



Government of **Western Australia**
Conservation and Parks Commission

Conservation and Parks Commission
Annual Report 2020–21

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Transmittal to the Minister

Hon Reece Whitby MLA
Minister for Environment

I am pleased to submit the Annual Report of the Conservation and Parks Commission for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021 in accordance with section 31 of the *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984*.



Chair
Conservation and Parks Commission

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Overview

Chair's report

The year in review saw the Conservation and Parks Commission continuing to support the Government's Plan for Our Parks initiative by means of its engagement in planning processes and the endorsement of seven park proposals. Legislation now requires the establishment of joint management arrangements with the Traditional Owners of lands and waters that are proposed for inclusion in the conservation estate. Implemented by means of Indigenous Land use Agreements, joint management arrangements are still in their relative infancy. They provide a strong, tangible mechanism for acknowledgment of Traditional Owners' obligations and wishes to care for country.

In addition, the Commission reviewed and commented upon proposals to upgrade and expand visitor facilities in parks and reserves during the reporting period. As mentioned in last year's Annual Report, visitation rates in the conservation estate soared due to domestic and international travel restrictions that were imposed to manage the COVID-19 pandemic. The facilities enhancement program assisted with the effective management of visitors, whose numbers continued to increase over the past 12 months. Specific enhancements such as the Collie and Dwellingup Adventure Trails also responded to the community's desire for immersion in nature through extended camping stays rather than day visits.

The Commission's work also involves consideration of proposed mining, tourism, and infrastructure development activities within the conservation estate. While decision-making or recommendatory responsibility for many of these proposals is delegated to the Commission's Director or the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA), the Commission considered first-hand significant or novel proposals. In doing so, it remained cognisant of its need to deal with matters consistently with regard to the bigger picture of the accumulative impact of individual proposals on the wider estate.

The Commission would like to acknowledge the distinguished service of its outgoing member, Professor Ross Dowling AM. After more than 10 years as a member, Ross departed the Commission on 6 May 2021 at the end of his term of appointment. Ross's professional domain as a Professor of Tourism Studies intersected with his personal passion for conservation of the natural environment. He considered Western Australia's conservation estate to be one of the state's greatest assets and looked for ways to encourage people to visit and enjoy it. Extensively connected to conservation and nature tourism organisations within Australia and abroad, Ross was abreast of emerging trends and best practice, knowledge which he readily shared with colleagues on the Commission.

The Commission welcomed Dr John Keesing to its membership in May 2021. A distinguished marine biologist currently working with the CSIRO, John brings to the Commission extensive knowledge and insight into the management of the marine environment within national and international policy frameworks. The Commission looks forward to John's contributions as he proceeds further into his term of appointment.

Finally, the Commission would like to acknowledge the dedication and hard work of its Director, Ms Kathleen Lowry. Kathleen continues to contribute her extensive knowledge and experience gained from her work as policy and program manager in DBCA.

Professor Chris Doepel PSM

Chair

Conservation and Parks Commission

Purpose

The Western Australian Conservation and Parks Commission has an important role to conserve the State's biological diversity and ensure the conservation estate is managed in an ecologically sustainable manner.

The Commission's purpose is to act as a trusted community steward and government advisor for the protection of Western Australia's biodiversity and conservation estate while fostering its appreciation and sustainable use.

Functions

The Commission is a body corporate under the *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984* (CALM Act) comprising seven members appointed by the Governor through nomination by the State Minister for Environment. As part of its functions, the Commission has vested in it the following lands:

- (i) State forest, timber reserves and marine reserves;
- (ii) unless section 8B(2)(f) of the CALM Act applies, national parks, conservation parks and nature reserves, either solely or jointly with an Aboriginal body corporate; and
- (iii) relevant land referred to in CALM Act section 5(1)(g).

The Commission also has the care, control and management of relevant land referred to in section 5(1)(h) placed with it, either solely or jointly with another person or body.

Section 19 of the CALM Act relates to the functions of the Commission which includes:

- advising the Minister on the development of policies;
- preparing and dealing with proposed management plans for land and waters vested in or under the care, control, and management of the Commission; whether solely or jointly with an associated body; and
- conducting periodic assessments of the implementation of management plans by those responsible for implementing them, including DBCA and, if the land is State forest or a timber reserve, the Forest Products Commission (FPC).

Commission membership

Subject to sections 21(4) and 22 of the CALM Act, members are to be persons who, in the opinion of the Minister, have knowledge and experience or a particular function or vocational interest that is relevant to the functions of the Commission.

