



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of Health
Public Health and Clinical Services

Environmental Health Directorate Yearbook

July 2012 – June 2013



We would like to thank the following organisations. Their support makes our work possible.

ChemCentre

Commonwealth

Communities

Council of Australian Governments

Curtin University

Department of Aboriginal Affairs

Department of Agriculture and Food

Department of Commerce

Department of Corrective Services

Department of Education and Training

**Department of Environment Regulation
(DER)**

Department of Finance

Department of Fisheries

Department of Housing

Department of Indigenous Affairs

**Department of Local Government and
Communities**

Department of Mines and Petroleum

**Department of Planning and
Infrastructure**

**Department of Racing, Gaming and
Liquor**

**Department of Regional Development
Lands**

Department of Sport and Recreation

Department of State Development

Department of Transport

Department of Water

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Environmental Health Australia

Environmental Protection Authority

Fremantle Ports

General medical practitioners

LandCorp

Local Government

Main Roads Western Australia

Murdoch University

OzFoodNet

Public Transport Authority (PTA)

**Public Health Advocacy Institute Western
Australia**

Radiological Council

Road Safety Council

Rottnest Island Authority

South Metropolitan Regional Council

State Administrative Tribunal

State Solicitors Office Swan River Trust

**Telethon Institute for Child Health
Research**

The University of Western Australia

WA Police

Water Corporation

**Western Australia Local Government
Association**

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Our purpose

To lead in the management of environment health risks

Our vision

**HEALTHY
PEOPLE
IN A
HEALTHY
ENVIRONMENT**

Our values

COOPERATION| FAIRNESS| EXCELLENCE| INTEGRITY| LEADERSHIP

Message from the Director: A Year in review



Now in our third year of publishing this yearbook, I can happily say that we are continuing to set a high benchmark.

The yearbook has proven to be a great tool for measuring our performance and in helping to raise awareness within the Department of Health and externally, on the diversity of environmental health and the important role we play in protecting the health of Western Australians.

We have even been the catalyst for other areas within the Department to produce similar yearbooks. We welcome the Pharmaceutical Services Branch and Disaster Management Regulation and Planning Directorate and encourage other areas to use the yearbook approach to promote the work of their teams.

Looking back at the past year, I'm happy to report that mother nature was kind and we were not called on to help with responding to any major natural disasters as with previous years. This meant that we could focus on completing our planned projects, which is reflected positively in our scorecard.

Some of our major accomplishments include finalising over 10 years of work in the groundwater replenishment trial. Not only did Dr Clemencia Rodriguez get her PhD out of the project, but it has recently been announced that WA will be the first Australian state to introduce recycled water into the groundwater aquifer. This is an exciting time and is likely to see further changes in the role of our Water Unit to ensure Perth's water supply isn't compromised.

I'm also delighted with the first round of tobacco control grants that have been rolled out to local governments to support local tobacco awareness campaigns. We've seen some great campaigns evolve from the grants, and are now into the second round of the scheme.

Further congratulations for our work on asbestos management and clandestine drug laboratories being recognised nationally. Our WA partnerships and the efforts of staff have helped to drive the national agenda.

There are many more projects we have completed and I hope you enjoy reading about these. I want to thank my team for their hard work and dedication, and look forward to the challenge of completing our ambitious planned schedule of works for the coming year.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jim Dodds'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the beginning.

Jim Dodds
Director
Environmental Health Directorate
Public Health and Clinical Service Division
Department of Health of Western Australia

Operational structure

The Environmental Health Directorate (the Directorate) is situated within the Public Health and Clinical Services Division (PHCSD) of the Department of Health of Western Australia.

The Public Health and Clinical Services Division is led by the Executive Director, Dr Tarun Weeramanthri. The Environmental Health Directorate is one of ten Directorates / Offices operating within the PHCSD structure.

The Directorate has six operational areas:

- Business Unit
- Environmental Health Hazards Unit (EHHU)
- Food Unit
- Radiation Health Unit
- Science and Policy Unit (SPU) and the
- Water Unit.

Management

Our team is led by the Director, Jim Dodds, and six unit managers.



Jim Dodds
Director
Environmental Health
Directorate



Manoj
Agarwal
Manager
Business
Unit



Dr Michael
Lindsay
Managing
Scientist
Environmental
Health Hazards
Unit



Stan
Goodchild
Manager
Food Unit



Hazel Upton
Managing
Health
Physicist
Radiation
Health Unit



Mirella
Goetzmann
A/Manager
Science and
Policy Unit



Richard Theobald
Manager
Water Unit

Enabling legislation

We administer a wide range of Acts, Regulations, By-laws and Codes of Practices:

Environmental Health Hazards

Health (Air-handling and Water Systems) Regulations 1994
Health (Asbestos) Regulations 1992
Health Act (Carbon Monoxide) Regulations 1975
Health (Garden Soil) Regulations 1998
Health (Poultry Manure) Regulations 2001
Hairdressing Establishment Regulations 1972
Health (Skin Penetration Procedure) Regulations 1998
Health (Offensive Trade Fees) Regulations 1976
Piggeries Regulations 1952
Health (Construction Work) Regulations 1973
Construction Camp Regulations
Health Act (Laundries and Bathrooms) Regulations
Health (Aquatic Facilities) Regulations 2007
Health (Public Buildings) Regulations 1992
Health (Rottneest Island) By-laws 1989
Fly Eradication Regulations
Health (Pesticides) Regulations 2011
Health (Prescribed Insect Pests) Regulations 1991
Health Act (Local Authorities Sewerage Undertakings) Model By-laws – Series “A”

Food

Food Act 2008
Food Regulations 2009
Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code

Water

Health (Treatment of Sewage and Disposal of Effluent and Liquid Waste) Regulations 1974
Health (Temporary Sanitary Conveniences) Regulations 1997
Health Act (Underground Water Supply) Regulations 1959

Radiation Health

Nuclear Waste Storage and Transportation (Prohibition) Act 1999

Radiation Health as secretariat to the Radiological Council

Radiation Safety (General) Regulations 1983
Radiation Safety (Qualifications) Regulations 1980
Radiation Safety Act 1975
Radiation Safety (Transport of Radioactive Substances) Regulations 2002

Science and Policy

Tobacco Products Control Amendment Act 2009
Tobacco Products Control Act 2006
Tobacco Products Control Regulations 2006

Scorecard for the 2012-2013 financial year

We made every effort to meet our planned schedule of works for the past financial year. However urgent health demands will always take precedence on whether we can achieve all of our planned operational priorities. We accept this is the nature of our work.

Did we achieve what we set out to do last year?

-  Project completed – we achieved our goal
-  Satisfactory result – progressed but not completed
-  Project not started – no longer a priority

| Score | Operational priority |
|---|---|
| BUSINESS UNIT | |
|  | Establish an ongoing monitoring and reporting system for budgets allocated to the Unit's special projects to ensure projects milestones match financial commitments. |
|  | Review and report on administrative processes and skill requirements to ensure effective administrative support for the Directorate's technical Units. |
|  | Develop a Business Continuity Plan to manage severe disruption to services in the event of an emergency. The BCP will identify all resources necessary to continue crucial functions. |
|  | Implement an online payment facility for all licensing activities. |
|  | Review the Directorate's Fees and Charges for 2013-14 - Compliance to Treasury Fees Templates. |
|  | Develop a better electronic document management system for the Directorate. |
| ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH HAZARDS UNIT | |
|  | Complete Drafting Instructions and a Regulatory Impact Assessment for the review of the Health (Asbestos) Regulations |
|  | Plan for and provide financial support to develop online public education material on the appropriate handling, removal and disposal of asbestos cement materials. |
|  | Develop a risk assessment and guidance package on vector-borne disease, 'nuisance' mosquitoes and land use planning for decision making agencies and developers. |
|  | Review Ross River virus disease risk to inform land- use planning across WA. |
|  | Finalise and implement guideline and supporting resources for managing health aspects of clandestine drug laboratories in partnership with the Department of Environment Regulation. |
|  | Develop guidelines to be used to measure the quantity of mould in public building ventilation systems. |
|  | Review the use of horticultural pesticides in urban environments and develop guidance information for associated land-use planning |
|  | Finalise roles, responsibilities and Standard Operating Procedures for the Directorate's risk assessment of public events and update supporting material, including events guidelines. |
| FOOD UNIT | |
|  | Implement the Strategic Plan 2012 – 2014 in preparation for a review of the <i>Food Act 2008</i> |
|  | Develop a framework for risk management, compliance and enforcement for the <i>Food Act 2008</i> : Ensure development of risk management, compliance and enforcement outcomes for the Food Act to ensure a consistent approach to the enforcement of the legislation across WA food establishments. |
|  | Develop a framework for the review of the <i>Food Regulations 2009</i> and the <i>Food Act 2008</i> |

| | |
|---|---|
|  | Enhance the Quality Management System to streamline new and existing processes under the <i>Food Act 2008</i> |
| RADIATION HEALTH UNIT | |
|  | Commission all laboratory equipment for the new Radiation Health Unit laboratory once the building is completed. |
|  | Develop new radioactive waste acceptance protocols and working protocols for the new Radiation Transit store on the QEII site. |
|  | Review the adequacy of training and assessment for x-ray operators on behalf of the Radiological Council. |
| SCIENCE AND POLICY UNIT | |
|  | Draft supporting guidelines outlined within the 'Public Health Bill Implementation Plan' to assist local government enforcement agencies to interpret the Bill. |
|  | Review, update and communicate the Environmental Health Directorate disaster response processes. |
|  | Review and update the retail premises inspection programs for tobacco retailers. |
|  | Develop and commence implementation of a tobacco compliance education strategy. |
|  | Support each of the four regional forums in the Kimberley, Pilbara, Mid West and Goldfields to plan regional programs and link them into regional Aboriginal Health Planning Forums. |
|  | Measure and report on regional aboriginal environmental health services and activities funded by our Department and determine their effectiveness in improving public health. |
|  | Conduct a training course on responding to public health emergency management issues in the East Kimberley Region. |
|  | Draft an options paper for discussion on a 'Collaboration Agreement' between EHD, Public Health Units and Local Government to clarify roles and responsibilities for the administration of public health. |
| WATER UNIT | |
|  | Complete and publish the Code of Practice for Onsite Wastewater Management in Western Australia. |
|  | Revise and republish the Code of Practice for Greywater systems. |
|  | Complete final report of the Beenyup Groundwater Replenishment Trial. |
|  | Publish the draft algal bloom response protocol for interagency adoption. |
|  | Complete the Government Sewerage Policy. |
|  | Revise and endorse the Memorandum of Understanding between the Water Corporation and Department of Health for the Full Operation of the Groundwater Replenishment System. |
|  | Prepare and endorse Memorandum of Understanding between the Water Corporation and Department of Health for Drinking Water Services. |
|  | Prepare and endorse Memorandum of Understanding between the Water Corporation and Department of Health for Wastewater Services. |
|  | Complete an audit of the Water Corporation. |

Last year's major achievements

To celebrate another productive year we want to recognise a few of our major achievements:



What we did



Dr Clemencia Rodriguez from our Water Unit inspects the application of biosolids, Shire of Wongan-Ballidu

Our work on asbestos management has been adopted nationally.

