

Additional Information available

In compliance with the requirements of the Standing Directions of the Minister for Finance, details of the items listed below are available on the department's [Annual Report web page](#).

a)	a statement that declarations of pecuniary interests have been duly completed by all relevant officers	2
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Notes:

The following entities are combined into DEECA's Financial Reporting Direction 22 disclosures pursuant to a determination made by the Assistant Treasurer under section 53(1)(b) of the *Financial Management Act 1994*:

- Mine Land Rehabilitation Authority (until 15 April 2026)
- Rural Assistance Commissioner

The Mine Land Rehabilitation Authority ceased operations on 20 March 2026 and was abolished on 15 April 2026. Its functions have been transferred to DEECA.

a) A statement that declarations of pecuniary interests have been duly completed by all relevant officers of the department

Declarations of pecuniary interests have been duly completed by all relevant officers.

b) Details of shares held by a senior officer as nominee or held beneficially in a statutory authority or subsidiary

Senior Officer	Shares Held	Stat Authority/Subsidiary
Secretary, DEECA	5,000,000	Agriculture Victoria Services Pty Ltd

c) Details of publications produced by the entity about the activities of the entity and where they can be obtained

Publication	Date published	Location
Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action Annual Report 2024-25	30 October 2025	Available online (www.deeca.vic.gov.au/our-department/annual-report and www.data.gov.au).
Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action Corporate Plan 2025-2029	11 September 2025	Available online (https://www.deeca.vic.gov.au/our-department/deeca-corporate-plan)
Mine Land Rehabilitation Authority Annual Report 2024-25	30 October 2025	Available online (https://www.mineland.vic.gov.au/library/publications/annual-reports/)

d) Details of changes in prices, fees, charges, rates and levies charged by the department for its services, including services that are administered

Details of fees and charges are available on the department's website at <https://www.deeca.vic.gov.au/doing-business-with-us/fees-and-charges>.

e) Details of any major external reviews carried out in respect of the operation of the department

External review	Conducted by	Purpose	Released
<u>Yoorrook Truth Be Told – Official Public Record</u>	Yoorrook Justice Commission	Provide a detailed narrative account of the violence and oppression experienced by First Peoples in Victoria since the start of colonisation. It draws on oral histories, collective memoir and rigorous research presented through the Yoorrook Justice Commission and summarises the 10 key findings from the process.	1 July 2025
<u>Yoorrook for Transformation – Third Interim Report – Volumes 1 and 2</u>	Yoorrook Justice Commission	Report on evidence of historic and ongoing systemic injustice, the way forward and recommendations for change: Volume 1 provides an overview of five critical themes raised by First Peoples throughout Yoorrook's inquiry: the past is the present, sovereignty, self-determination, rights and accountability. Volume 2 examines key issues pertaining to land injustice: theft of Country, recognition systems, joint management, water rights, climate change and caring for Country.	1 July 2025

External review	Conducted by	Purpose	Released
<u>Delivering Savings Under the COVID Debt Repayment Plan</u>	Victorian Auditor-General's Office	Determine whether departments implementing plans to deliver savings and efficiencies are consistent with the COVID Debt Repayment Plan.	30 July 2025
<u>Inquiry into Climate Resilience</u>	Parliament of Victoria, Legislative Assembly Environment and Planning Committee	Inquire into the main risks facing Victoria's built environment and infrastructure from climate change, and the impact these risks will have on the people of Victoria, including how the Government is preparing for these impacts, the challenges to becoming more resilient and improving preparedness for future climate disaster events.	12 August 2025
<u>Cybersecurity of IT Servers</u>	Victorian Auditor-General's Office	Determine whether agencies' cybersecurity measures protect their IT servers from threats.	29 October 2025
<u>Inquiry into wildlife road strike in Victoria</u>	Parliament of Victoria, Legislative Council Economy and Infrastructure Committee	Investigate the government's approach to preventing, monitoring and responding to wildlife road strike and the role, funding and training of paid and volunteer rescue and rehabilitative organisations and individuals.	18 November 2025
<u>Inquiry into the supply of homes in regional Victoria</u>	Parliament of Victoria, Legislative Assembly Environment and Planning Committee	Inquire into the supply of homes in regional Victoria including the methods of building them and the mix of housing forms and types.	19 November 2025
<u>State of the Great Ocean Road Parks and Coasts 2025 Report</u>	Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability Victoria	Report on the environmental condition of the Great Ocean Road coast and parks under section 17C of the <i>Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability Act 2003</i> .	20 November 2025
<u>Melbourne Strategic Assessment Conservation Outcomes 2024 Report</u>	Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability Victoria	Report on the implementation of Melbourne Strategic Assessment conservation outcomes under section 18A of the <i>Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability Act 2003</i> .	20 November 2025
<u>Service Delivery Performance 2025</u>	Victorian Auditor-General's Office	Assess whether departments met their service delivery performance targets.	3 December 2025
<u>Managing the Transition to Renewable Energy</u>	Victorian Auditor-General's Office	Determine whether Victoria is on track to achieve its renewable energy objectives.	3 December 2025
<u>Review of Victoria's preparedness for major chemical, biological and radiological incidents</u>	Inspector-General for Emergency Management	Assess Victoria's emergency management sector's preparedness for responding to major chemical, biological and radiological emergencies.	29 January 2026

