

# OUR DEPARTMENT

## OVERVIEW

The Department of Environment, Parks and Water Security (DEPWS) was established by the Northern Territory Government on 8 September 2020, combining the functions of the previous Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Parks and Wildlife Commission of the Northern Territory from the former Department of Tourism, Sport and Culture.

The department provides advice and regulation to support the sustainable use of the Territory's natural resources. The department is responsible for the management, development, protection and preservation of the Territory's wildlife and parks and reserves as well as coordinating water security outcomes.

The department operates from offices throughout the Territory delivering natural resource management services and advice to landholders across the 1,350,000 km<sup>2</sup> of the Northern Territory.

The department also manages the Northern Territory's parks and reserves estate comprising 85 national parks and reserves throughout the Territory, offering visitors a range of natural and cultural experiences.

# STRATEGIC PLAN 2021-24

## OUR VISION

The Northern Territory's natural assets are managed sustainably for the benefit of all.

## OUR GOALS

### 01 SUPPORTING SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### 03 PROTECTING AND MANAGING OUR NATURAL ASSETS

## WHAT WE ARE DOING

- 1.1 Undertake strategic, integrated assessments of the Territory's natural assets to inform sustainable development and conservation management.
- 1.2 Support the development and growth of Aboriginal businesses and Aboriginal economic participation.
- 1.3 Implement regulatory efficiencies to support our customer service focus.
- 1.4 Ensure we have the right regulatory and policy framework to support effective decision making.

- 2.1 Grow the profile of the Territory and its work by promoting objectives and outcomes through digital and stakeholder engagement.
- 2.2 Collaborate and engage stakeholders to design effective regulatory systems.
- 2.3 Develop and maintain partnerships with land managers and agencies to leverage knowledge to better manage the Territory's resources.
- 2.4 Work with key industry stakeholders to build resilience through mutual understanding.
- 2.5 Build an informed and engaged community.

## VALUES

Commitment to Service || Ethical Practice || Respect

# OUR PURPOSE

Provide evidence-based advice and regulation to support sustainable use of the Northern Territory's natural resources, and protect and present our wildlife, parks and reserves.

ECONOMIC

## 02 FOSTERING AND STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS

OUR

## 04 INVESTING IN OUR PEOPLE AND SYSTEMS

The department is committed to achieving our strategic objectives through effective partnership and engagement.

Engage with key stakeholders to plan and deliver effective systems.

Build partnerships and research to enhance knowledge and understanding of the Territory's natural resources.

Strengthen partnerships and understanding.

Build resilient

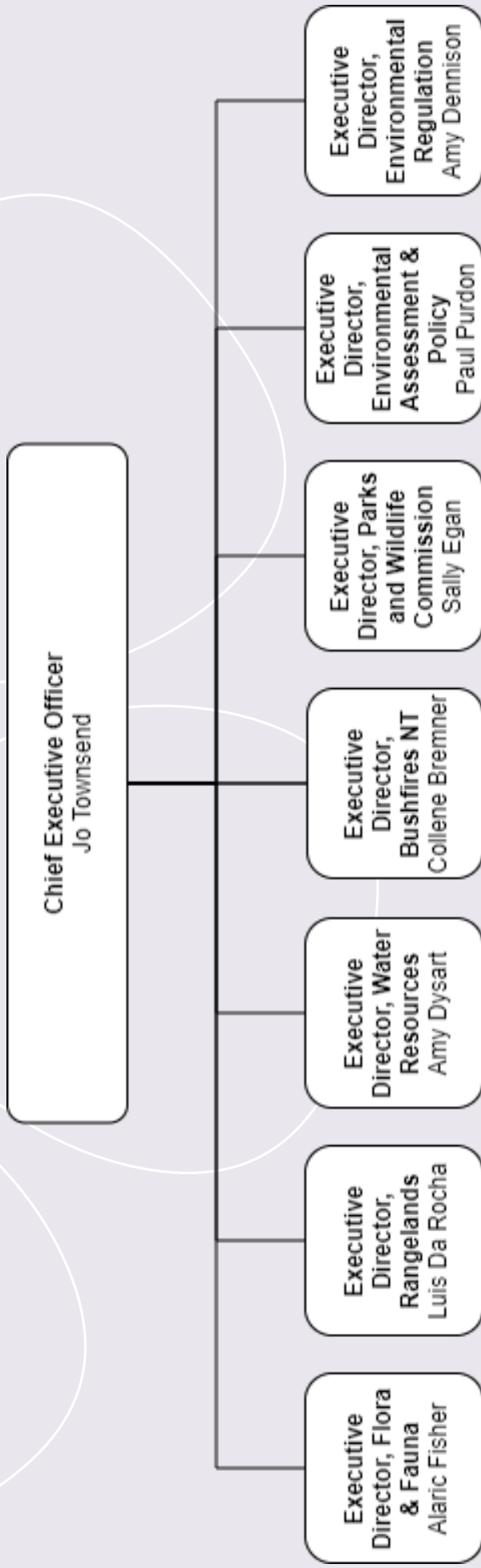
- 3.1 Implement robust systems to monitor the health of the Territory's natural resources, including biodiversity values, to inform effective management.
- 3.2 Develop and implement policies and management programs to facilitate sustainable use of wildlife and mitigate threats to our natural assets and the community.
- 3.3 Preserve and conserve our parks, reserves, wildlife and cultural assets for future generations.
- 3.4 Improve access to our parks and reserves and cultural assets to enhance visitor experience and Territory lifestyle and wellbeing.
- 3.5 Ensure the effective and efficient administration of our legislation, including transparent, consistent and proportionate regulation.
- 3.6 Security of our water resources for future generations.