Legislation, guidelines and publications

We initiated or completed a number of reviews of legislation, guidelines and publications during 2012-2013.

Better asbestos management

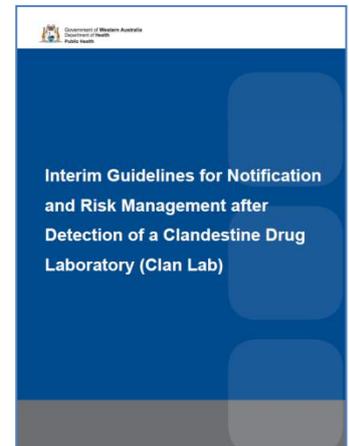
To address problems of asbestos soil contamination we worked with the DER to publish the '[Guidelines for the Assessment, Remediation and Management of Asbestos-Contaminated Sites in Western Australia in 2009](#)'. This was the most comprehensive guidance of its type in Australia and has now been adopted in the 2013 amendment of the National Environmental Protection Measure (NEPM) 1999.

Mr John Howell, our Senior Toxicologist who created this work, has been invited to promote the NEPM asbestos guidance across Australia.

Risky business - Clan labs

The '[Interim guidelines for notification and risk management after detection of a clandestine drug laboratory](#)' was published with the help of numerous government agencies. A series of well attended training courses was also organised to support the documents implementation.

As a result of this innovative work we have been invited by enHealth to develop a national public health risk statement on clan labs.



Guidance for large waste water treatment plants

We produced the '[Independent third party engineering verification guidance note](#)' providing information about independent third party engineering verification requirements for projects using large, complex or innovative wastewater treatment plants.

Report on the Food Act 2008

Following the publication of the first *Report on the Food Act 2008* in 2011, we published a biennial report of enforcement agencies' performance of functions under the *Food Act 2008* for the period 1 July 2010 to 30 June 2012.

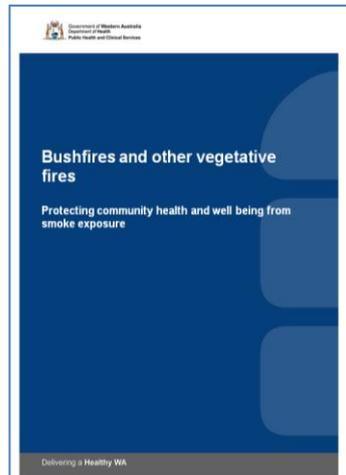


Photo: (left to right) Paul Willingham from Risk Environment Services OHS Consultant, Katy Roberts, John Howell and Llew Withers from the Department of Health, and Paul Newell from the Department of Environment and Conservation, took part in Clan Lab notification training.

The report collates valuable information from enforcement agencies to determine regulatory consistency between enforcement agencies and identify areas requiring improvement and support.

Bushfires and smoke exposure

As part of our role on local, state and national air quality committees we published a smoke matrix to assist DER and Department of Fire and Emergency Services to communicate health risks and recommended actions to the public during bushfires.



The '[Bushfires and other vegetative fires](#)' guide provides officials with a 'ready reckoner' of smoke concentrations and recommended actions to reduce smoke exposure during bushfires and other vegetative fires.

We also worked with officers from the DER to progress their '[Burn Wise Guide](#)', which will assist local governments resolve domestic smoke nuisance complaints.

Public Health Bill

A range of work continued behind the scenes to maintain momentum on the proposed Public Health Bill. This included addressing concerns from the Economic and Expenditure Reform Committee (EERC) following the referral of the Bill to the EERC from Cabinet in mid 2012.

Further work also progressed on drafting resources to aid with the interpretation and application of the proposed Bill.

Asbestos reforms

We submitted a preliminary impact assessment on the proposed asbestos reforms to the Regulatory Gatekeeping Unit (RGU) for assessment. The drafting instructions are nearing finalisation and adopt the aims and objectives set out in [asbestos consultation](#) documents.

We also funded the WA Cancer Council to develop an on-line learning program "Is that Asbestos at my place? What now?". We propose to launch the website in August 2013, with the aim of providing the DIY homeowner with a basic level of training and competency to carry out minor asbestos works. One of the proposed Regulation reforms will require a person who wishes to remove >10m² of bonded asbestos to attain a higher level of competency, or, engage a licensed removalist.

Community studies, surveys and investigations

Contributing to health research is an important part of our business. We participate in a number of studies, surveys and investigate potential community health concerns – including:

Selling cigarettes to minors

We funded a Controlled Purchase Operation (CPO) to determine the likelihood of tobacco retailers selling tobacco products to minors.

20 retailers were selected for the CPO, and no sales were made to minors with all outlets either requesting identification or refusing to make the sale to the young person.

It is pleasing that our audits indicate that tobacco retailers are generally not selling cigarettes to young people. Further COP's are planned for subsequent years.

Surveying shellfish harvesting areas

We have a responsibility for overseeing the WA Shellfish Quality Assurance Program. Our role involves shoreline and sanitary surveys of all commercial shellfish harvesting areas to identify possible pollution sources and determine their impact on the quality of the shellfish. These surveys are conducted to assess the level of risk associated with shellfish harvesting in WA and require extensive field and desktop assessments.

So far, we have completed the shoreline survey for Oyster Harbour in Albany and have commenced surveying Mistaken Island, also near Albany, and Cockburn Sound.



Photo: Officers from the Food Unit assessing the mussel harvesting process in Cockburn Sound

Salmonella contamination of poultry meat

A year long investigation relating to *Salmonella Typhimurium* contamination of poultry meat was completed. The investigation included meetings with the poultry industry, site visits to poultry processors and twelve assessments of primary producers.

It became evident that some primary producers and processors had insufficient measures. We are now working with industry to determine and implement corrective measures to minimise the impact of poultry faeces on the safety of the final product.

Shisha smoking

In response to complaints regarding shisha smoking (tobacco smoking implement) in outdoor eating areas and enclosed public places we initiated a surveillance and investigation operation at various known Perth shisha smoking venues.

Some businesses that were allowing shisha smoking were found to be selling/supplying shisha to customers without a valid tobacco licence. It was also discovered that shisha tobacco was being supplied/sold to minors.



Photo: A confiscated shisha smoking implement

Bubblegum cigarettes

We followed up on a complaint made by a member of the public who purchased a packet of gum with each stick designed to look like a cigarette.

Section 106 of the Tobacco Products Control Act 2006 states that *“A person must not sell any food, toy or other product that is not a tobacco product but is designed to resemble a tobacco product or package.”* The matter was investigated and resulted in 143 packets of bubblegum being seized from the store.



Photo: Bubble gum designed to look like cigarettes are not allowed to be sold under WA legislation

Chewing tobacco

In partnership with the Disaster Management Regulation and Planning Directorate we seized a quantity of chewing tobacco from a retail store. Chewing tobacco was permanently banned from being sold in Australia in 1991.

Testing of the product confirms it is chewing tobacco for legal purposes. We are now taking action to prosecute the owners.

Crematoriums

As part of our role of administering the *Cremation Act 1929* and associated regulations, Departmental officers audited the Geraldton Crematorium. We reviewed administrative procedures, maintenance and cleanliness of the cremation area and equipment. The report made a number of recommendations where improvements were required.

We now propose to conduct similar inspections of all crematoriums across WA, in partnership with the Metropolitan Cemeteries Board.



Photo: An older type of crematorium used at the Geraldton Crematorium.

Esperance lead finalisation

Our involvement in the Government-funded cleanup of Esperance has now been finalised. An Independent Audit

We finalised our role in the most significant lead cleanup in Australia.

commissioned by the clean up organisers to validate the cleanup stated:

“The auditor considers that the procedures developed for the Esperance Cleanup and Recovery Program (ECRP), the manner in which the ECRP team delivered the project and the community input has combined to allow a robust, technically justifiable and comprehensive cleanup and validation of the Esperance Townsite. All stakeholders should be proud of their contribution to this project and it remains an example of (while hopefully not required) how such a project should be planned and implemented.”

This brought to a close one of the most significant lead cleanups in Australian history.

Goldfields Ross River virus disease outbreak

The Goldfields Region experienced an acute

outbreak of Ross River virus (RRV) disease. Goldfields Public Health Unit was integral in identifying the first cluster of cases and issuing community advice. We recorded 169 cases of RRV in the Goldfields, the majority (128) notified from the City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder (the City).

We assisted City officers to investigate the outbreak, including mosquito surveillance (adult trapping and larval surveys), exploration of breeding habitats and analysis of follow-up information.

The City is developing a public education campaign to promote awareness. We will continue to help agencies analyse patient data to better understand the conditions that led to this outbreak and to determine high priority mosquito breeding sites.

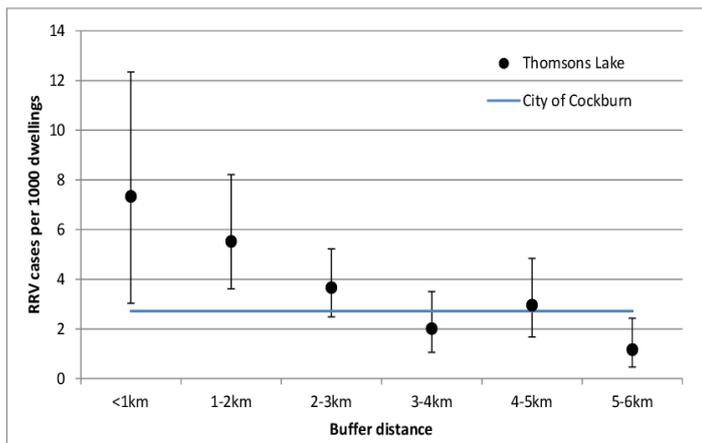


Photo: To the average eye this scoop of water collected from Kalgoorlie Golf course may look like debris but it is fact almost entirely young mosquito larvae.