External review	Conducted by	Purpose	Released
<u>Victorian Emergency Management Strategic Action Plan (SAP) 2023-26 - Progress Report 2024</u>	Inspector-General for Emergency Management	Eighth progress report on the implementation of SAP actions	29 January 2026
<u>Implementation monitoring of 'Review of 10 years of reform in Victoria's emergency management sector' and 'Inquiry into the 2019-20 Victorian fire season' - Progress Report 2024</u>	Inspector-General for Emergency Management	Third report on Victorian Government's progress implementing recommendations and actions	12 February 2026
<u>Major Projects Performance Reporting 2025</u>	Victorian Auditor-General's Office	Examine if public information provided by responsible entities to Parliament and the community can be used to assess the progress of major projects and the factors driving significant variations.	4 March 2026
<u>Timely Payments Performance</u>	Victorian Auditor-General's Office	Determine if agencies pay suppliers on time.	18 March 2026
<u>Supporting the Transition of Native Timber Harvesting</u>	Victorian Auditor-General's Office	Determine whether the Forestry Transition Program supports former native timber workers, forestry businesses and communities to transition from the end of native timber harvesting.	1 April 2026
<u>Responses to Performance Engagement Recommendations: Annual Status Update 2026</u>	Victorian Auditor-General's Office	Assess if agencies implemented the Victorian Auditor-General's performance engagement recommendations in a timely way.	13 May 2026
<u>Sustainability Reporting by Water Corporations</u>	Victorian Auditor-General's Office	Determine whether metropolitan water corporations' sustainability reporting is complete and reliable.	20 May 2026
<u>Inquiry into Electricity Supply for Electric Vehicles (EV)</u>	Parliament of Victoria, Legislative Council Economy and Infrastructure Committee	Report on a range of issues, including strategies to reduce EV charging during periods of peak demand and increase charging during times of peak supply. The report examines whether public charging infrastructure is being rolled out at a sufficient rate across Victoria, particularly in older suburbs where off-street parking is limited.	2 June 2026
<u>Follow-up: Reducing Bushfire Risks</u>	Victorian Auditor-General's Office	Follow up report on whether DEECA and the Country Fire Authority (CFA) were effectively working together to reduce Victoria's bushfire risk and examine whether DEECA and the CFA met their obligations to reduce bushfire risk in and around Grampians National Park before the 2024 Grampians bushfires.	10 June 2026

External review	Conducted by	Purpose	Released
<u>Inquiry into Decommissioning Oil and Gas Infrastructure</u>	Parliament of Victoria, Legislative Council Environment and Planning Committee	Inquiry into the scale and legal ownership structure of Victoria's oil and gas infrastructure, including offshore wells, pipelines, high-pressure transmission and low-pressure distribution systems, and its decommissioning over the coming decades, including consideration of onshore works, works in Commonwealth and Victorian waters, how to ensure cost effective decommissioning, and identifying current and potential leaked greenhouse gases.	18 June 2026

f) details of major research and development activities undertaken by the department

Name of research and development activity	Conducted by	Purpose
Accelerating Genetic Gain: Development and integration of breeder facing AI tools to maximise use of pre-breeding research outputs and improve breeding processes	Agriculture Science and Technology	To develop tools to efficiently mine, integrate and analyse vast amounts of genomic data to support breeding and research decisions for improved crop varieties.
Accelerating the development of chickpea with enhanced acid soil tolerance Phase II	Agriculture Science and Technology	To develop genetic tools to facilitate breeder use and deployment of high value acid soil tolerant chickpea germplasm.
Achieving improved genetic gain for yield in chickpea, faba bean and lentil using genetic diversity	Agriculture Science and Technology	To deliver improved genetic gain for yield in chickpea, faba bean and lentil using genetic diversity.
Agrivoltaics - Integrating profitable agricultural production and renewable energy generation	Agriculture Science and Technology	To identify food production systems that can be integrated with renewable energy photovoltaic systems to transition agricultural regions to low-emission energy generation.
An integrated pest management program for the Australian almond industry: Phase 2	Agriculture Science and Technology	To equip almond producers and processors with the knowledge and tools required to implement cost-effective management strategies for carpophilus beetle and carob moth.
Arthur Rylah Institute eel tagging program	Arthur Rylah Institute	To examine the oceanic spawning migration of eels.
Arthur Rylah Institute Riparian Intervention Monitoring Program 2025-2027	Arthur Rylah Institute	To monitor riparian vegetation at intervention sites across the state of Victoria.
Assessing species trait vulnerability to non-burn fuel treatments (species trait database upgrade)	Arthur Rylah Institute	To upgrade the species trait database by mapping species trait vulnerabilities and benefits to forest management activities.
Assessing the long-term effect of bromoform feeding to dairy cows on methane emissions, milk production, composition and functionality, animal health, reproductive performance, human safety, rumen function, microbiome and offspring performance	Agriculture Science and Technology	To determine the long-term effects of bromoform feeding on enteric methane emissions, animal health, human safety, rumen function, microbiome, and productivity and offspring performance.
Assessment of the impact of supply voltage magnitude on consumer appliance lifespan	University of Wollongong	To determine the impact of distribution network supply voltage magnitudes on consumer appliance life.

Name of research and development activity	Conducted by	Purpose
Australian Grains Genebank Strategic Partnership	Agriculture Science and Technology	To unlock the genetic potential of the Australian Grains Genebank to accelerate cereal, oilseed, and pulse crop improvement.
Australian horticultural market access research partnership (Fruit Fly)	Agriculture Science and Technology	To develop, trial and implement a national fruit fly surveillance, biocontrol, biopesticide and integrated pest management program.
Barwon South West - Climate adaptation project - behavioural insights	Arthur Rylah Institute	To deliver a pilot project to help improve climate change adaptation across Victoria by exploring behavioural insights and opportunities for social change.
Best practice sampling and virus detection in Australian grapevine propagation assets	Agriculture Science and Technology	To undertake surveillance, sampling strategies and diagnostics for grapevine viruses in propagation material.
Biocontrol approaches to address pest challenges in raspberry and blackberry	Agriculture Science and Technology	To develop and extend effective pest management strategies for the Australian raspberry and blackberry industry.
Biocontrol implementation of sagittaria using the fruit-feeding weevil	Agriculture Science and Technology	To implement a sagittaria biological control program throughout the irrigation districts of northern Victoria and southern New South Wales.
Capitalising on pulse protein food and feed opportunities domestically and internationally	Agriculture Science and Technology	To benchmark Australian pulses for protein quality, nutritional composition, and functional attributes.
Close yield gap and maximise farm system benefits from grain legume production	Agriculture Science and Technology	To deliver development and extension activities that support closure of the economic yield gap and maximise farm system benefits from the incorporation of grain legumes in Victorian crop rotations.
Comparative population dynamics and ecology of Australian game ducks	Arthur Rylah Institute	To conduct a population genetic study and evaluate the applicability of demographic analyses, capitalising on previously collected blood samples obtained as part of the avian influenza monitoring.
Contaminated land and coastal hazard review	Alluvium Consulting	To undertake an investigation of contaminated land located on the Victorian coast at risk of impact by coastal hazards.
DairyBio 21-26	Agriculture Science and Technology	To create improved herds and pastures for the Australian dairy industry through improved trait identification and breeding.
DairyFeedbase	Agriculture Science and Technology	To deliver real-time information to guide decision-making gathered in the paddock and dairy that optimise animal nutrition, health, welfare and milk production.
Decision support tool for assessing collision mortality impacts	Arthur Rylah Institute	To develop a quantitative tool to support assessment of predicted bird and bat collision fatalities at wind farms for industry and regulators.
Developing a sustainable, long-term management program for giant pine scale in Australia	Agriculture Science and Technology	To implement the sustainable management of giant pine scale in Australia.