Professor Chris Doepel PSM – Chair (from 7 May 2019, former Deputy Chair)



Chris Doepel is a part-time Professor at the University of Notre Dame Australia in Fremantle, where he chairs the University's Program and Course Accreditation Committee and undertakes policy work within the Division of Academic Affairs. Until March 2016, he was the Dean of Business and Chair of College Committees for Arts and Sciences, Business and Law at the University. Prior to undertaking this last role, he was Dean of the Faculty of Law and Business at Murdoch University in Perth. Before joining Murdoch University in 2008, Chris was the Registrar and Chief Executive Officer of the National Native Title Tribunal. He has extensive experience as a senior manager in public administration and in the formulation of policy advice to governments. Chris holds a Bachelor of Jurisprudence, a Bachelor of Laws, and a Master of Arts. He is a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Management. In 2006, Chris was awarded a Public Service Medal (PSM) in the Australia Day Honours for his native title work.

Mrs Jo-anne Lanagan – Deputy Chair (from 7 May 2019)



Jo Lanagan is the Chief Executive Officer at Central Desert Native Title Services, where she has worked in various roles for the past eight years. Jo has held senior roles in the State and Commonwealth Governments including Director of Heritage and Culture at the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Director of Claims Management for the Office of Native Title. She has led negotiations on behalf of both the State and Commonwealth Governments in the Australian Square Kilometre Array Project, leading to the CSIRO build of the largest radio astronomy observatory in the world and Australia hosting international radio astronomy projects. Jo was one of two negotiators on behalf of the State Government to reach a comprehensive native title settlement with the Yawuru people over Broome, resulting in the creation of conservation estate and the creation of a marine park. Through her native title work Jo has had the good fortune to visit much of the more remote conservation estate in Western Australia.

Professor Ross Dowling AM – Member until 6 May 2021



Ross Dowling is an Honorary Professor of Tourism in the School of Business at Edith Cowan University. Ross is an environmental scientist conducting international research, training, and development of tourism in natural areas. His principal teaching, research and consultancy interests lie in ecotourism, geotourism and cruise ship tourism. He co-founded Ecotourism Australia and is a former Chair of the Forum Advocating Cultural and Eco Tourism (FACET) in Western Australia. Ross is a geotourism advisor for UNESCO Global Geoparks and a founder of the Global Geotourism Conferences. Prior to moving to Australia, Ross worked in New Zealand where he was Foundation Advisory Officer with the Ministry for the Environment and was awarded a Nature Conservation Council Foundation Citation for his efforts in conservation education. In 2011, Ross received the Medal of the Order of Australia for his contribution to ecotourism and in 2019

he was made a Member of the Order of Australia for his significant service to higher education, tourism, and conservation. Ross is also a WA Parks Foundation Ambassador and brings to the Commission knowledge and experience in relation to conservation and tourism development.

Mr Alan Walker – Member (from 7 May 2018)



Alan Walker worked for more than 45 years in the management of parks, reserves, and State forests in Western Australia. Since retirement from the public sector, he has also worked in the private sector in the field of bushfire management. For 10 years he was the Director of Regional Services in the former Department of Environment and Conservation. He was the leader of the State's involvement in the development of the first Regional Forest Agreement that prescribed outcomes in forest and biodiversity conservation, timber production and the protection of cultural and heritage values. He was the co-author of several forest and national park management plans. Alan was awarded an Honours Degree in Science (Forestry) from the Australian National University. He is a volunteer guide and committee member with the Rottneest Voluntary Guides Association. He was a former President in Rotary and the leader of a Rotary Group Study Exchange team to South Wales. He is a keen bushwalker, and he has an interest in nature-based tourism.

Mrs Tania (Tahn) Donovan – Member (from 7 May 2019)



Tania (Tahn) Donovan is a Wadandi Yok woman from Busselton and has experience in Aboriginal affairs in relation to employment, tourism, business development, policy, and capacity building across State Government. Tahn is currently working as a Project and Membership Officer with National Native Title Council. She has a wide range of skills and experiences in the environmental, tourism and hospitality, disability employment, farming and transport industries.