Spatial analysis of Ross River virus in metropolitan Perth

A spatial analysis was undertaken to investigate the association between Ross River Virus risk (RRV) and proximity to Thomsons Lake in Cockburn during the 2011/12 RRV outbreak. The rate of RRV cases per 1000 dwellings was calculated for buffer distances between 1km and 6km and demonstrated that residents living within 2km of Thomsons Lake had a significantly higher risk of RRV compared to the City of Cockburn as a whole.

This project highlights the importance of appropriate planning by State and Local Governments when assessing mosquito-borne disease risks associated with residential development applications.



Number of Ross River virus cases per 1000 dwellings versus buffer distance from Thomsons Lake, 2011/12

Cracker dust

In collaboration with the Department of Mines and Petroleum, we reviewed a health risk assessment of mineral fibres in cracker dust from the Newman Region and its use in the community. Cracker dust was determined to be low risk and a Public Health Impact Statement and a list of frequently asked questions were developed following the conclusion of investigations. We are now developing a guidance note on

public health risk management of asbestiform (asbestos containing) minerals associated with mining.



Photo: Cracker dust is created during the crushing of aggregate. Source: [Department of Mines and Petroleum](#)

Vasse fish kill event

During April 2013, we received advice from the public regarding a massive fish kill in the Vasse Wonnerup estuary near the floodgates in the Busselton/Wonnerup region due to a toxic algal bloom. We contacted the City of Busselton (the City), the Department of Water, the DER and were able to help coordinate assistance for the City to remove dead fish, provide health warning signs and to issue a media statement to the public to advise of potential health effects.



Photo: A fish kill in the Vasse Wonnerup estuary courtesy of member of the public:

Aquatic centre chlorine gas leak

After being advised by the DER, officers investigated a chlorine gas leak at a large aquatic centre following a building evacuation and treatment of 30 people for gas inhalation.

The incident occurred when a staff member, who was not wearing personal protective equipment, was disconnecting an 'empty' chlorine gas drum and resulted in residual gas leaking into the facility. New safety steps have been put in place. This case was a reminder that the incorrect handling of chlorine gas could have tragic consequences.



Photo: Corroded bolt that contributed to the chlorine gas leak.

Stormwater drain pollution

In partnership with DER we investigated elevated bacterial results collected from a stormwater drain in Kings Park which indicated a source of pollution was entering the system. After a small 'sanitary survey', it was considered that commercial scale rubbish bins and inappropriate washdown facilities were causing the pollution events. Commercial operators were required to address the pollution issue.



Photo: Stormwater drain under investigation following elevated sampling results

Home lead investigation

Our Principal Toxicologist undertook a joint investigation with the City of Mandurah to determine if soil consumed by a young infant was contaminated with lead, resulting in elevated lead blood levels.

The infant had Pica, a condition whereby non-edible materials with no nutrient value are consumed, and was consuming soil where old lead car batteries had been buried. The results confirmed that the soil was contaminated with lead.



Photo: Principal Toxicologist Martin Matison collecting a soil sample for analysis.

Northampton lead tailings

An interagency committee was established to examine issues surrounding the dumping of lead tailings in the Northampton region, 474 kms from Perth. The presence of lead has been well documented in Northampton. Testing is planned across 650 properties to establish the extent of lead tailings distributed around the town. Inspections and testing is to take place during late 2013, although the work required is not to the same extent as the Esperance town site and is purely a precautionary measure.

The extent and nature of any remedial work will very much depend on the findings of this sampling and cannot be reliably defined at this stage.

Our goal is to ensure obstacle course risks are managed properly.

Obstacle courses

We have had to keep pace with the increased popularity of recreational obstacle courses coming to WA. These new obstacle courses introduce new risks and challenges for event managers and enforcement agencies alike.



Photo: Participants in obstacle courses are usually required to climb over large walls throughout the event.

Although these events are relatively new to WA, we have spent some time assessing and learning from the mistakes of events overseas where injuries have occurred, and where particularly successful events have been held. It is not our intention to remove all risks from these events, but to ensure they are well managed and to ensure that if

injuries occur, patients can be treated quickly and professionally.

We are working with industry and local governments to address concerns such as electric shocks, fire and burns, falls and water and mud drowning.

A policy has already been established for electric shock obstacles.

Follow up to parliamentary events inquiries

The findings of the Parliamentary Inquiry into the Kimberley Ultramarathon were released in August 2012. The Inquiry analysed the roles of event managers and government stakeholders in the assessment and approval of events, and delivered recommendations concerning the roles of authorities, sponsors and event managers, as well as recommendations for approval processes and communication.

Additionally, the WA Coroner released his findings concerning the Gemma Thoms Inquest. Gemma was a 17 year old who passed away after taking illegal drugs at the 2009 Big Day Out in Perth. The Coroner made two recommendations as a result of the Inquiry that require the Department of Health to provide responses.

We are now working to implement the recommendations from both Inquiries.



Projects, programs and other health initiatives

We coordinated, or were involved in progressing, a number of state and national projects, programs and other health initiatives.

Local government tobacco control grants

We introduced the Tobacco Control Grants Scheme, a new project that aims to facilitate and support the engagement of Local Governments in activities to control the use of tobacco products across WA.

The Public Health Advocacy Institute of WA (PHAIWA) has been awarded the tender to oversee the application and distribution of the scheme.

Grants of up to \$5000 are provided and a maximum of sixty grants will be provided. Information about the grants has been conveyed in a variety of formats including regional seminars in Broome, Southern Cross and Capel.

Final formation of Aboriginal forum

Last year saw the establishment of Aboriginal EH forums in the Pilbara and Goldfields. We now have four regional forums (Kimberley and Mid West included) which bring together the regional environmental health workforce and contractors with health and non-health agencies to share experiences and discuss planning of services which influence EH conditions in Aboriginal communities. The forums help to raise the profile of environmental health and increase understanding of EH services by non-health agencies, as well as providing training opportunities in specific areas.

Helicopter treatments for mosquito management

We worked closely with Local Government Environmental Health Officers in the

Southwest to monitor mosquito breeding and environmental variables (tides, temperature and rainfall) to determine the optimum times to apply chemicals utilising our helicopter aerial application services. 19 aerial treatments have been completed in the Peel Region, 8 in the Leschenault and 6 in the Geographe Region of the Southwest. These aerial applications aim to kill mosquitoes, and have helped reduce the risk of mosquito-borne diseases to public health.



Photo: Helicopter used as part of the South-west aerial treatment of mosquito breeding sites.

Risk Management Compliance and Enforcement Framework

The Risk Management Compliance and Enforcement framework has been developed to improve consistency in the approach to enforcement of the *Food Act 2008* by WA enforcement agencies.

Previous training provided to 120 authorised officers on risk management, compliance and enforcement by RiskCover, Food Standards Australia New Zealand and the State Solicitor's Office helped shape the draft framework, which includes a compliance and enforcement policy, a risk policy statement and risk management procedures. Further consultation is planned for 2013-14 prior to implementation.

INNOVATIVE FUNDING FOR PREVENTION THE WA TOBACCO CONTROL GRANTS SCHEME



THE PROBLEM

The smoking rate in WA remains high at 18.9%. Local governments can play an important role in providing and enforcing smoke free public spaces.

ABOUT THE LICENSES

Number of retailers licensed to sell tobacco in WA: 3,750

Annual license fee: \$204.00 (initial application), \$173.50 (renewal)

Licensed retailer requirements:

- Display approved license to sell tobacco and two prominent anti-smoking signs
- Ensure cigarette products are hidden from customer view
- Train staff as to their legal responsibilities when selling cigarettes

PENALTIES FOR SELLING WITHOUT A LICENSE

INDIVIDUALS

» First offence = \$40 000

» Second offence = \$80 000

COMPANIES

» First offence = \$80 000

» Second offence = \$160 000

ONE SOLUTION

The West Australian Government requires retailers to pay an annual registration fee for the right to sell tobacco products. This system was the first of its kind in Australian and similar fee-based tobacco licensing mechanisms have now been introduced in SA, TAS, NT and ACT. In 2013, for the first time, a portion of the revenue generated from the WA licensing system has been used for preventive health strategies that target tobacco control at the local government level.

ABOUT THE PROJECT

PHAIWA and WA Health Department have joined forces to encourage local governments to apply for grants to promote tobacco control and compliance. Over one year, we will provide approximately 60 grants worth \$5000 (up to \$10,000 if innovative) to WA local governments for projects that value add to existing legislative requirements around tobacco control. Most of these grants aim to increase the number of smoke free public places. So far we have funded 23 local governments to promote smoke free public places.

HOW LOCAL GOVERNMENTS ARE USING THE FUNDING

Shire of Esperance

The Esperance Cannery Art Centre and the Shire have painted four murals which promote tobacco control laws: smoking in outdoor eating areas; smoking within flags at beaches; smoking in cars with kids and smoking at playgrounds. The murals are located at strategic hot spots in the Esperance town centre.

City of Vincent

The City is running a program targeting smoking in licensed premises that involves developing 'social smoking' posters and stickers which are distributed to licensed premises and displayed in smoking areas and on cigarette vending machines. The signs show images where people are snickering or avoiding a 'smoker' and demonstrate the off-putting tobacco smell, the excessive cost in taking up smoking and a group of friends enjoying a drink without feeling the need to smoke.

City of Armadale

This project uses the popularity of scooters, BMX bikes and skateboards to promote and educate young people in Armadale about the various negative impacts of smoking. Smarter than Smoking resources are displayed at six skate park workshops and competition events including banners, competition wheel and flip charts with printed resources and merchandise also available to young people throughout the project.