Name of research and development activity	Conducted by	Purpose
Development and testing of a sprayable biodegradable mulch for Australian broadacre crop production	Agriculture Science and Technology	To evaluate the role sprayable biodegradable mulch may play in broadacre agriculture linking product manufacturers with use cases, environmental and financial evaluation, and business development opportunities.
Development of analytical methods for evaluating the influence of planned burning and management on fire behaviour	Natural Hazards Research Australia	To develop new and implement existing analytical methods to determine planned burning influence on stopping or slowing fire spread and severity.
Eastern Victoria airborne gravity survey	Geological Survey Victoria, Surveyor General Office of Victoria, Geoscience Australia (National Collaborative Framework Agreement)	To fill critical data gaps, improve GPS-derived height accuracy and better understand Victoria's geological architecture to support the evidence base for the state's earth resource prospectivity.
Effective virus management in grain crops	Agriculture Science and Technology	To develop an understanding of potential virus-induced yield impacts and diverse options for the control of these viruses and their vectors in grains.
Environmental baseline studies in northwest Victoria	Geological Survey of Victoria and CSIRO	To establish an environmental baseline across northwest Victoria by characterising the geochemistry of natural systems including groundwater and soils.
Epidemiology, economic thresholds and management of Ascochyta blight and Botrytis diseases in lentil and faba beans	Agriculture Science and Technology	To determine new disease epidemiology, economic thresholds and management of Ascochyta blight and Botrytis diseases in lentil and faba beans.
Fast tracking the delivery of improved chilling tolerance of chickpea for Australian growers	Agriculture Science and Technology	To develop field rankings of chickpea germplasm for chilling tolerance and identify improved germplasm with enhanced chilling tolerance for breeding programs.
Flagship Waterways Monitoring 2025-2027	Arthur Rylah Institute	To monitor significant flora and fauna management interventions and objectives undertaken by the Mallee Catchment Management Authority as part of the Flagship Waterways program.
Flow Monitoring, Evaluation and Research (Flow-MER) Program – Basin-scale project 2025-26	Arthur Rylah Institute	To undertake a basin-scale evaluation of fish responses to the contribution of Commonwealth environmental water.
Freshwater mussel surveying in Hattah-Kulkyne National Park and Merbein Common	Arthur Rylah Institute	To undertake field surveys to establish population information on freshwater mussels.
Genome editing in Paspalum notatum cultivated variety INIA Sepé for increased livestock digestibility	Agriculture Science and Technology	To advance genome editing of Paspalum notatum (INIA Sepé) to improve forage digestibility and enhance the commercial value of elite pasture cultivars.
Geomorphology specialist data analysis and advice- Goulburn to Murray Trade Review Scientific Advisory Panel	Streamology	To provide geomorphology specialist membership on the Scientific Advisory Panel, including analysis and advice to inform the Goulburn to Murray Trade Review project.

Name of research and development activity	Conducted by	Purpose
Goulburn to Murray Trade Review Research and Investigation Program - 2025-2028	Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority	To undertake monitoring to assess effectiveness of the lower Goulburn River operating rules in achieving the intended objectives.
Grapevine phylloxera: development and adoption of new tools for surveillance and management	Agriculture Science and Technology	To develop new tools, technologies and protocols for the integrated pest management of grapevine phylloxera in Australia.
Hattah Lakes Ramsar projects 2025-2026 (Lakebed Herbland Monitoring Program and Winged Peppercreep Monitoring)	Arthur Rylah Institute	To gather ecological knowledge about the Lakebed Herbland condition and Winged Peppercreep population at the Hattah Lakes Ramsar site to inform management of the site.
Heathland Sands (desert) ecological fire group return sampling	Natural Hazards Research Australia	To provide ecosystem resilience data for models and tools used for decision making for bushfire management across the state, risk assessments, and reporting for Heathland Sands (desert).
Heathland Sands (general) ecological fire group return sampling	Natural Hazards Research Australia	To provide ecosystem resilience data for models and tools used for decision making for bushfire management across the state, risk assessments, and reporting for Heathland Sands (general).
Heathy Grassy Dry Forest ecological fire group return sampling	Natural Hazards Research Australia	To provide ecosystem resilience data for models and tools used for decision making for bushfire management across the state, risk assessments, and reporting for Heathy Grassy Dry Forest.
High Altitude Shrubland Woodland ecological fire group return sampling	Natural Hazards Research Australia	To provide ecosystem resilience data for models and tools used for decision making for bushfire management across the state, risk assessments, and reporting for High Altitude Shrubland Woodland.
Improving the yield stability of lentils under elevated temperatures	Agriculture Science and Technology	To improve the yield stability of lentil under elevated temperatures.
Improving yield potential of lentils on acid soils in Australia	Agriculture Science and Technology	To characterise and develop lentils with tolerance to acid soils across Australian growing regions.
Increasing wheat yield and yield stability through improved heat tolerance during grain filling	Agriculture Science and Technology	To increase wheat yield and yield stability through improved heat tolerance during grain filling.
Integrated statewide forest extent mapping and spatial carbon modelling: Pilot, scale-up and capability build	University of Melbourne	To develop a forest extent and structure mapping capability for Victoria, using integrated remote sensing and reference data.
Large-scale phenotyping and development of integrated disease management strategies: Effective genetic and sustainable management of Ascochyta blight of chickpea - Phase II	Agriculture Science and Technology	To develop and validate large-scale phenotyping approaches and integrated disease management strategies that improve genetic resistance and sustainable control of Ascochyta blight in chickpea production.
Macquarie perch fish surveys and fin clip analysis 2026-2028	Arthur Rylah Institute	To conduct Macquarie perch population surveys and genetic assessments for priority waterways of the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority.