Ms Penny Bond – Member (from 7 May 2019)



Penny Bond graduated with a Bachelor of Laws (with Distinction) and Bachelor of Arts from Murdoch University and has both public and private sector experience. She previously worked as a Senior Policy Adviser in State Government, with responsibility for ensuring the implementation of cross-portfolio policies and progressing Bills through Cabinet and the State Parliament. Penny represented the Minister as a Panel Member on the Ministerial Advisory Panel for Occupational Health and Safety Reform, which saw her work collaboratively with stakeholders on important law reform. Penny is a lawyer at MinterEllison and is undertaking a Master of Laws at The University of Western Australia, where she was recently recognised as the highest achieving postgraduate student in Climate Change and Emissions Trading Law. Penny enjoys hiking and camping and is passionate about the appreciation of Western Australia's conservation estate.

Ms Kim Eckert OAM – Member (from 7 May 2020)



Kim resides in Kalgoorlie-Boulder and is the CEO of Kalgoorlie-Boulder Urban Landcare Group (KBULG), a not-for-profit community organisation in the Goldfields. Kim uses her broad range of skills and experience in conservation and the environment, not-for-profit, community group, disability, tourism, and volunteering sectors to assist community groups in Kalgoorlie-Boulder and sits on many community committees. Appointed as a WA Parks Foundation Ambassador in 2017, Kim is passionate about our state's conservation areas; educating the community about the local flora (including facilitating Traditional Owners to educate the community about traditional bush food and bush medicine); connecting people to parks and nature; and promoting travel in WA to visit our most precious and natural areas. Kim holds a qualification in conservation and land management and is a graduate member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. In 2019, Kim was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for her significant contributions to the Kalgoorlie-Boulder community and has recently been appointed to the Pastoral Lands Board as the Conservation Interest Member.

Dr John Keesing – Member (from 7 May 2021)



Dr John Keesing is a Senior Principal Research Scientist with the CSIRO and is Australia's representative on the UNESCO Intergovernmental Panel on Harmful Algal Blooms. As a marine biologist he has carried out research in Australia, New Zealand, China, India, and Japan publishing more than 100 scientific articles. John has led ship-based research voyages surveying the biodiversity in many of the marine parks off the WA coast and in his spare time enjoys camping and exploring in our national parks. John holds a Bachelor of Applied Science, a PhD in Zoology and a Graduate Diploma in Applied Finance and Investment. He was previously a Visiting Senior Professor with the Chinese Academy of Sciences and is a past President of the Australian Marine Sciences Association.

Executive support

The Secretariat of the Commission had the following staff base at 30 June 2021:

Director Ms Kathleen Lowry MBA, BEd.

Operational systems support was provided to the Commission by DBCA under the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between DBCA and the Commission for service delivery effective as of October 2020.

Priorities – building an environmental legacy

Government environmental priorities have seen the development of key initiatives in the areas of legislative reform such as the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*, (BC Act), and key election commitments and government priorities including:

- expanding the Aboriginal Ranger program;
- increasing the conservation estate by 5 million hectares under the Plan for Our Parks initiative by February 2024;
- recognition of Aboriginal connection to country and opportunities for joint management and joint vesting of conservation reserves;
- increasing opportunities for sustainable visitation and appreciation of the natural environment; and
- the protection of the State's biodiversity.

Plan for Our Parks

In early 2019, the McGowan Government announced a plan to create five million hectares of new national and marine parks and conservation reserves across Western Australia. The five-million-hectare expansion will see the conservation estate increased by over 20 per cent.

Plan for Our Parks will create more opportunities for nature-based and cultural tourism, provide enhanced biodiversity conservation and build on Aboriginal joint management throughout Western Australia.

The Commission's role in the development of Plan for Our Parks has included considering reserve proposals and responding to Departmental briefings on work in progress and providing its subsequent advice to the Minister for Environment. Now that the Plan for Our Parks reserve proposals have been refined, the State Government commenced negotiation of Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUAs) and concurrent management planning processes for each park.

The Commission has recommended the creation of seven parks and reserves within the 2020/2021 reporting period, encompassing 313,746 hectares. This includes the creation of the Nyinggulu (Ningaloo) coastal reserves, the Badimia conservation reserves in the Midwest, stage one of the Helena and Aurora Ranges National Park, and expansion of Wellington National Park.

The Commission endorsed and was signatory to the following ILUA's:

- Mayala ILUA, Bardi Jawi ILUA and Dambeemangarddee ILUA for the preparation of the three indicative joint management plans for the Buccaneer Archipelago marine parks.
- Gooniyandi Aboriginal Corporation ILUA for the Fitzroy River National Park.

Joint management

The Commission received updates on the CALM Act amendments in 2011 to enable joint management arrangements and Aboriginal customary activities.