City of Perth

At the start of 2013 the City voted unanimously to progress a review of the 'City's Thoroughfares and Public Places Local Law' in order to establish smoke free environments in Forrest Place and Murray and Hay Street Malls. Once the local law is in place, the project will assist with supporting tobacco compliance through funding the design, fabrication and installation of highly visible signage to indicate the new 'smoke free' areas.

Shire of Morawa

A local artist working with students at Morawa District High School has developed a series of photos portraying the harmful effects of tobacco use and harm minimisation techniques for tobacco use. These photos were used to create a projector image that encourages a healthy, smoke free lifestyle. This projection was launched at a smoke-free community event in Morawa over seven consecutive evenings during Drug Action Week and is also used at other community events.

An environmental health funded initiative



Government of Western Australia
Department of Health



www.phaiwa.org



Quality management system

The Food Unit has been enhancing its quality management system to better reflect the current roles and responsibilities of the Unit under the *Food Act 2008*. As a result, there are now 33 standard operating procedures in place that are subject to regular review.

Expanding the recreational waters program

The state wide bacterial water quality monitoring program of recreational waters was expanded to include south-west sampling locations. Monitoring will now commence at Wilson Inlet and Denmark

River (Shire of Denmark), Oyster Harbour, King George Sound and Princess Royal Harbour (City of Albany) and Bickley Reservoir (Department of Sport and Recreation).

A big thank you goes out to all local government authorities who continue to assist with monitoring popular swimming locations across WA.



Photo: New recreational sample site has been established at the popular Bickley Reservoir swimming spot.

A new chapter for Radiation Health services

For over 50 years the Radiation Health Unit in one form or another was located at 18 Verdun Street, Nedlands. With the QEII Medical Centre redevelopment and the expansion of the facilities of the hospital, the buildings occupied by Radiation Health were identified for demolition to make way for a new Mental Health Unit.

The decision was made to relocate the Radiation Health team and services and team to Grace Vaughan House, Shenton Park. As part of the move, a new laboratory building was built during 2012 and completed in early November 2012. The laboratory is in the process of being commissioned. A variety of x-ray equipment



Photo: Radiation Health Office at Verdun Street, Nedlands.



Photo: The new Radiation Health facility.

has already been installed and facilities to provide wipe testing, calibration and radiometric analysis services are being finalised.

X-ray operator course

WA Country Health Services on behalf of the Radiological Council had been the course provider for the x-ray operator course for approximately 10 years. The 5 day course provides training for health practitioners from remote or rural hospitals in WA, where medical imaging technologists are not always available to take basic x-rays.

During 2012 the WA Country Health Services advised they were unable to continue running the course from 2013.

A new course provider was required to take over the role on behalf of the Radiological Council. Curtin University has since been recognised to continue providing the course into the future, with the first course for 2013 being held in July.

Wireless at Grace Vaughan House

We upgraded the old computer servers at Grace Vaughan House (GVH) to a new wireless network. The wireless connection will be of particular benefit when GVH is used as an Emergency Outbreak Centre allowing laptops to access the internet throughout the building.

Number crunching

A large part of our work relates to enforcing legislative compliance requirements which includes licensing, registration, approvals, permits, notification and assessment services for a range of activities. Various processes are in place including auditing and compliance requirements to monitor industry risks against appropriate health legislation. A snapshot of some of our compliance obligations during the 2012-13 financial year are outlined below:

Business Unit*

3398 Tobacco licences renewed

414 New tobacco licences issued

* The Business Unit coordinates the administration functions associated with issuing licences and registrations on behalf of the Environmental Health Hazards and Science and Policy Units. Compliance checks are undertaken in conjunction with Unit experts prior to issuing.

Environmental Health Hazards compliance numbers

100 Contaminated site applications assessed

14 On-site contaminated site inspections

476 Classified contaminated sites that required our agreed sign off in partnership with the DER

12 Local laws processed

48 Public building issues responded to

94 Public events and mass gatherings attended (including meetings and debriefings, monitoring events and providing advice to other government agencies and event managers)

41 Naegleria isolations from aquatic facilities samples responded to

85 Clandestine drug laboratories detected

27 Fumigation sites approved

2341 Pest management technician licences renewed

421 New pest management technician license issued

862 Pest management business registrations renewed

Streamlining fumigation approvals

Gazettal of the *Health (Pesticides) Regulations 2011* included a requirement for all sites offering a fumigation service to seek approval from the Department of Health. This has led to a significant increase in fumigation-related work undertaken by our Directorate.

In 2011, 20 new sites were approved for fumigation activity which increased to 39 new sites in 2012. In addition, 23 boats both on water and in dry dock required assessment and approval for fumigation as well as 35 applications requiring approval from pest management businesses.

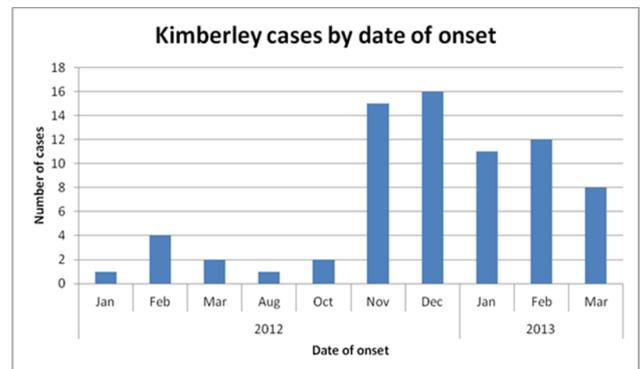
The substantial increase is largely attributed to the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) requirement for all importers of goods requiring fumigation to undertake that work at the goods delivery site. Discussions were held with DAFF Officers to streamline approval processes for importers, DAFF and the Department. This has led to improved communication between stakeholders and modification in the application forms resulting in our staff providing faster and more efficient assessments of fumigation sites.

Psittacosis investigations

An outbreak of parrot related Psittacosis occurred in the summer. Three cases of Psittacosis were noted from a breeder of birds (Northam), and two purchasers of birds (South Perth & Geraldton). All three patients were eventually linked after purchasing their birds on-line. Infected parrots were identified as a common purchase and being a zoonotic disease, persons in very close contact with the birds were affected with pneumonia-like symptoms. All victims eventually recovered and 6 breeders and 2 domestic premises were inspected by country and metropolitan environmental health officers.

Cryptosporidiosis investigations

An outbreak of cryptosporidium occurred in the Kimberley regions from November 2012 to March 2013. A number of sources were noted and quick action by the OZFOODNET Unit of Communicable Disease Control Directorate (CDCD), Shire of Broome, Kimberley Public Health Unit and our staff contained the outbreak.

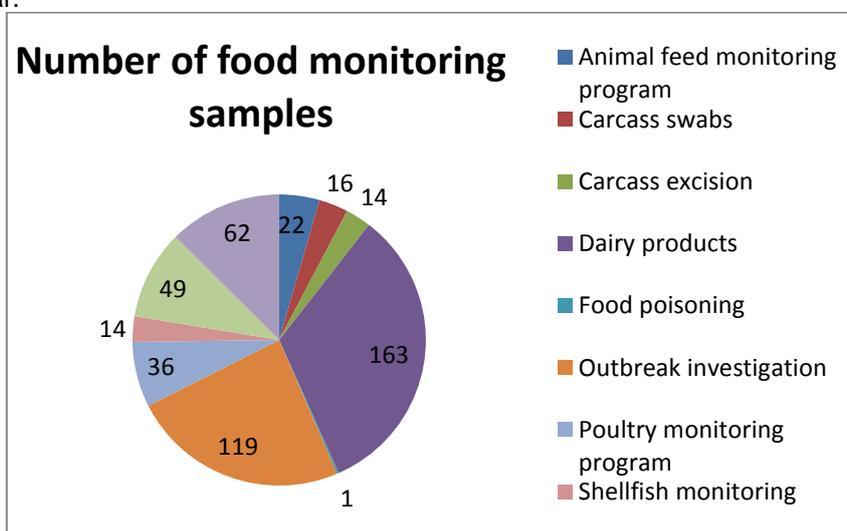


Food compliance numbers

The following table represents the number food businesses for which the Department of Health is the appropriate enforcement agency. This role includes assessments and taking enforcement action under the *Food Act 2008* and *Food Regulation 2009*.

| Food business | Number | Assessments | Enforcement Action |
|--------------------------------|--------|-------------|---|
| Public hospitals | 84 | 22 | 1 improvement notice |
| Not in a district (Crown land) | 27 | 64 | 6 Improvement notices 2 infringement notices |
| Dairy farms | 168 | 159 | Nil |
| Dairy processors | 66 | 53 | 1 improvement notice |
| Meat premises | 121 | 238 | N/A |

The below chart outlines the number of food monitoring samples collected for range of food products during the 2012-13 financial year.



Radiation Health compliance numbers (on behalf of the Radiological Council)

The Radiation Health Unit plays an administrative, supervisory and auditing role in the Radiological Council's compliance activities. Some of these activities include processing and issuing of licences and registrations, tracking of equipment and radioactive substances, reporting and providing recommendations for structural protection and inspections.

The Radiation Health Unit assists the Radiological Council in the preparation and submission of an annual report which details all the activities undertaken by the Radiological Council and the administrative support provided by the Radiation Health Unit.

For a more detailed analysis of Radiation Health compliance data please refer to the [Radiological Council's 2012 Annual Report](#), with data presented for a calendar year.