Name of research and development activity	Conducted by	Purpose
Management strategies for wheat foliar diseases in the Southern Region	Agriculture Science and Technology	To implement cost-effective and sustainable management strategies to reduce costs and yield loss from wheat foliar diseases and minimise further development of fungicide resistance.
Matching pulse crop designs to site and seasonal conditions to maximise yield and profit	Agriculture Science and Technology	To investigate the impact of soil type, water availability, and canopy temperature on pulse growth and development in Australian production environments
Melbourne Strategic Assessment - Program review	Ernst & Young	To evaluate the Melbourne Strategic Assessment Program's delivery, governance, and financial management controls, identifying improvement opportunities and recommendations to enhance program outcomes.
Melbourne Strategic Assessment 5-year agreement: 2025-2030	Arthur Rylah Institute	To provide ecological advice and conduct ecological monitoring for the Melbourne Strategic Assessment program.
Monitoring fish populations in Victorian Waterways 2025-2026	Arthur Rylah Institute	To collect data and report on the status and trends of native fish populations in priority regulated rivers of Victoria.
Monitoring of Net Blotch populations for new virulence of industry significance	Agriculture Science and Technology	To monitor Net Blotch pathogen virulence across Australia and update host differential sets.
Monitoring Waterbirds at the Western Treatment Plant - 2026-2031	Arthur Rylah Institute	To monitor population trends for waterbird and shorebird species and their dispersal across the Western Treatment Plant, to inform management decisions by Melbourne Water.
Multi-location hemp variety trials (Australian Industrial Hemp Program of Research)	Agriculture Science and Technology	To undertake integrated research that advances industrial hemp varieties, production systems, value-added products, and sustainability outcomes to support growth and competitiveness of the Australian hemp industry.
Murray-Darling Basin fishways effectiveness monitoring	Arthur Rylah Institute	To conduct native fish surveys to assess fishway effectiveness within the Murray-Darling Basin.
Narrow orchard systems for future climates	Agriculture Science and Technology	To establish narrow row 2D pedestrian orchards to compare the performance of dwarfing rootstocks, tree canopy heights and training systems.
National field pea breeding program	Agriculture Science and Technology	To deliver improved field pea varieties across a range of agroecological environments.
National grains diagnostic and surveillance initiative	Agriculture Science and Technology	To deliver fast, accurate diagnostics to enable timely management decisions that reduce the impact of biotic threats on grain crops.
National lentil breeding program	Agriculture Science and Technology	To deliver rapid transformational change to the national lentil breeding program for higher yielding lentil varieties.
National Soil Action Plan - Improving soil structure for resilient ecosystems	Agriculture Science and Technology	To increase drought resilience by targeting management practice changes that improve soil structure and function across a range of industries.

Name of research and development activity	Conducted by	Purpose
National Soil Action Plan - Soil biodiversity across landscapes	Agriculture Science and Technology	To understand soil microbiome, populations and functions in agriculture and natural ecosystems to improve nutrient cycling, maintain or improve soil carbon, and support soil and landscape recovery and rehabilitation.
National Soil Monitoring Program - Bulk Density Sampling	Agriculture Science and Technology	To provide access to consistent, national soil data from multiple regions across Australia.
Nation-wide weed biocontrol mass-rearing and release network for enhanced drought resilience in Australia's agricultural landscapes	Agriculture Science and Technology	To reduce the impact of invasive weeds through targeted biocontrol research, implementation, and collaboration.
Native Fish Report Card Program 2026-2027	Arthur Rylah Institute	To collect data on native fish populations at priority waterways and produce 10 Native Fish Report Cards for 2025.
Non-burn fuel treatments in a changing climate	IFER/University of Melbourne	To address key knowledge and process gaps in measuring and assessing the effectiveness of small-scale, non-burn fuel management activities in reducing bushfire risk.
Novel and targeted biological control of blackberry invasions in forest and tree plantations	Agriculture Science and Technology	To integrate new biocontrol agents into control strategies targeting invasive blackberry taxa impacting on Australian forest industries.
On ground reconnaissance, impact assessment, and priority recovery actions for bushfire-impacted aquatic species.	Arthur Rylah Institute	To undertake on-ground reconnaissance, impact assessment, and priority recovery actions for bushfire-impacted aquatic species.
Optimal stubble loads for maximising canola establishment in the Wimmera	Agriculture Science and Technology	To identify stubble management practices and farm systems that improve the establishment of canola sown into high stubble loads in the Wimmera.
Perennial mixed pastures for improved productivity and reduced methane emissions in southern Australia	Agriculture Science and Technology	To develop high performance, methane-mitigating multispecies pastures for the sheep industry.
Productivity, Irrigation, Pests and Soils (PIPS) 4 Profit - Optimising apple production systems	Agriculture Science and Technology	To develop apple orchards that have higher labour use efficiency, produce stable yields of high-quality fruit, use state-of-the-art technology to manage spatial and temporal variation, and collect objective eco credential data to support low environmental impact production systems.
PIPS 4 Profit - Pear production systems for future climates	Agriculture Science and Technology	To develop pear orchards that have higher labour use efficiency, produce stable yields of high-quality fruit, use state-of-the-art technology to manage spatial and temporal variation, and collect objective eco credential data to support low environmental impact production systems.
PIPS 4 Profit - Pest and disease management	Agriculture Science and Technology	To develop sustainable, cost-effective pest and disease management practices adapted to suit Australian conditions.