During this reporting period, the Commission endorsed five joint management plans including the:

- Guniyan Binba Conservation Park Joint Management Plan;
- Nynggulu (Ningaloo) Coastal Reserves Joint Management Plan 2020;
- Mayala Marine Park Indicative Joint Management Plan 2020;
- Bardi Jawi Marine Park Indicative Joint Management Plan 2020; and
- Proposed Maiyalam Marine Park Indicative Joint Management Plan 2020.

The Commission will continue to be updated by DBCA's learnings to strengthen existing partnerships and expand the joint management program, including through the Plan for Our Parks initiative.

Management Planning

The Commission's main objectives in relation to estate planning are to provide quality and timely advice to the Minister for Environment and ensure the preparation and implementation of effective management plans for lands and waters vested either solely or jointly in the Commission.

The Commission's Management Plan Review Committee was re-established to ensure early engagement with the Commission with the aim of ensuring a consistent planning approach, more uniform presentation of plans and effective use of key performance indicators.

During the 2020-21 financial year, three CALM Act management plans were endorsed by the Commission including the:

- Wheatbelt Region Parks and Reserves Management Plan 2020; and
- Kalgulup Regional Park Management Plan 2021.

The Commission also endorsed the release of three CALM Act management plans for public comment:

- Kalgulup Regional Park Draft Management Plan;
- Pilbara inshore islands Nature Reserves and Proposed Additions Draft Management Plan; and
- Houtman Abrolhos Islands National Park Draft Management Plan 2021.

The Commission endorsed the Lalang-garram Marine Park Visitor Plan released in February 2021 which was awarded the Landscape Architecture Award for Land Management and subsequently the National award from the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects WA.

Market-led Proposals

Market-led Proposals (MLP) provide an innovative opportunity for government to work with the private sector to create jobs and stimulate Western Australia's economy.

The MLP Policy is designed to enable business to provide a proposal to government providing a single channel and a clear, consistent, and transparent process.

Nature-based Tourism

A Problem and Opportunity Statement (POS) for 'Opportunities in Nature-based Tourism in Western Australia's National, Marine and Conservation Parks' was released by the Minister for Environment on 17 August 2020 as part of the State Government's support to COVID-19 recovery.

DBCA consulted the Commission regarding the proposals which will require Commission endorsement for any resultant CALM Act lease or licencing requirements.

Carbon for Conservation

The Carbon for Conservation POS initiative was released in August 2020 under the State Government's Market-led Proposals policy. The initiative seeks to develop partnership opportunities to support innovative ways to optimise the carbon storage potential of the conservation reserve system, whilst enhancing outcomes for biodiversity conservation and Aboriginal people.

As the lead agency for the initiative, DBCA has been facilitating a series of feasibility assessments being undertaken by proponents across the state in Stage 2 of the process. An inter-agency panel has been assembled and is currently working through a process to evaluate the proposals received following the conclusion of Stage 2.

The Commission continues to work with DBCA to explore carbon farming opportunities on the conservation estate and has recently commenced the development of a position paper to consolidate the Commission's policy position and approach to carbon farming more broadly.

Investment in Collie and Dwellingup

Lake Kepwari

In 2017 the McGowan Government made a \$23.3 million commitment to invest in infrastructure for parks and forests in the Collie region. As part of the commitment, \$5.2 million was allocated to the construction of new campgrounds and boating facilities at Collie's Lake Kepwari.

Formerly an open-cut coalmine, the site has been transformed into a water-based tourism hub, featuring areas for boating, water skiing, swimming, camping, and picnicking. DBCA completed initial works in December 2020, with additional campground facilities being constructed for completion in 2022.

Collie Adventure Trails

Located 213 kilometres from Perth's CBD and 60km from Bunbury, Collie has long been popular for adventure camping, water skiing and outdoor activities. The State Government committed \$10 million to the Collie Adventure Trails project which will make Collie a premier 'trail adventure town'. The trails will become home to a world-class network of trails for mountain bike riders and bushwalkers to explore more of the area.

Collie's topography and landscape provide an array of areas to enjoy and challenges to tackle. The spectacular Collie River, which stretches from the town through Westralia Conservation Park and Wellington National Park, has imposing granite outcrops, lush vegetation and steep and varied natural features which create an ideal foundation on which to build a world-class trails network.

Dwellingup Adventure Trails

The State Government committed \$8.5 million to deliver the Dwellingup Adventure Trails Project. The picturesque town of Dwellingup is within easy driving distance from Perth and Mandurah making it an ideal location for day trip and overnight adventure activity for families and trail enthusiasts.