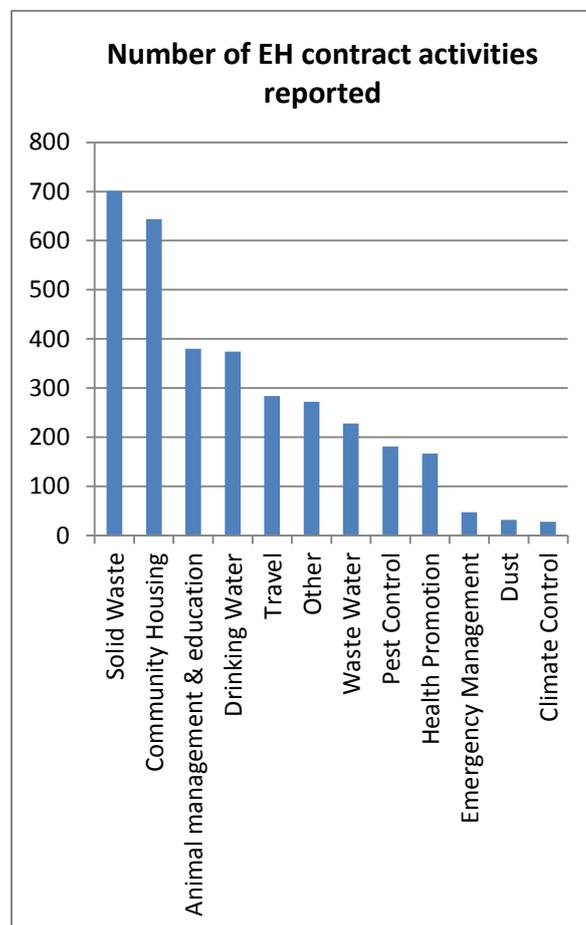
Science and Policy compliance numbers

| | |
|---------------|---|
| 363 | Tobacco compliance store audits |
| 60 | Tobacco compliance complaints investigated |
| 8 | Tobacco compliance infringements issued |
| 24 | Tobacco warnings issued |
| 0 | Tobacco compliance prosecutions |
| 10 | Tobacco training sessions conducted |
| 184 | 24/7 emergency hotline responses (asbestos management, sewerage overflows, accidental release of potentially toxic chemicals into the atmosphere) |
| 959 | Development assessments reviewed |
| 3338 | Reported EH activities for non-government organisation (NGO) contracts (Aboriginal communities) |
| 18,863 | Individual items recorded under the reported EH activities for NGO contracts (Aboriginal communities) |

Aboriginal Environmental Health Contracts:

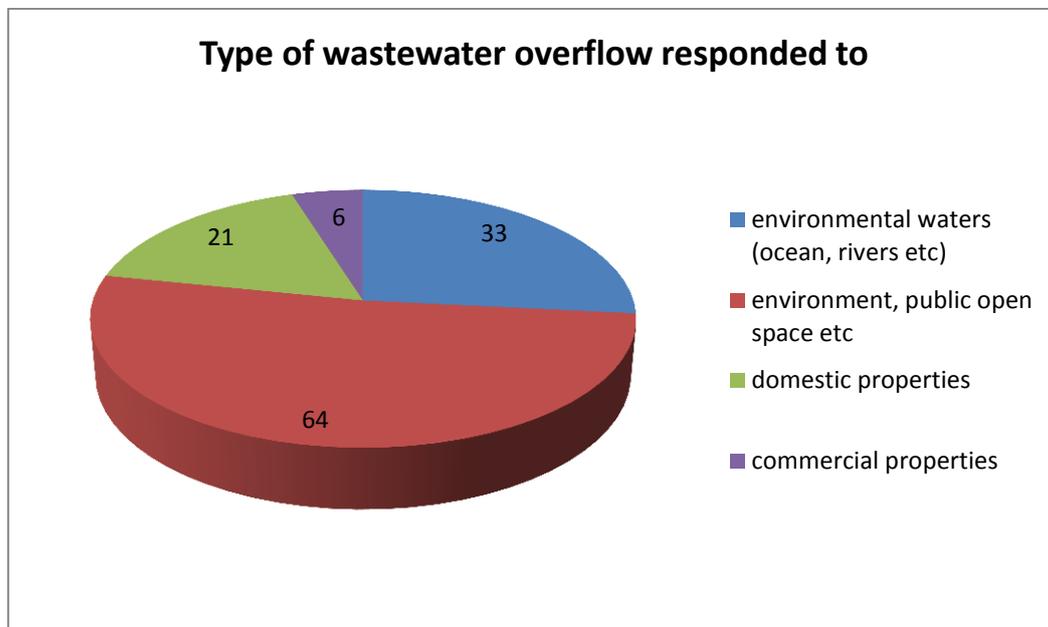
The Directorate funds 26 organisations to provide EH services to remote and regional WA Aboriginal communities. All organisations focus on recruiting, training and employing Aboriginal people. These service providers recently commenced reporting activities performed as part of their contracts. This was initiated by the Directorate to gain a better understanding of the breadth of tasks undertaken and to provide an accurate depiction of what gets done under the program.

Reported activities in the following table relates to core areas of environmental health, including travel to and from remote locations. We believe this shows the valuable work funded by the Department and performed in, and on behalf of, regional and remote Aboriginal communities to improve living conditions and prevent health risks.



Water compliance numbers

| | |
|------------|--|
| 614 | Application approvals for subdivisions submitted by Western Australian Planning Commission |
| 329 | Applications to install or construct an apparatus for the treatment of sewage |
| 185 | Reviews of development approval submissions |
| 137 | Assessments of Town Planning Scheme amendment proposals |
| 89 | Assessments of recycled water quality management plans |
| 9 | Health responses to algal bloom events (rivers, ocean, lakes, other waterways) |
| 73 | Swimming pool applications assessed |
| 29 | Product assessments for wastewater |
| 13 | Drinking water quality management plans assessed |
| 124 | Responses to wastewater overflows / sewage spills (outlined in the chart below) |



Committee representation

You might not realise this but we travel all over Australia representing the Department on state and national committees which steer the agenda of numerous environmental health issues relevant to WA. Below is a small selection of some of these committees.



Communication



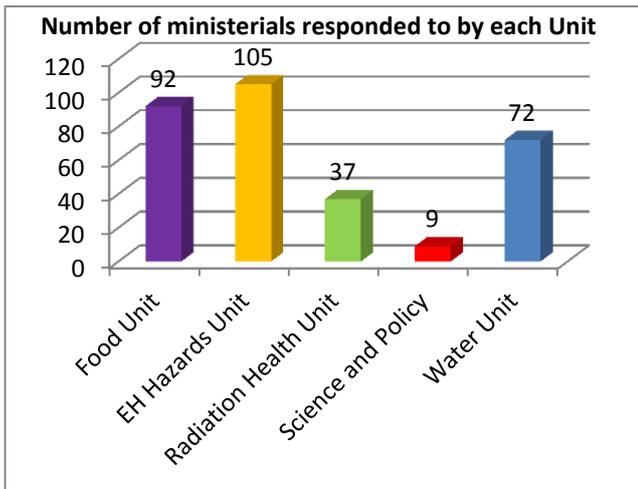
Photo: Robert Mullane from our Aboriginal Environmental Health team presenting at an Aboriginal Environmental Health forum in the North-west

Communication activities

Communication is at the core of everything we do.

Ministerials

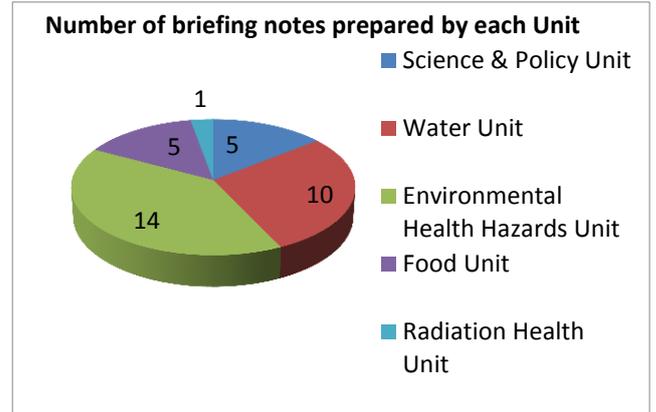
We assisted the Minister for Health in responding to **315** written community environmental health concerns. This was 61 less than the previous year.



| Unit | Ministerial topic of most public concern |
|-------------------|--|
| Food | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Front of pack labelling • Pregnancy warning labels on alcohol |
| EH Hazards | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wood smoke • Asbestos • Mosquito control |
| Water | Fluoridation of drinking water |
| SPU | Smoking in public places |
| Radiation | Solaria |

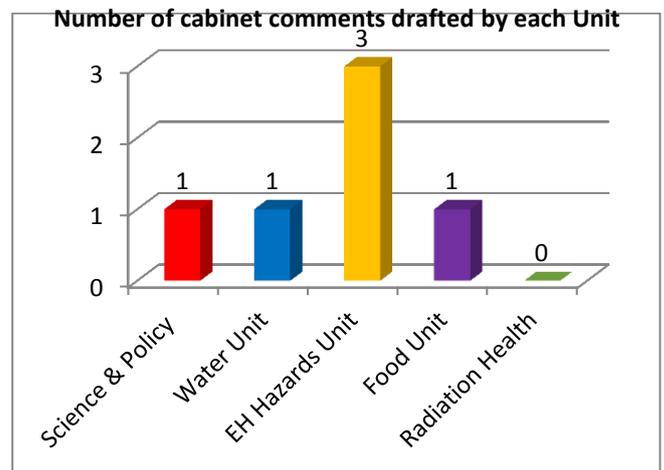
Ministerial briefing notes

As part of the parliamentary process, we provided **35** briefings to the Minister for Health when requested to update on topical environmental health issues. This was 13 less than the previous year.



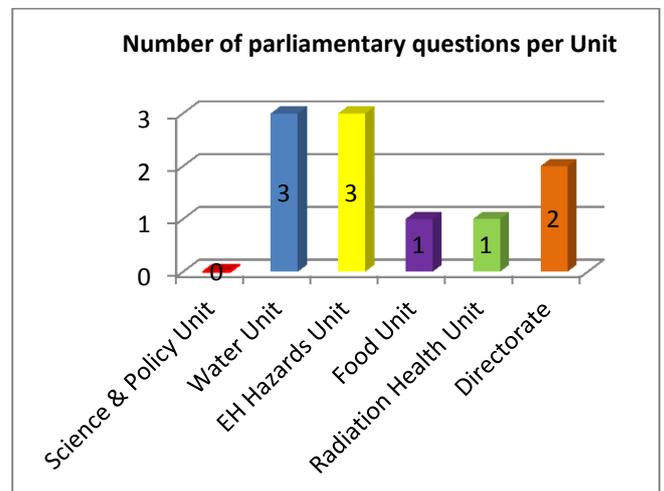
Cabinet comments

We responded to **6** urgent cabinet comments.



Parliamentary questions

We responded to **10** parliamentary questions.



Media releases

We issued **6** media releases across the state to advise or remind the community of potential public health risks for which extra vigilance was required. The previous year we issued 19 media releases.