Name of research and development activity	Conducted by	Purpose
Population modelling – Borumba Pumped Hydro Project	Arthur Rylah Institute	To conduct population viability analysis to estimate potential impacts of the Borumba Pumped Hydro Project on 10 native aquatic species.
Precision summerfruit orchards	Agriculture Science and Technology	To demonstrate the value of precision crop information and data-driven spatial 'zonal' crop load management to fruit growers.
Predicting nitrogen cycling and losses in Australian cropping systems - Augmenting measurements to enhance modelling	Agriculture Science and Technology	To improve the nitrogen management practices of Australian grain production systems through improved simulation models.
Quantifying greenhouse gas emissions from the decomposition of crop residue	Agriculture Science and Technology	To develop best practice methods for quantifying field-based greenhouse gas emissions from crop residues for a range of different crop types and cropping systems.
Recreational hunting study in the Snowy River and Errinundra National Park	Arthur Rylah Institute	To determine the change in deer abundance from the introduction of recreational hunting in the Snowy River and Errinundra National Parks.
Renewable Energy Industrial Precincts Strategic Framework	KPMG and Climateworks	To investigate the potential of renewable energy industrial precincts to leverage the economic benefits of the energy transition and support industrial decarbonisation.
Root structure and function traits - Overcoming the root phenotyping bottleneck in cereals	Agriculture Science and Technology	To overcome field phenotyping bottlenecks for root traits to achieve step gains in crop productivity and drought tolerance in wheat and sorghum.
Seasonal status of pests and diseases delivered to growers	Agriculture Science and Technology	To facilitate the integration of surveillance and diagnostics of established pests and diseases of the Australian grains industry to provide growers with timely seasonal biotic stress levels.
Selecting more methane efficient cattle and sheep	Agriculture Science and Technology	To create genomic estimated breeding values for greenhouse gas emission traits.
Soilborne Disease Initiative	Agriculture Science and Technology	To understand the impact of soilborne disease in crops and implement solutions to mitigate losses caused by these diseases.
Strategic approaches to ecological compensation and offsets	The University of Queensland, University of Melbourne (Melbourne Biodiversity Institute) and 2rog Consulting	To provide advice on establishing a strategic ecological compensation framework as part of exploring bioregional planning opportunities in Victoria.
Streamlining diagnostics for horticultural seeds imported into Australia	Agriculture Science and Technology	To develop an adaptable, cost effective and quality assured molecular diagnostics system to detect and mitigate risk of introduction of regulated pathogens through seed in Australian horticultural production systems.
Study of the efficacy of unmanned aerial vehicles for monitoring rabbits	Arthur Rylah Institute	To study the efficacy of using unmanned aerial vehicles for monitoring rabbits.

Name of research and development activity	Conducted by	Purpose
The Living Murray Barmah-Millewa Forest fish and crayfish condition monitoring	Arthur Rylah Institute	To assess and report on the condition of fish and Murray crayfish condition within the Barmah-Millewa Forest Icon Site under The Living Murray program.
The Living Murray Barmah-Millewa Forest turtle and frog condition monitoring	Arthur Rylah Institute	To assess and report on the condition of turtles and frogs within the Barmah-Millewa Forest Icon Site.
The Living Murray data collation	Arthur Rylah Institute	To develop database and data standards for The Living Murray program.
The Living Murray-Mallee condition monitoring and fish movement 2025-26	Arthur Rylah Institute	To undertake long term condition monitoring in the Lindsay, Mulcra and Wallpolla Islands and Hattah Lakes icon sites.
Threatened flora rapid assessments, Grampians (Gariwerd) National Park 2026-2027	Arthur Rylah Institute	To collect critical data on the persistence, distribution and population status of priority threatened Grampians flora, and to understand how fire influences species population structure and long-term viability.
Threatened flora reconnaissance and recovery actions from bushfires 2026	Arthur Rylah Institute	To determine the status of threatened plant species affected by fires across Victoria during 2026, collect data to assist future fire planning and emergency responses, and provide prioritised recommendations for recovery actions.
Tolerable fire interval update project (TFI 2.0)	Arthur Rylah Institute	To review and update data used to generate tolerable fire intervals to support enhanced bushfire management for vegetation recovery, ecological resilience and conservation of biodiversity.
Towards developing improved resistance to Botrytis grey mould in chickpea and lentil	Agriculture Science and Technology	To improve high throughput phenotyping methods for Botrytis grey mould to enable quick, accurate and cost-effective screening of large numbers of breeding lines.
Understanding crop development and yield responses to mitigate high soil strength in Australian soils	Agriculture Science and Technology	To benchmark root growth for key grain crops and potential 'primer crops' in key soil types to assess whether high soil strength reduces crop growth.
Understanding the impacts of waterlogging on barley, canola and faba bean	Agriculture Science and Technology	To investigate, quantify and model the effects of anaerobic stress on growth, development and yield of barley, canola and faba bean crops, and scenarios for avoiding severe waterlogging and accelerating recovery through nitrogen management.
Utilising B genome diversity in canola	Agriculture Science and Technology	To develop technologies to promote the incorporation of useful genes from the Brassica B genome into canola.
Victorian antimony processing – preliminary economic assessment	GHD	To research the economic benefits, barriers and opportunities for establishing an antimony downstream industry in Victoria.
Victorian Grassland Earless Dragon	Arthur Rylah Institute	To deliver field surveys for the Victorian Grassland Earless Dragon and its habitat.

Name of research and development activity	Conducted by	Purpose
Victorian Land Use Information System	Agriculture Science and Technology	To deliver authoritative, parcel-level land use and land cover data for 2026-27 and advanced analytic systems to support strategic planning across Victoria.
Victorian Murray Floodplain Restoration Project - additional ecological monitoring	Arthur Rylah Institute	To restore ecologically significant wetlands and floodplains at 9 sites along the Victorian Murray River floodplain.
Victorian Murray-Darling Basin fish survey 2025-26	Arthur Rylah Institute	To assess the health of native fish communities across selected sites in Victoria.
Victorian renewable fuels capacity assessment	CSIRO	To assess more biomass feedstocks and more renewable fuel production pathways.
Victoria's comparative advantage - economic opportunities through the energy transition	EY	To analyse Victoria's strengths and potential for comparative advantage that can support the development of economic opportunities enabled by the energy transition.
Waterway economic analysis	Marsden Jacob Associates	To develop economic statements for the Victorian Waterway Management Strategy, future business cases, Victoria's Economic Growth Statement, and DEECA's Economic Framework.
Western Treatment Plant waterbird impacts - desktop and foraging study	Arthur Rylah Institute	To develop and implement methods to monitor waterbirds at the Western Treatment Plant, to assess the effects of forthcoming changes in pond management by Melbourne Water.
Western Victoria bushfires - Water quality sampling program	Arthur Rylah Institute	To assess the aquatic ecosystem recovery of the Wannon River, Fyan Creek, Jimmys Creek and their tributaries after the 2024 Western Victorian bushfires.
Whole microbiome sequencing and milk mid-infrared as proxies for ruminant methane emissions	Agriculture Science and Technology	To assess the accuracy of milk mid-infrared spectroscopy as a proxy for predicting dairy methane emissions and develop an affordable methane measuring device for highly accurate in-paddock and in-shed measurements.