Dwellingup is already recognised for adventure tourism receiving in excess of 250,000 visitors a year, 80 per cent of whom camp at the popular Lane Poole Reserve and are focused on family-oriented outdoor nature activities. The project will develop new trails and facilities that showcase the area's natural landscapes and cultural heritage and make a significant economic contribution to the region.

WA Recovery Plan

The Western Australian Government announced a \$5.5 billion dollar recovery plan to outline how Western Australia will bounce back from the impacts of COVID-19 to reposition itself as a thriving and innovative place in which to live, work, visit and do business.

The plan has 21 priority streams, each underpinned by direct commitments, including investment, resourcing, and programs of work. Relevant areas to the Commission include initiatives in the environment, training, and tourism areas.

The Commission received briefings from DBCA on lead projects being funded under the WA Recovery Plan, with the majority of these located on lands vested in the Commission. A number of trail projects under the WA Recovery Plan were underway during this reporting period including:

- construction of new and upgraded mountain bike and walk trails in the Perth Hills including at the Goat Farm and John Forrest National Park;
- planning and construction of new and upgraded walk, paddle, and mountain bike trails in the Great Southern region;
- construction of additional mountain bike trails at The Pines near Margaret River;

- renewal of infrastructure and campsite improvements to Bibbulmun Track and Munda Biddi Trail facilities including trail sections;
- construction of a new section of Munda Biddi Trail between Greens Pool and Waterfall Beach in William Bay National Park;
- construction of an extension to the Harewood Forest trail north-west of Denmark; and
- relocation of the arrival/departure location for the Munda Biddi Trail and Bibbulmun Track Southern Terminus in Albany.

Strategic directions and governance

The Commission operates under their functions outlined in the CALM Act and supports government priorities. For effective management of the conservation estate in WA, the Commission works collaboratively with DBCA for the delivery of these services. The Commission operates at a strategic level under its *Strategic Directions 2019-2021*.

An MOU was developed and reviewed in September 2020 between the Commission and DBCA to establish terms for the service provisions and indicative resource requirements from DBCA to deliver on the Commission's priorities.

Regular evaluation of a board's performance is considered an integral part of effective corporate governance in order to ensure it has the necessary skills, experience and abilities to fulfil its responsibilities and determine the extent to which it is delivering on its purpose.

The Public Sector Commission's principles for good governance continued to be implemented and maintained by carrying out the annual review of the Commission's Charter, Code of Conduct, Conflict of Interest policy and risk register. The Commission undertook a self-review in 2020 of its governance to ensure continuous improvement in governance arrangements were maintained.

Policy development and advice

The Commission develops position statements to inform the Commission's functions under section 19 of the CALM Act. These functions include advising the Minister for Environment and preparing management plans. During the 2020-2021 financial year the Commission reviewed and updated the following policies, position statements and associated guidelines:

- Position Statement No. 16 – Periodic Assessment and the Implementation of Management Plans
- Guidelines for Periodic Assessment of Management plans – Marine Reserves
- Position Statement No. 14 – Application of the Marine Management Area reserve category

- Position Statement No. 18 – Protecting and Conserving the value of the land to the culture and heritage of Aboriginal persons
- Instrument of Delegation Policy
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Public Interest Disclosure Policy
- Conservation and Parks Commission Communication Strategy 2020

Periodic Assessment framework

The Commission has a statutory responsibility to ensure the conservation estate is being managed effectively. A corporate policy was adopted by DBCA that guides management effectiveness. DBCA are in the process of operationalising this policy and finalising a reporting process that will support the Commission’s periodic assessment framework reporting for parks and reserves. It is anticipated that better integrated reporting will deliver a more systematic approach to management plan implementation (and will provide for continuous improvement in the development of new management plans).

Marine park management effectiveness

The Commission reviewed the annual marine park management effectiveness assessments and attended the Marine Management Workshop held in November 2020 with DBCA and the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD).

No end-of-term assessments were published in the financial year pending the full adoption of new procedures for the delivery of management effectiveness information currently being implementing by DBCA.

Mid-term and end-of-term performance review of the Forest Management Plan 2014–2023

The Forest Management Plan 2014–2023 (FMP) covers lands vested in the Conservation and Parks Commission within the State's south-west forests. The focus of the FMP is on managing State forest and timber reserves. The FMP is a 10-year plan developed in consultation with the community. It is the key policy framework for managing forests as these plans identify goals and performance targets and propose management activities to achieve these goals.