Media release topic

- Mosquito-borne disease risk continues in Kimberley and Pilbara
- Fish Kills reported in Vasse Wonnerup
- Ross River virus disease risk in south-west
- Heatwave health warning
- Tips to avoid a summer food bug
- Mosquito-borne virus disease risk in south-west

Training and development

Certificate 2 training in Aboriginal Environmental Health

We worked with Empower Education to provide training in Certificate 2 Indigenous Environmental Health for 20 students. The course provides instruction in basic disease transmission, repairs and maintenance of basic plumbing, onsite septic and effluent systems and waste management, all of which prepares trainees in the range of

health-affecting community problems they can address.

We provide uniforms, training equipment and tools for use by graduates in remote communities.

Certificate 3 in Indigenous Environmental Health

Last year the Directorate assisted with establishing the Certificate 3 in Indigenous Environmental Health course at Halls Creek TAFE. The Shire of Halls Creek EHO Musa Mono taught the course to students employed in the Aboriginal environmental health program around the state.

The course required 4 blocks of training delivered in Halls Creek, with practical work undertaken in regional Aboriginal communities. Five students graduated from the course with a better level of understanding of environmental health practices and an appreciation of working in and with the local communities. Each graduate has taken their knowledge back for use in their own region and workplace.

Each student was employed in our Aboriginal EH program, which included a training component in their wage allowing them to participate in the course.



Photo: 2013 trainees who attend the certificate 2 training course together with Matthew Lester (Manager), and David Jarman, (Supporting Officer), from our Aboriginal Environmental Health team



Photo: Certificate 3 participants from left to right: Musa Mono (P/T TAFE Lecturer and Manager Regulatory Services with the Shire of Halls Creek); Cody Winter (Bega Gambirringu Health Service); Joseph Drayton (Bega Gambirringu Health Service), Jerry Penie (now City of Kalgoorlie Boulder); Craig Dempsey (Shire of Halls Creek); Semeya Woodhouse (Shire of Halls Creek); Timothy Bond (Kimberley Population Health in Kununurra)

Dairy industry workshops

We delivered a series of one day workshops in Perth, Harvey, Margaret River and Albany for dairy food businesses in WA. The workshops provided guidance to dairy food businesses on compliance with the *Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code*, specifically the requirement to implement a food safety program, and the regulatory food safety auditing system.

Verification of food safety program workshops

Following a request from local government, the Food Unit coordinated two one-day workshops for *Food Act 2008* authorised officers on the verification of food safety programs.

The workshops covered the regulatory food safety auditing framework and the role of the enforcement agency. Practical training was provided on how to assess food safety programs to determine compliance with the *Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code*, and how to assess regulatory food safety auditor reports. The workshop was later delivered in Broome to the North West Environmental Health group.

“The Food Unit delivered an interactive one day workshop that was very professional and well delivered by Marilyn Macfarlane, Terry Mazzucchelli and Mark Fallows. This was very well received by the members and I personally got a lot out of this session following the introduction of the new Food Act”.

Workshop attendee

ChemCentre open day

We were invited to present on ‘the Western Australian Food Monitoring Program’ at the ChemCentre open day for EHOs. The presentation provided a history of the program and what we wanted to achieve as part of our role in food surveillance, the Local Health Authorities Analytical Committee and our work with ChemCentre.

enHealth standards and guidelines roadshow

We assisted with organising a number of WA workshops promoted by enHealth to discuss recent enHealth publications. Over 55 environmental health practitioners attended the three separate workshops, including one workshop in the East Kimberley region. Attendees were provided with the opportunity to learn more about matters relating to Risk Assessment Guidelines, Asbestos, Arthropod pests and a resource manual for Environmental Health Practitioners (EHPs) working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

Emergency management training

A two-day course on Emergency Management for EHPs was provided to 15 attendees in the East Kimberley region. The course was well received and included participants from local emergency services, the local hospital and regional local government officers. Some travelled two days to attend the course. In view of the good attendance, more regional courses are planned for the forthcoming year.

Our staff



Natalia Shishkina, left, and Boshra Yazahmeidi, right, presenting at the Young Water Professionals seminar

Our staff

We view our staff as one of our most important assets.

Martin Matisons presented in the United States

Principal Toxicologist, Martin Matisons, was invited to present two papers at the Environmental Health Conference 2013 in Boston Massachusetts, United States, which included the use of rainwater tanks to measure lead dust pollution and synthetic pyrethroid paraesthesia.

Dr Matisons then headed to the Society of Toxicology 2013 meeting in San Antonio Texas where he participated in workshops on lead, arsenic in food, diesel and cancer and unconventional gas.

Dr Matisons said that “both conferences dealt with many issues I’m currently involved with and the information will be applied to scenarios we experience in WA”.



Photo: Dr Matisons (right) is pictured with Dr Roger McClellan (left), editor in chief for the journal Critical Reviews in Toxicology

Young professionals, Natalia Shishkina and Boshra Yazahmeidi

As part of their professional development, Natalia Shishkina and Boshra Yazahmeidi, presented an overview of their careers working in the Water Unit to 30 young water

professionals of the Australian Water Association (AWA).

The April, *My Water Career*, session was designed to provide a broad overview of what other young water professionals do in the consulting, utility, government and academic fields.

The networking opportunity allows staff to make connections that would be important for the future and to share knowledge and experience across the different disciplines.

First time published! Natalia Shishkina

A big congratulations goes to Natalia Shishkina who published her first journal article “[Water recycling in Western Australia: analysis of 2003–2009 water quality monitoring programme](#)” in partnership with Toni Hannelly and Dr Clemencia Rodriguez.

“It was a great opportunity to publish the article in an exciting special issue called Water Reuse in the 21st Century of the International Water Association Journal” Natalia said.

“The article reported on the analysis of data collected from schemes across WA and discussed challenges facing those involved in recycling schemes from planning to full operation”.

Ryan Janes is glowing!

We sponsored Ryan Janes’ Master of Infectious Diseases research project (at the University of Western Australia). Ryan has been investigating mosquito species abundance and composition in three Perth local governments.

“This has been an amazing learning curve and I’ve had some fun using fluorescent dyes to track mosquito dispersal distances and directions” Ryan said.

"I was pretty happy with the media attention this project has received - it even ended up in New Zealand newspapers!"

"Work has supported me to take time off to complete my project, which involved 8 days of intensive trapping and several weeks of laboratory testing and specimen identification. Over 50,000 mosquitoes were collected and identified in the project."

"I'm looking forward to completing my Masters after 4 long years of balancing work and study!"



Premium event attended by Colin Jacob and Paul Magill

Radiation Health Unit staff, Colin Jacob and Paul Magill, attended the Australasian Radiation Protection Society (ARPS) annual conference held in Sydney 14-17 October 2012. The conference is the premium event in radiation safety across the country covering a range of radiation uses. Topics ranged from the Fukushima aftermath to uranium mining and on to dose reduction in medical imaging and challenges to radiation regulators.

Colin advised "The conference provided a great opportunity to establish networks with persons from Australian regulatory bodies as well as professionals within the private sectors".

"I had a valuable and enjoyable experience and would look forward to attending again should the opportunity arise. Of note was the lack of knee high socks and brown cardigans, and not a pen protector in sight!"

Julie Blanchard explores nuclear medicine

In February Julie Blanchard from Radiation Health attended the PET/MRI symposium at the University of Sydney run by the Nuclear Medicine Physics Special Interest Group of the Australian and New Zealand Society of Nuclear Medicine. The symposium focussed on the emergence of PET/MRI hybrid systems.

"Whilst in Sydney I was fortunate enough to be given a personalised tour of the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation facility at Lucas Heights including the OPAL reactor, a state-of-the-art 20 Megawatt reactor that uses low enriched uranium fuel to achieve a range of nuclear medicine, research, scientific, industrial and production goals", Julie said.

Julie Phelps' studies help identify rural and remote travel issues

Julie Phelps from the Water Unit conducted 'A case study on the need for a Directorate protocol for rural and remote travel' as part of her Master of Public Health studies. This examined compliance with State legislation, staff familiarity with relevant safe work and travel policies, training and experience and problems which can occur when people work alone. Julie was very pleased with the outcome, as she was able to identify and report on travel issues which her colleagues thought were important.

"I appreciated the voluntary staff participation, as there was a great 90% survey response rate across the Directorate, and I was able to advise the Executive that 90% of these respondents thought that a protocol would be a useful safety tool", Julie explained.

We've been recognised for our efforts in supporting staff health and wellness.

Workplace health and wellness

This year it has all been about Boot Camp! Thanks to Mirella Goetzmann who helped to get the program started, we now have a personal trainer come to our office to run morning boot camp sessions. The staff funded program started off with two sessions a week, but due to their popularity five sessions are run each week.

Willow Warren said, "I've seen fantastic improvements in my fitness and weight loss and love the fact that I can exercise first thing in the morning, shower at work and start my day feeling fit and ready to go."

Management support staff participation in activities that contribute towards improved health and wellness.

Other activities include:

- Lunchtime pilates classes
- Riding office bikes to nearby work meetings and lunchtime rides
- Walking around Shenton Park Bushland.

We've even been recognised for our efforts in supporting staff health and wellness, making it on the front page of the HealthView magazine. Go team!