g) Details of overseas visits funded by the department including a summary of the objectives and outcomes of each visit

Title of Officer	Destination	Objective/s	Outcomes
Director, Geological Survey Victoria Acting Manager, Exploration and Development Director, Critical Minerals	Canada and USA	Promote Victoria's resources sector and attract investment at the Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada convention and associated events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaged more than 265 delegates and identified 32 qualified industry and investor leads, generating strong investment interest. Raised awareness of Victorian mining opportunities through targeted presentations and investor engagement events with more than 100 industry stakeholders. Reinforced Victoria's reputation as a safe, stable and well-regulated mining jurisdiction, attracting interest from companies considering expansion or relocation. Improved understanding of international investor priorities to inform future engagement and investment attraction activity. Identified opportunities to advance strategic partnerships and investment.
Senior Policy Advisor Water Emergency Response	Thailand	Participate in the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs Civil-Military Coordination (UN-CMCoord) Skills Training course to learn from and contribute to international best practice, as one of 20 participants selected worldwide.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased knowledge of UN-CMCoord practices through analysis of international emergency responses. Strengthened civil-military coordination capabilities by sharing lessons on effective and ineffective approaches. Improved stakeholder engagement skills to support humanitarian access and operational outcomes. Enhanced ability to develop practical coordination actions that support protection objectives. Identified key gaps and improvement opportunities within the UN-CMCoord framework. Expanded international networks and collaboration with humanitarian coordination professionals.
Manager Aviation Services Unit	Italy	Attend the Aerial Firefighting conference in Rome, Italy on the latest innovations in aerial firefighting aircraft, systems and capability development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced Victoria's aviation capability through increased awareness of emerging aerial firefighting and intelligence-gathering technologies. Strengthened relationships with potential aircraft and infrastructure suppliers to support future capability development. Improved knowledge of aviation safety practices and innovations. Increased understanding of European Union funding models and future aerial firefighting programs. Identified opportunities to inform Victoria's long-term aviation capability planning, investment decisions and strategic partnerships.

Title of Officer	Destination	Objective/s	Outcomes
Senior Officer Emergency Preparedness and Risk	USA	Attend the 2026 International Symposium on Animal Mortality Management to strengthen Victoria's emergency animal diseases preparedness and response capability, improve mortality management, reduce environmental and community risks, and strengthen confidence in the state's biosecurity system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced organisational understanding of emerging mortality management practices, decision-support tools and large-scale emergency response frameworks. Improved integration of organisational policies, contingency plans and training programs to strengthen emergency preparedness and response capability. Strengthened contemporary risk assessment, contingency planning and capability development practices Strengthened strategic planning and field operations alignment. Improved readiness to manage large-scale emergency events through continuous improvement of plans, procedures and workforce capability.
Regional Manager, Animal Health and Welfare			

h) Details of major promotional, public relations and marketing activities undertaken by the department to develop community awareness of the services provided by the department

Activity	Description	Cost (including GST)
Real Help, Right Now campaign - Energy affordability assistance	Advertising to raise awareness of programs and services available to help Victorian households manage energy costs. The campaign promoted the \$100 Power Saving Bonus, Victorian Energy Compare, the Energy Assistance Program, and savings available through appliance upgrades supported by the Victorian Energy Upgrades and Solar Homes programs	\$878,518
Victorian Energy Upgrades Program Promotion 'Upgrade and Save'	Advertising to raise awareness of discounts available to help Victorian households upgrade to more energy-efficient appliances, reducing energy bills and emissions.	\$551,243
Put the Sun to Work – Solar Homes Program	Advertising to raise awareness of rebates and interest-free loans available under the Solar Homes Program for the installation of solar panels and energy-efficient hot water systems at Victorian homes and rental properties.	\$388,943
Drought Support program	Advertising campaigns to increase awareness of the Drought Support Package in addition to extensive media, social media and stakeholder communications.	\$369,250
Landcare statewide communications	Statewide communication activities delivered by Landcare Victoria Incorporated, including 3 issues of the Victorian Landcare and Catchment Management magazine in 2025-26 which raised awareness of Landcare and natural resource management issues, and showcased the achievements of the Landcare and environmental volunteer community. The activities also included managing social media channels to promote Landcare in Victoria.	\$300,000

Activity	Description	Cost (including GST)
Bushfire support for farmers	Advertising to raise awareness of the supports available to impacted farmers in response to the January 2026 fires, including primary producer recovery grants, concessional loans, technical information and events to support recovery across production, land management, water, biosecurity, animal health and recovery planning.	\$130,344
Solar Victoria sponsorships and event partnerships	Conferences and industry events throughout the year to provide opportunities for Solar Victoria to engage with key stakeholders, share program outcomes and insights, promote compliance, and contribute to discussions on Australia's energy transition.	\$128,000
Great Outdoors marketing campaign	Social media campaign to increase awareness of the Explore Outdoors website and More to Explore app, encourage visitation to state forests and drive traffic to digital visitor information. DEECA partnered with 9 social media influencers to showcase Victoria's state forests, reaching 385,964 people, generating 459,481 video views and delivering 6,302 shares.	\$122,000
Big Bandicoot Backyard event	Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria delivered the Big Bandicoot Backyard event at Cranbourne Gardens from 10 to 12 April 2026, to raise awareness of the endangered Southern Brown Bandicoot. The event attracted 5,430 attendees and was supported by a targeted digital campaign, increased the visibility of the species and the Melbourne Strategic Assessment Program.	\$29,985
Victorian Trees on Farms Program Advertising	Advertising across print and social media to promote and create awareness of the new Victorian Trees on Farms Program, as well as the new Trees on Farms Utilisation Program in North Eastern Victoria.	\$26,965
Offshore Wind Gippsland campaign	Campaign to raise awareness, and expand communications and engagement, to maintain and strengthen social licence for offshore wind development in Gippsland by providing community resources on the facts and benefits of offshore wind development.	\$19,503
Crimestoppers Illegal Firewood Campaign	Campaign to increase community awareness of the environmental impacts of illegal firewood collection and encourage reporting. The 'Illegal Firewood: The Cost is Wild' campaign promoted simple, anonymous reporting pathways through Crime Stoppers Victoria and provided practical information to help the community identify and avoid illegal firewood activity.	\$10,000
Western Region Sustainable Water Strategy commencement notifications	Advertising to promote an expression of interest process for community members to join working groups established to guide the development of the new Western Region Sustainable Water Strategy. Advertisements ran in The Koori Mail, Ararat Advocate, The Colac Herald, The Hamilton Spectator, Horsham Weekly Advertiser, Portland Observer, Pyrenees Advocate, Warrnambool Standard, The Weekly Times and Wimmera Mail Times.	\$3,232
Victorian Access Regime and Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines	Facebook promotional marketing activity by VicGrid to create awareness of the consultation period for the Victorian Access Regime.	\$2,811