- 4.1 Inspire and support a workplace culture that is diverse, collaborative, respectful and accountable.
- 4.2 Build and enhance strategic leadership across the department.
- 4.3 Maintain and increase capability through succession planning and development programs.
- 4.4 Deliver a healthy and safe environment through reducing risk and supporting continual improvement.
- 4.5 Implement improved business systems, access to information and streamline key processes.
- 4.6 Maintain and enhance data and information management systems that maximise accessibility and value for stakeholders.

Integrity || Accountability || Impartiality || Diversity



# OUR STRUCTURE



## CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



### Jo Townsend

Jo has held the position of Chief Executive Officer of the Department of Environment, Parks and Water Security since it was formed in September 2020.

She was previously the Chief Executive Officer of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources where she led the agency through an extensive legislative reform program and positioned the organisation to deliver new accountabilities for the regulation for water resources, onshore gas and environmental impact assessment, as well as new approaches to bushfire management, established the Office of Climate Change and supported an expanded assessment of water, land and biodiversity resources across the Territory.

Jo also holds the statutory appointment of the Controller of Water Resources under the *Water Act 1992* where she is responsible for management, allocation and enforcement responsibilities under the Act.

Jo has an extensive and diverse career in the Northern Territory Public Sector spanning more than 25 years and has held executive leadership roles in social policy, public health, child protection, water resources.

Jo has a Bachelor of Arts degree and a Graduate Diploma in Applied Psychology.

## GOVERNANCE BOARD



L-R: Luis Da Rocha, Executive Director, Rangelands; Amy Dysart, Executive Director, Water Resources; Sally Egan, Executive Director, Parks and Wildlife; Stephanie Jungfer, Executive Officer; Amy Dennison, Executive Director Environmental Regulation; Cynthia Loganathan, Chief Financial Officer; Jo Townsend, Chief Executive Officer; Dr Alaric Fisher, Executive Director, Flora and Fauna; Paul Purdon, Executive Director, Environmental Assessment and Policy; Collene Bremner, Executive Director, Bushfires NT.  
Not pictured: John Gaynor, Regional Director South.



# LEGISLATION ADMINISTERED

The department is responsible for administering 44 pieces of legislation, including 23 Acts and 21 pieces of subordinate legislation. This legislation provides an overriding direction for many department functions and is the foundation of a number of output groups. A review process ensures the legislation remains contemporary and relevant to community expectations and incorporates best practice in the areas it governs.

- **Bushfires Management Act 2016**
  - Bushfires Management (General) Regulations 2017
  - Bushfires Management (Volunteer Bushfire Brigades) Regulations 2006
- **Cobourg Peninsula Aboriginal Land, Sanctuary and Marine Park Act 1981**
  - Cobourg Peninsula Aboriginal Land and Sanctuary (Entry and Camping) By-laws 1986
  - Cobourg Peninsula Aboriginal Land, Sanctuary and Marine Park (Rehabilitation Areas) By-laws 2002
- **Environment Protection Act 2019**
- **Environment Protection (Beverage Containers and Plastic Bags) Act 2011**
  - Environment Protection (Beverage Containers and Plastic Bags) Regulations 2011
- **Environmental Offences and Penalties Act 1996**
  - Environmental Offences and Penalties Regulations 2011
- **Lake Eyre Basin Intergovernmental Agreement Act 2009**
- **Litter Act 1972**
- **Marine Pollution Act 1999**
  - Marine Pollution Regulations 2003
- **National Environment Protection Council (Northern Territory) Act 1994**
- **Nitmiluk (Katherine Gorge) National Park Act 1989**
- **Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority Act 2012**
- **Nuclear Waste Transport, Storage and Disposal (Prohibition) Act 2004**
  - Nuclear Waste Transport, Storage and Disposal (Prohibition) Regulations 2019
- **Parks and Reserves (Framework for the Future) Act 2003**
  - Parks and Reserves (Framework for the Future) Regulations 2005
- **Parks and Wildlife Commission Act 1980**
- **Pastoral Land Act 1992** (except provisions about Aboriginal community living areas)
  - Pastoral Land Regulations 1992
- **Petroleum Act 1984**
  - Part V, Division 2 and provisions relating to environmental regulation of exploration for and production of petroleum
    - Petroleum (Environment) Regulations 2016
- **Planning Act 1999**
  - Land clearing approvals on unzoned land (under delegation from the Minister for Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics)
- **Soil Conservation and Land Utilisation Act 1969**
- **Territory Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act 1976**
  - Territory Parks and Wildlife Conservation By-laws 1984
  - Territory Parks and Wildlife Conservation Regulations 2001
  - Thoral Local Management Committee Regulations 1993
  - Barranyi (North Island) Local Management Committee Regulations 1992
  - Djukbinj National Park Local Management Committee (Djukbinj Board) Regulations 1997
  - Keep River National Park Local Management Committee Regulations 1992
- **Waste Management and Pollution Control Act 1998**
  - Waste Management and Pollution Control (Administration) Regulations 1998
  - Environment Protection (National Pollutant Inventory) Objective 2004
- **Water Act 1992**
  - Water Regulations 1992
- **Water Efficiency Labelling Standards (National Uniform Legislation) Act 2014**
- **Weeds Management Act 2001**
  - Weeds Management Regulations 2006