Government of Western Australia
Department of Health

healthview

Winter 2013

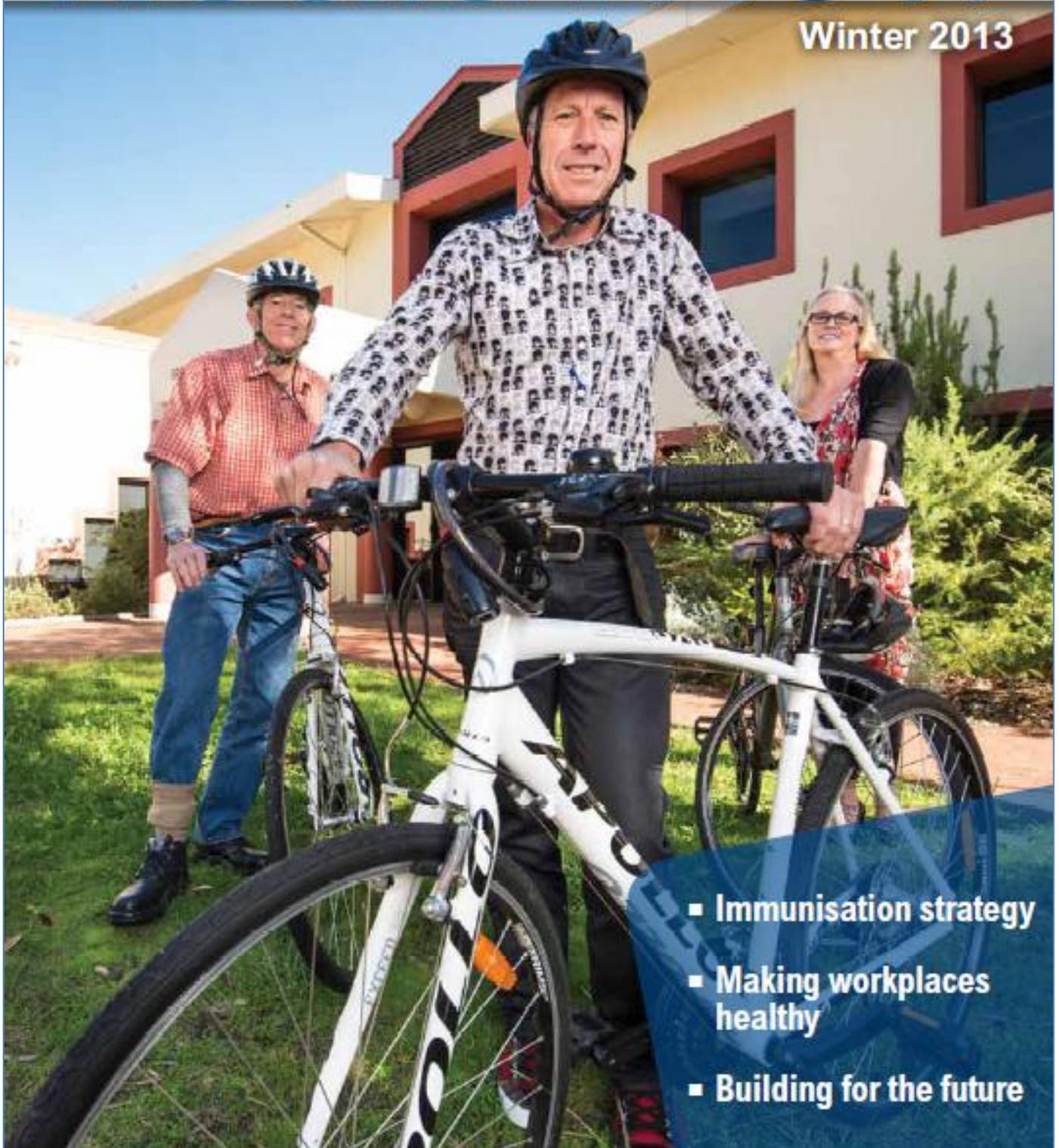


Photo: Jim Dodds (Director), John Howell (Senior Toxicologist) and Willow Warren (Scientific Officer) promoted the Directorate's healthy workplace initiatives on the winter edition of the Healthview magazine.

This year's priorities



Photo: A boat carrying asylum seekers from Sri Lanka into the Geraldton Port in April 2013 was required to undergo fumigation to prevent exotic pests and diseases entering WA

This year's priorities

We have a busy year ahead with a number of priorities requiring completion.

Business Unit

1. Develop and communicate a building maintenance and cleaning schedule that identifies a quarterly, annual and 5 year schedule of works (including estimated costs) required to maintain GVH and Brockway Road grounds and buildings. The plan should also identify potential areas for renovation.
2. Canvass the business administration support requirements needed with each Unit Manager. Develop individual service level agreements for all five Units clearly articulating the administration services that can and cannot be provided by the Business Unit.
3. Establish an ongoing process for distributing quarterly business administration reminders (e.g. email, newsletter, posters). The process will include mechanisms identifying the quarterly administrative messages that need to be communicated to staff (e.g. identify during regular team meetings).
4. Scope and report on options for improving the administrative burdens of the tobacco, pesticide, radiation, food and water licensing / registration databases which includes:
 - More user friendly databases
 - Ability to generate various reports
5. Review the Tobacco, Radiation, Food and Pesticide licensing fees and charges and apply identified increases before September 2013.
6. Develop a Business Case to support a permanent full time position to assist with tobacco and other licensing functions.
7. Embed the staff induction process into Business Unit systems, ensuring 100% of new staff receive the induction package and complete the induction checklist.
8. Establish a customer telephone complaint recording system and report quarterly to the Director to assist with identifying areas where improvements in telephone customer service can be achieved across the Directorate.
9. Improve the process for staff travel (interstate and overseas) reporting required under the Department Travel Policy to enable Business Unit staff to better manage the travel database on behalf of individual staff.
10. Submit the Information and Communications Technology request to Health Information Network to start the tender process for the electronic document management system project.

Environmental Health Hazards Unit

1. Develop and publish a Mosquito Management Plan template on the website for use by Local Government.
2. Develop the first stage of the 'Health atlas spatial database' and trial real-time mosquito management data collection via mobile tools through mosquito Contiguous Local Authority Groups (CLAGs).
3. Review and report on those aspects of the pesticide licensing and payments database which require modification or updating to enable:
 - 1) recording of online bpay / bpoint reference numbers;
 - 2) online data entry/application by a client; and
 - 3) other opportunities for improvement.
4. Develop and trial a business inspection form for pest management businesses.
5. Review and make recommendations for streamlining the processing of fumigation site assessments.
6. Organise logistics and programme for the Mosquito Control Association of Australia Conference to be held in WA in September 2014
7. Develop publish and distribute guidance on public health risk from asbestos associated with mining activities
8. Develop a guidance note on management, removal and disposal of asbestos cement material following a fire event (e.g. industrial fire, bushfire).
9. Develop and publish a health risk assessment guideline on fracking and potable water in WA (including submission to scientific journal for peer review).
10. Develop and publish a brochure on use of pesticides and pregnancies for inclusion on the website.
11. Produce a draft guideline for body art and personal appearances industries with identified stakeholders and circulate widely for industry and public comment.
12. Review the existing Code for Practice for Aquatic Facilities to incorporate amendments for the design, construction & operation of Water Spray Grounds.
13. Develop consult on and implement a four year (\$1 million per year) funding scheme to improve Local Government mosquito management programs in WA.
14. Undertake a literature review of existing policy and regulations related to indoor air quality (e.g. kitchen, bathrooms, furnishings, timbers, carpets, gas appliances, mould) and report recommendations to the Air Quality Coordinating Committee on options for management in WA.

15. Convene and coordinate a WA Asbestos Regulators Inter-Agency Group including development of linkages to the National Office of Asbestos Safety (in collaboration with Science and Policy Unit).
16. Consult on, develop and publish a National position statement on clandestine drug laboratories and public health risks on behalf of enHealth.
17. Plan and convene a spatial data workshop for WA Health and local governments on the use of spatial information to monitor and manage environmental health hazards.
18. Produce reports on management recommendations for mosquitoes and mosquito-borne disease risks following wet season and cyclonic rainfall for the Local Governments of Broome, Kalgoorlie-Boulder and Port Hedland.
19. Prepare and hold a week-long mosquito management training course for LG, Environmental Consultants and State Govt agency personnel.

Food Unit

1. Review and update the Western Australian Shellfish Quality Assurance Program in partnership with industry to better define management of shellfish harvesting.
2. Refine and streamline assessment, auditing, compliance and reporting processes for the administration of the Primary Production and Processing Standards of the *Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code* across food industries including dairy, meat, poultry, and bivalve molluscs. Adopt a State based approach for the consistent implementation of the Standard, consistent with national objectives.
3. Review, update and implement the Food Unit Communication Strategy to provide support to enforcement agencies for implementation of food legislation.
4. Communicate to local government enforcement agencies the national food recall process, outlining the roles and responsibilities of the various agencies/parties involved in a food recall.

Radiation Health

1. Re-establish and improve the Radiation Environmental Analysis Service by upgrading and testing new hardware.
2. Re-establish the calibration service in the relocated radiation laboratory.
3. Improve the Radiation Health Unit emergency response service by formalising incident specific guidelines for staff who take part in the emergency on-call service.
4. Revise the Industrial Radiography requirement for 200 kVp calibration by investigating calibration methods and collecting and evaluating collected X-ray spectra against ISO spectra.

Science and Policy Unit

1. Review, update and prioritise the existing Directorate communication strategy. Commence implementation of at least three of the top remaining priority projects.
2. Conduct the fourth “Environmental Health Needs Survey for Remote Aboriginal Communities” in a minimum of 200 communities by the end of the financial year.
3. Develop and trial a home hygiene resource kit in two remote communities that promotes healthy living practices by Aboriginal people.
4. Implement CEHAPS (Community Environmental Health action plans) into 50% of Communities that receive a grant to provide EH service.
5. Conduct Local Government emergency management professional development programs, to include at least two courses in the Perth Metropolitan area and the South West of WA.
6. Develop a process for
 - Identifying skill sets of internal Directorate officers to ensure appropriate deployment of volunteers to disaster areas
 - Formalising requests received by local government for assistance with major events.
7. Review and update the Environmental Health legislation review program associated with the Public Health Bill and report on the scope of works required to:
 - draft future statutory policies or
 - update existing regulations.
8. Improve, through education and training, the level of awareness of local government’s role in the enforcement of tobacco legislation in the Perth metropolitan area on targeted stores to determine their likelihood of selling tobacco products to minors and enforcing the law if they do.
9. Coordinate a tobacco compliance survey for a minimum of 500 stores in the Perth metropolitan area to monitor the current level of compliance with the tobacco Regulations and report on the survey findings.
10. Conduct control purchase operations in Perth metropolitan area stores selling tobacco to determine their likelihood of selling tobacco products to minors and enforcing the law if they do.
11. Implement a minimum of three high priority tasks of the Development Assessment Panel review.
12. Conduct a business process review of the Water Unit to identify regulatory and/or internal administrative processes causing unnecessary administrative burdens and recommended strategies for improvements.
13. Identify at least three EH research projects across the directorate that uses data either routinely collected or if collected will be beneficial to the Directorate. Determine if any of

these provide opportunities for collaboration with research institutes. Scope the feasibility for each project and prepare a research proposal to be submitted for approval.