i) Details of assessment and measures undertaken to improve the occupational health and safety of employees, not otherwise detailed in the report of operations

Health and safety governance

DEECA continued to deliver quarterly health and safety representative (HSR) forums in 2025-26. Consultation with the department's 200 HSRs and 53 deputy HSRs enabled a refresh of DEECA's intranet health and safety resources, including the rollout of the HSR Register Interactive Map, enhancing staff access to occupational health and safety (OHS) information. Senior executives also continued to actively participate both in public sector OHS working groups and forums and DEECA's internal OHS consultative structures, providing oversight and assurance of the department's people, culture, health, safety and wellbeing initiatives.

Occupational Health and Safety Management System (OHSMS)

DEECA continued to strengthen its OHSMS in 2025-26 through proactive reviews to strengthen contractor, volunteer and water safety frameworks, to ensure alignment with best practice and evolving risk profiles. Significant effort was invested in developing a targeted communication and rollout approach to strengthen understanding of OHS responsibilities and accountabilities across these complex risk areas, supporting a more informed, consistent and preventative approach to safety.

Safety assurance and investigations

During 2025-26, safety advisors undertook 317 site visits and completed 189 reviews of safety assurance, dangerous goods and hazardous substances, and plant and equipment management, to ensure contemporary safety systems were maintained within the context of the department's work. These reviews resulted in 293 corrective actions. A further 20 investigations into safety incidents resulted in 110 additional corrective actions and safety improvements in the highest risk areas.

Vaccination program

DEECA continued its delivery of an annual voucher-based influenza vaccination program in 2025-26. A total of 1,534 employees or 23% of employees, redeemed a voucher and 22 vaccination reimbursements were claimed.

Mandatory training

Mandatory safety, mental health and wellbeing and psychological first aid training continued to be delivered in 2025-26, to support DEECA's safety and wellbeing culture and ensure staff feel empowered to recognise, raise and address issues at all levels.

Inappropriate workplace behaviours reporting channel

In 2025-26, the department's Talk to Us channels, which support early resolution options for inappropriate workplace behaviour, received 68 reports, a decrease of 30 reports compared with 2024-25. The majority of reports (55 reports; 81%) related to direct experiences and exposure to the alleged behaviour. Of the reports received, 52 were referred to additional pathways including the Workplace Relations and Investigations team (21), Workplace Conciliator (13), People and Culture Business Partners (13), Employee Assistance Program (12), Injury Management team (5) and the Integrity team (5).

j) General statement on industrial relations within the department and details of time lost through industrial accidents and disputes

A general statement on industrial relations within the department is included in the DEECA 2025-26 Annual Report, under the Our People section, which is available at [DEECA's Annual Report website](#).

	Time lost (person days)
Workplace injuries	In 2025-26, 73 claims lodged with DEECA's WorkCover insurer involved lost time. A total of 1,338 days were lost due to workplace injuries.
Industrial disputes	DEECA recorded one work stoppage as a result of protected industrial action undertaken by the Australian Workers' Union during enterprise bargaining in 2025-26. A total of 7.6 hours were lost for 351 employees, totalling 2,667.6 hours, or 351 days.

k) Major committees sponsored by the department, the purpose of each committee and the extent to which the purposes have been achieved

The following table lists DEECA's Board of Management and its committees, the purpose of each committee and the extent to which the purposes have been achieved in 2025-26.

Committee	Purpose	Extent of purpose achieved in 2025-26
Board of Management	<p>The DEECA Board of Management sets the strategic direction of the department, monitors performance against the strategic direction and ensures sound governance to support decision making.</p> <p>The Board of Management comprises the Secretary, Deputy Secretaries, Chief Executive Officers and the Executive Director, Office of the Secretary.</p> <p>Meetings may include additional invitees from across DEECA's executive team, whose experience and expertise support the Board of Management's discussion and decisions.</p>	<p>The Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • endorsed business plans and monitored performance across major and priority projects and services, ensuring alignment with the Victorian Government's objectives, priorities and budget decisions, while delivering measurable outcomes • endorsed strategies and initiatives to progress Aboriginal self-determination, strengthening community relationships and advancing treaty and reconciliation goals • endorsed policies and strategies to foster a safe and respectful workplace, support workload sustainability and address negative behaviours, to promote a positive organisational culture • endorsed a range of actions to improve emergency management capability, capacity, and business preparedness, enhancing resilience and readiness across the department • provided stewardship of DEECA's emergency management responses across multiple portfolios • provided stewardship and oversight of the department's contribution to the Victorian Government's economic growth agenda • considered policy issues at the intersection of multiple portfolios to provide an aligned departmental position • endorsed changes to departmental systems, processes, and operating models to improve efficiency, support workload management, and achieve budget savings, aligning with organisational sustainability and financial goals • endorsed the establishment of revised Terms of Reference and revised meeting cadence for the Board of Management to replace the former DEECA Executive Board • endorsed revised Terms of Reference for Board of Management subcommittees to support efficient and effective governance within the department.