The Commission continues to seek improvements to management of the area covered by the Forest Management Plan and monitor DBCA’s application of the plan’s key performance indicators.

A mid-term review of performance of the FMP was carried out in 2019 with a number of recommendations from the Commission. DBCA presented to the Commission on the implementation of these recommendations.

The Commission received a presentation on the development of the end of term performance review of the Forest Management Plan 2014-2023, and an update on

the early stages of development of the new Forest Management Plan due for implementation from 2024.

Estate Management

Prescribed burning, biodiversity, and monitoring

The Commission has received feedback from environmental and forest protection groups calling for increased monitoring, reduction in prescribed burning and more transparency on the prescribed burning program.

The Commission notes the annual burn program's outcomes are reviewed on a region-by-region basis each year prior to the development of following year's indicative program. At every stage of Parks and Wildlife Service's process for planning, implementing, and reviewing its prescribed burning program, biodiversity is considered and managed as an integral part of this process. This approach allows fire managers to be responsive to new knowledge, advances in technology and changes across the environment over the life of a prescribed fire plan.

The Commission supported DBCA in continuing a project for more robust mapping of burn severity, developing a spatially enabled planning tool that includes biodiversity datasets and the continued development of the regional conservation plans to address prescribed burning and biodiversity management.

Mineral exploration consents

Section 24 of the *Mining Act 1978* requires that the recommendations of the Minister for Environment and the Commission are provided to the Minister for Mines and Petroleum prior to the Minister for Mines and Petroleum's consideration of consent to mining activities within 'other than class A' reserves managed under the CALM Act and within class A reserves (other than national parks and nature reserves) outside the South West Land Division of the State and the shires of Esperance and Ravensthorpe.

In general, proponents were required to develop exploration plans or conservation management plans in consultation with DBCA that detail the proposed activities, risks to reserve values and risk management measures before the Commission would consider the applications.

In 2020–21, the Commission provided recommendations relating to applications to undertake mineral exploration activities in a number of vested reserves including the following:

- Mount Manning Conservation Park - Goldfields Region
- Julimar State Forest – Swan Region (Perth Hills District)
- Beekeepers Nature Reserve – Midwest Region
- Wanagarren Nature Reserve – Midwest Region
- Kambalda Nature Reserve – Goldfields Region
- Dundas Nature Reserve – South Coast Region

In cases where recommendations agreeing to provide consent for exploration activities were provided, the Commission also highlighted that its support for further exploration activities was not guaranteed. This would be dependent upon detailed review of proponents' proposals, advice from DBCA, and anticipated effects on the conservation estate.

Commercial Leases and Licenses

Advice on matters relating to leases, licences, permits, mining tenements and other activities such as utility infrastructure proposed on land and waters vested in the Commission was provided to the DBCA during this reporting period. Table 1 summarises the Commission's consideration of CALM Act leases, licences and permits during this reporting period.

Table 1. CALM Act leases, licences and authorities endorsed by the Commission during 2020–21

Commercial operations licences	3
Apiary authorities	481
Other leases and licences	15

*Supplied by DBCA, 2021

Commercial Filming and Photography Handbook

The Commercial Filming and Photography Handbook contains information and conditions that apply to all commercial operations licence and lawful authority holders undertaking a commercial filming and photography operation on DBCA managed lands including lands vested with the Commission. Additional conditions are added to licences and lawful authorities where required if they are not included in the handbook.

The Commission endorsed the updated handbook which allows for the pre-approval of commercial operations licences for commercial filming where the proposed filming is consistent with the handbook. This has contributed to streamlining the commercial filming licence assessment and approvals process.

Evidence based information for decision making

To assist in gaining a better understanding of the range of issues confronting estate managers in different parts of the State, the Commission received presentations on the following matters:

- Plan for Our Parks initiative
- Aboriginal Ranger Program
- Native Title and Indigenous Land Use Agreements
- Visitor Risk Management
- Benefits of Joint Management under the CALM Act

- Southern Forest Irrigation Scheme
- Carbon for Conservation
- Science that supports marine reserve management and the marine monitoring program
- Reviews and development of the Forest Management Plan
- Offset Strategy for the Ocean Reef Marina Redevelopment
- Proposed Attadale-Alfred Cove Foreshore Master Plan and Melville Bird Sanctuary
- Mentored Aboriginal Training and Employment Scheme

Biodiversity and Conservation

Draft Interim Recovery Plans

Interim Recovery Plans (IRPs) for threatened species and ecological communities have been produced by DBCA for many years to guide conservation and management. Part 6, Division 5 of the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* (BC Act) now provides a legislative basis for both the development of IRPs and the opportunity for stakeholders to be consulted during IRP development.