14. Identify existing hard copy application, registration, notification and licensing forms used across the Directorate that can be created into electronic online form and report on the:
 - Costs
 - Best option (eg use existing website or new website for converting into online forms).

Water Unit

1. Consult with identified stakeholders on the second draft of the Government Sewage Policy over a 3 month period and report on the consultation findings.
2. Review and report recommendations on feasible options for reducing the number of days required to process a septic tank application and to minimise the complexity of submitting an application by a proponent.
3. Review and report on feasible options for minimising the number of days required to process aquatic facility applications and minimise the complexity of submitting the application by a proponent.
4. Identify the number of existing recycling wastewater schemes in WA and establish a process for auditing these schemes in subsequent years to ensure updated conditions for the management of the schemes to be issued in accordance with the “2011 Guidelines for the Non-potable Uses of Recycled water in WA”.
5. Report on options to undertake environmental sampling required as part of the DOH metropolitan environmental waters monitoring program (river and ocean).
6. Develop a communication strategy, in partnership with the Communications Directorate, on the fluoridation of drinking water. The strategy will include reviewing and improving the fluoridation of drinking water information available on the website to ensure information is available for the public by the end of the financial year.

Our financial status



**Photo: Mussel growing lines located between Rockingham and Garden Island
in Cockburn Sound assessed by Food Unit officers.**

Our financial status

The Directorate’s annual budget for 2012-13 was \$18 million out of which \$9.5 million was for employments costs and the remaining \$8.5 million for other goods and services. The total actual expenditure for 2011-12 was \$18.3 million which was around 2.3% variance against budget allocation.

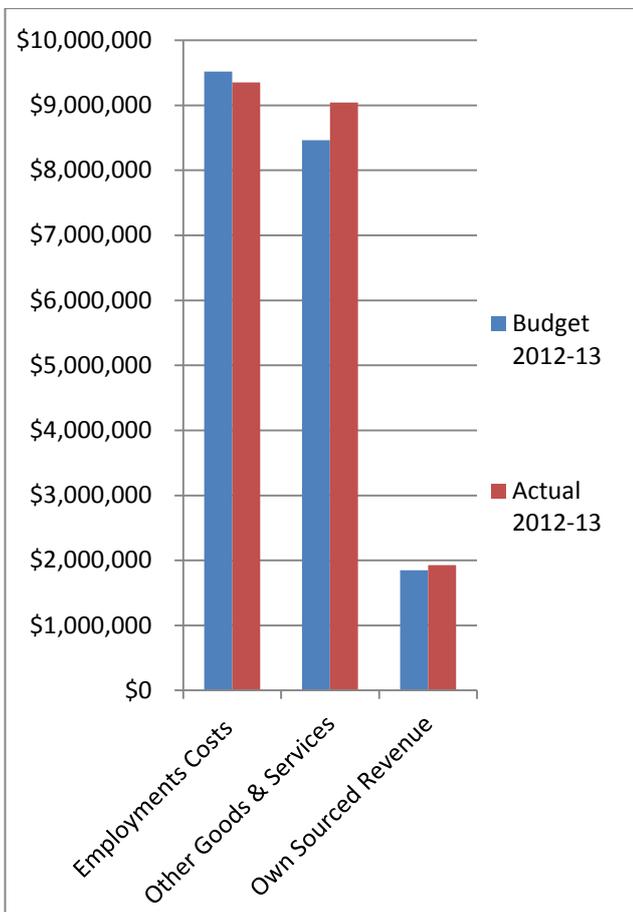
Expenditure breakdown

Salaries, wages and staffing costs accounted for more than half (53%) of the Directorate’s total expenditure.

Remaining expenditure (47%) covered various other costs and programs including Environmental Health Services in Aboriginal communities, environmental surveillance and mosquito management.

The other goods and services costs also included operational expenses and Grace Vaughan House building maintenance expenditure.

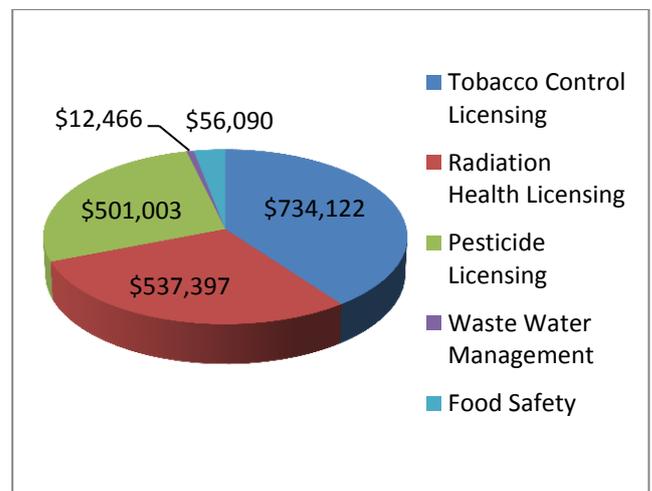
Directorate’s expenditure breakdown



Own sourced revenue breakdown

In 2012-13, the Directorate’s different licensing units collected \$1.84 million in revenue. Tobacco licensing was the highest contributor (40%) followed by radiation licensing (29%) and pesticide licensing (27%). Revenue generated by tobacco licensing was used for the review of Tobacco Act and for the conduct of a tobacco retailer compliance survey in metropolitan Western Australia. It also paid for the Tobacco Quit Line program expense.

Directorate’s own sourced revenue

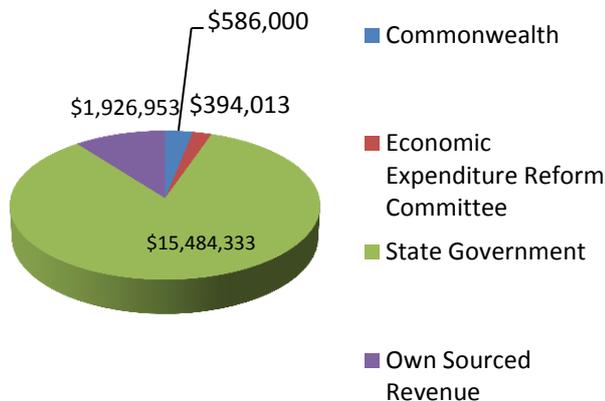


TOTAL: \$1 841 078

Where our funding came from

In 2012-13, funding for the operations of the Directorate came from different sources. The WA State Government funded around \$15.4 million and the Commonwealth Government contributed \$586,000. Funding from the Own Sourced Revenue was \$1.93 million.

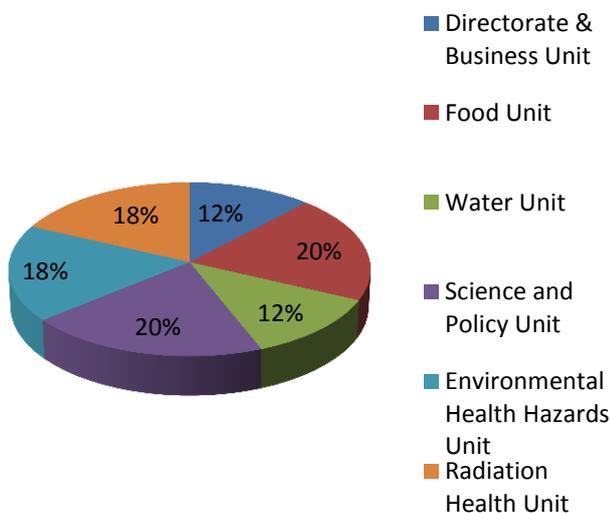
Sources of funding



Workforce distribution

In 2012-13, the Directorate had 97 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staff members.

Full Time Equivalents (%)



Financial overview

In 2012-13 the Directorate:

- Provided \$5.8 million to various organisations for the provision of Environmental Health Services in Aboriginal communities.
- Spent \$541,075 on environmental surveillance programs in WA.

- Spent \$641,285 on mosquito management programs and on funding assistance to local governments for local mosquito control programs under the Contiguous Local Authorities Group funding program.
- Spent \$222,594 to implement food surveys to estimate the levels of pesticide residues in fruit and vegetables produced and sold on the domestic market.
- Provided \$200,000 to Curtin University for establishment, management and evaluation of a state wide tobacco control grants scheme to support tobacco compliance activities.
- Provided \$48,000 to Spatial Information Systems Research Ltd to develop a monitoring and spatial mapping package for environmental health surveillance data.
- Received \$80,000 from Port Hedland Industries Council for an air quality Health Risk Assessment for Port Hedland. The assessment work was carried out during the financial year.
- Spent \$1,450 to buy two new conference phones to reduce travel related expenses and to encourage staff to have teleconferences when possible.
- Provided \$36,000 to the Cancer Council to develop asbestos e-learning package.
- Provided \$89,896 to Telethon Institute for Child Health Research for a research program – Environmental burden of childhood disease in Western Australia.
- Contributed \$35,698 to the Food Standard Australia New Zealand.
- Paid \$38,447 for the Front-of-Pack Labelling scheme development project.
- Contributed \$18,119 to the operation of the National Food Regulatory implementation system.

Glossary

| | |
|-------------|--|
| CDCD | Communicable Disease Control Directorate |
| Directorate | Environmental Health Directorate |
| DER | Department of Environment Regulation (previously Department of Environment and Conservation) |
| DOH | Department of Health |
| EHD | Environmental Health Directorate |
| EHP | Environmental Health Practitioners |
| EHO | Environmental Health Officer |
| LG | Local Government |
| PHCSD | Public Health and Clinical Services Division |

Acknowledgments

The completion of this yearbook would not happen without the dedication of our staff.

A big thank you goes to those staff who took the time to contribute information to include within the yearbook.

In particular, we would like to thank the yearbook team for helping to coordinate the collation of information across the Directorate. Members include:

- Bree Abbott, Science and Policy Unit
- Willow Warren, Environmental Health Hazards Unit
- Sally Newbury, Environmental Health Hazards Unit
- Rebecca Delsar, Food Unit
- Julie Phelps, Water Unit
- Manoj Agarwal, Business Unit
- Marta Berzins, Radiation Health Unit
- Lindsay Gillam, Science and Policy Unit



Photo: Environmental Health and Communicable Disease Control staff who participated in Loud Shirt Day raising money for deaf children

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