Committee	Purpose	Extent of purpose achieved in 2025-26
Finance, Procurement and Budget Strategy Committee	The Finance, Procurement and Budget Strategy Committee provides senior executive oversight and strategic direction on financial management, financial sustainability, and procurement matters. This includes emerging issues and risks on financial management, financial sustainability, and oversight of procurement matters under the Victorian Government Purchasing Board's supply policies to ensure alignment with the department's strategic risks.	<p>In 2025-26, the former Finance and Procurement Committee met 3 times (July, September and November 2025). The Committee provided strategic guidance and a consistent governance approach on DEECA's finance and procurement reforms.</p> <p>Key focus areas in the first half of 2025-26 included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> annual attestation of the department's compliance with the <u>Asset Management Accountability Framework</u> development of the DEECA Social Procurement Strategy 2026-28 to embed social and environmental priorities into procurement decision-making. monthly monitoring of financial and procurement performance and risks updating of financial policies. <p>The Finance, Procurement and Budget Strategy Committee replaced the Finance and Procurement Committee from 1 January 2026 and met in February and June 2026.</p> <p>The key focus of the new Committee in the second half of 2025-26 was:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> providing advice and proposed actions to be undertaken by DEECA to closely monitor and manage forecasts prior to the end of financial year monitoring progress on updates to the procurement framework following modifications implemented and enhancements executed.
People Committee	The People Committee leads and oversees organisational culture, capability, health, safety, and wellbeing in line with DEECA's legislative obligations and departmental priorities.	<p>The People Committee consolidated and streamlined the former Safety and Wellbeing Assurance and People and Culture Stewardship Committees. The Committee met 7 times in 2025-26 and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> endorsed and oversaw key people and culture activities, including a review into 2024-25 expenditure monitored progress against DEECA's Psychosocial Risk Management approach commenced activities to establish a Safety Assurance Subcommittee and workshops to enable deep dives into key safety-related themes and mitigations considered and endorsed a 'person-centred' cultural focus for DEECA, guided by a Keep Everyone Safe approach.
Performance and Operations Committee	The Performance and Operations Committee provides oversight of the department's operational performance, efficiency and risks. The Committee monitors performance, offers strategic advice and assurance to the Secretary, and provides an opportunity for operational leadership to address shared challenges.	<p>The new Performance and Operations Committee was established in November 2025 and met in March and June 2026. The Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> endorsed the development of an improved strategy for insurance approaches and governance arrangements provided additional oversight of the department's strategic and operational risks monitored performance across major infrastructure, flagship and priority projects and services, ensuring alignment with the Victorian Government's objectives, priorities and budget decisions, while delivering measurable outcomes

Committee	Purpose	Extent of purpose achieved in 2025-26
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> reviewed the progress on key department initiatives, including emergency management capability and capacity, and action on emissions reduction considered the evaluation of the department's progress on Aboriginal self-determination initiatives.
Strategic Technology Committee	The Strategic Technology Committee sets the strategic direction for DEECA's digital, data, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) capability and monitors ICT performance. It enables the department to leverage data and technology to achieve best practice outcomes and monitors DEECA's strategic ICT risks.	<p>The Data and Technology Stewardship Committee met 4 times in 2025-26: The Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> noted the operation and maturity of DEECA's cybersecurity controls noted status updates of DEECA's information technology project portfolio noted the operations of DEECA's key ICT governance forums, including the Architecture Review Board and Change Advisory Board discussed uses and benefits of common technology platforms. <p>The Strategic Technology Committee replaced the former Data and Technology Stewardship Committee from 1 January 2026 and met twice in 2025-26. The Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> endorsed the DEECA Technology Strategy 2026-2029 for Board of Management approval. monitored DEECA's cybersecurity controls, cyber maturity level and strategic cyber risk. noted status updates on 2 major technology projects in DEECA business groups. discussed opportunities and benefits of using common technology platforms within the department. considered DEECA's readiness for the Public Record's Office Victoria Information Maturity Assessment Program survey (August to October 2026).
Executive Staffing and Remuneration Committee	The Executive Staffing and Remuneration Committee ensures a fair and equitable approach to employment and remuneration at the Senior Executive Service, Principal Scientist and Senior Technical Specialist classifications. The Committee considers and oversees the movement of the executive workforce, including monitoring recruitment to executive roles, executive role creation and contract renewals.	<p>The Executive Staffing and Remuneration Committee met 7 times in 2025-26. In addition to performing its core function, key focus areas for 2025-26 included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> overseeing the executive workforce composition and reporting reviewing and endorsing updates to key executive employment governance frameworks to establish a consistent and transparent approach to the executive employment lifecycle, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> executive contract renewal guidelines executive remuneration decision matrix.
Risk and Audit Committee	The Risk and Audit Committee is an independent body established in accordance with the <u>Standing Directions 2018</u> under the <i>Financial Management Act 1994</i> (FMA). As an advisory committee, it provides independent assurance to the Secretary that the department's risk and control environment is	<p>The Risk and Audit Committee met 5 times in 2025-26 and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> reviewed DEECA's 2024-25 annual financial statements and recommended that the Secretary authorise them monitored DEECA's compliance with the FMA requirements and reviewed DEECA's annual assessment of compliance reviewed the report of operations on financial management, performance and sustainability considered DEECA's risk culture, profile and appetite (including insurance)

Committee	Purpose	Extent of purpose achieved in 2025-26
	operating effectively and efficiently. The Committee reviews and assesses the department's systems and controls for financial management, performance and sustainability, including risk management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> reviewed and assessed DEECA's compliance with the <u>Victorian Government Risk Management Framework</u> and effectiveness of DEECA's implementation of its risk management framework oversaw DEECA's internal audit function and approved the rolling strategic Internal Audit Plan, work program and audit scopes independently reviewed and assessed the effectiveness of DEECA's systems and controls for financial management, performance and sustainability, including risk management by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> reviewing internal audit outcomes considering outcomes of the Victorian Auditor-General's Office engagements regularly reviewing implementation of actions in response to recommendations from internal and external engagements.

I) Details of consultancies and contractors including:

- i. consultants/contractors engaged
- ii. services provided
- iii. expenditure committed to for each engagement.

Details of all consultancies and contractors (including i. consultants/contractors engaged; ii. services provided; iii. expenditure committed to for each engagement) are available on request from the DEECA Customer Contact Centre on 136 186, or via email: **Customer Service**, subject to the provisions of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*.