Under section 106(a) of the BC Act, DBCA *must* consult with the Commission before making an IRP where the threatened species or ecological community occurs on land vested in the Commission or is otherwise relevant to the functions of the Commission. There were no draft Interim Recovery Plans prepared for the Commission's review for the 2020-21 financial year.

Regional Conservation Plans

In 2019, DBCA formed a working group to consider conservation planning processes and preparation of regional conservation plans in acknowledgement that a consistent, documented, and transparent approach was required.

The regional conservation planning process provides a consistent, documented, and transparent approach to regional conservation planning and reporting within DBCA. It provides a process for structured decision making, in the context of finite resources, regarding the prioritisation and implementation of conservation actions for threatened and priority species and ecological communities within and outside the conservation reserve system across WA.

The Commission did not receive any new regional conservation plans for noting during this reporting period. However, plans are expected in 2022.

Ocean Reef Marina

An update was provided to the Commission in January 2020 on the Ocean Reef Marina development and excision from and proposed additions to the Marmion Marine Park.

Measures were developed to minimise losses to Roe's abalone stocks as a result of this development by DPIRD. Mitigation measures include working with commercial operators to translocate stock from within the development envelope and the ongoing monitoring of abalone stocks and habitat.

Western Australian Biodiversity Science Institute (WABSI)

The Commission values evidence-based decision making and therefore requested a presentation from WABSI to further develop its knowledge in the latest biodiversity science conducted in Western Australia.

A presentation was made to the Commission on WABSI's current and potential scientific research of WA's biodiversity. WABSI is a science research broker and joint venture between four universities: Edith Cowan, Murdoch, University of Western Australia, and Curtin, which collaborate with four Government departments: DBCA, DPIRD, DWER, and DMIRS. CSIRO and the WA Museum are also key partners.

The Commission will continue to build relationships with WABSI for future matters relevant to the management of the conservation estate in WA.

Vested lands and waters

Table 2 provides a summary of lands and waters vested in the Commission during the 2020-21 financial year.

Table 2. Lands and waters vested in the Commission.

Land classification	Area as at 30 June 2021 (ha)	Area as at 30 June 2020 (ha)
National parks	6,449,679	6,264,352
Conservation parks	1,154,192	1,086,805
Nature reserves	10,088,170	10,276,977
State forests	1,307,476	1,307,536
Timber reserves	123,143	123,147
CALM Act section 5(1)(g) and 5(1)(h)	1,081,536	1,060,306
Marine park	4,424,469	4,424,469
Marine nature reserve	132,000	132,000

Marine management area	143,385	143,385
Total	25,048,528	24,818,977

* Supplied by DBCA, 2021.

Additions to the conservation estate

The Commission endorsed the additions to the conservation estate of the following:

- Reinstatement of Lake Jasper Reserve 44705 into the D'Entrecasteaux National Park under the PfOP initiative.
- Inclusion of 102.45 hectares from Reserve 25890 into the Urawa Nature Reserve. This inclusion rationalised the hectares excised from the Urawa Nature Reserve from an airstrip.
- Addition of Lot 50, 5.34 hectares has dense remnant vegetation, which was bequeathed to the State for addition to the Leeuwin-Naturaliste National Park at the western boundary.
- Addition of a 2.8 kilometre section of William Bay Road Reserve 24482 and addition of Reserve 43491 to the William Bay National Park.
- Expansion of Wellington National Park with the addition of 6,134 hectares from State Forest 25.

Disclosures and legal compliance

Financial statements

In accordance with section 31(2) of the *Public Sector Management Act 1994*, the Commission is not a statutory authority within the meaning of the *Financial Management Act 2006*, but is a statutory body established by section 18 of the CALM Act.

Funding for the operation of the Commission is provided through DBCA. Expenditure is monitored by the Commission and the reporting and audit of expenditure is undertaken by DBCA.

Total expenditure for the Commission for the financial year ended 30 June 2021 was \$396,217.98.

Board and committee remuneration

The Commission operates in accordance with Part III of the CALM Act, the *Public Sector Management Act 1994*, and its Charter, Code of Conduct, and other policies. The Commissioners' remuneration is shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Commissioners' remuneration

Position	Name	Period of membership	Gross/actual remuneration (\$)
Chair	Chris Doepel	1/7/2020 to 30/6/2021	40,570.16
Deputy Chair	Jo-anne Lanagan	1/7/2020 to 30/6/2021	25,538.18
Member	Penny Bond	1/7/2020 to 30/6/2021	19,426.94
Member	Tahn Donovan	1/7/2020 to 30/6/2021	19,426.94
Member	Ross Dowling	1/7/2020 to 30/6/2021	16,737.07
Member	Kim Eckert	1/7/2020 to 30/6/2021	19,426.95
Member	John Keesing	7/05/2021 to 30/6/2021	N/A
Member	Alan Walker	1/7/2020 to 30/6/2021	19,426.95
Total			\$160,553.19

The Commission met 11 times during the reporting period. Attendance for the total number of eligible meetings for each member are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Commissioner meeting attendance

Position	Name	Attendance	Eligibility
Chair	Chris Doepel	11	11
Deputy Chair	Jo-anne Lanagan	10	11
Member	Penny Bond	8	11
Member	Tahn Donovan	11	11
Member	Ross Dowling	8	8
Member	Kim Eckert	11	11
Member	John Keesing	2	2
Member	Alan Walker	11	11

Governance disclosures

At the date of reporting, no Commissioners or officers, or firms of which Commissioners or officers are members, or entities in which Commissioners or officers have substantial interests, had any interests in existing or proposed contracts with the Commission, other than normal contracts of employment of service; or had any interests in issues before or likely to come before the Commission for consideration, endorsement, or consultation.

Employment and industrial relations

Further to CALM Act amendments in 2015, staffing resources are provided to the Commission through the Director General of DBCA as the employing authority.

Table 5 indicates specific staff allocated to service delivery in the secretariat of the Commission and does not include staff numbers and effort allocated to the delivery of Commission functions through DBCA.

Table 5. Secretariat staff profile at 30 June 2021

	Head count	FTE
Full-time permanent	1	1
Part-time permanent	0	0
Secondment	0	0
Total	1	1

Ministerial directives

No Ministerial directives were received during this reporting period.

Recordkeeping plans

The Commission prepared and finalised its *Record Keeping Plan 2016* in accordance with section 19 of the *State Records Act 2000*. The purpose of this plan is to set out the matters about which records are to be created by the Commission and how it is to keep its records.

The State Records Commission has endorsed the Commission's *Record Keeping Plan 2016*. No changes were required to this process in 2020–21.

Government policy requirements

Substantive equality

The Commission implements the State Government's *Policy Framework for Substantive Equality* primarily through management planning processes associated with the CALM Act.

Disability access and inclusion plan outcomes

The Commission is committed to fostering accessible and inclusive environment for its staff and Commissioners. The Commission advocates under DBCA's *Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2021–25* for disability inclusion. The Commission has adopted DBCA's Disability Confident Recruiter process.

Multicultural policy framework

The Commission has adopted DBCA’s multicultural policy framework and workforce and diversity plan for its staff and Commissioners. The Commission is committed to building an inclusive and diverse workforce.

Compliance with public sector standards and ethical codes

Commission staff are employees of DBCA. DBCA provided the framework for human resource management within the Commission through a Memorandum of Understanding.

In the management and direction of the office of the Commission, the Director has complied with Public Sector Standards in Human Resource Management, the *Western Australian Public Sector Code of Ethics* and the Commission’s *Code of Conduct*.

Information on both the *Code of Ethics* and the *Code of Conduct* is provided to new employees and members of the Commission on commencement with the Commission.

Occupational safety, health, and injury management

DBCA’s Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) policy requires managers to demonstrate, maintain, monitor, and review OSH in the workplace and places a responsibility on employees to implement a cycle of continuous improvement.

No workers’ compensation claims were recorded during the reporting period.

The Commission works to the policy identified by DBCA.

No workers’ compensation claims were recorded during the reporting period. The performance of the Commission OSH and injury management is shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Performance reporting: Occupational safety, health, and injury management

Measure	Actual result	Results against target	
		Reporting period 2020	Target
Number of fatalities	0	0	Achieved
Lost time injury and/or disease incidence rate	0	0	Achieved
Lost time injury and/or disease severity rate	0	0	Achieved
Percentage of injured workers returned to work within 6 weeks	0	0	Achieved
Percentage of managers trained in occupational safety, health, and injury management responsibilities	100%	100%	Achieved