

Letter of compliance



Department of
Housing and Public Works

18 September 2020

The Honourable Mick de Brenni MP
Minister for Housing and Public Works
Minister for Digital Technology
Minister for Sport
Level 31, 1 William Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Minister

I am pleased to submit for presentation to the Parliament, the Annual Report 2019-20 and financial statements for the Department of Housing and Public Works.

I certify that this annual report complies with:

- the prescribed requirements of the *Financial Accountability Act 2009* and the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019*, and
- the detailed requirements set out in the *Annual report requirements for Queensland Government agencies*.

A checklist outlining the annual reporting requirements can be found at page 53 of this annual report.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Liza Carroll".

Liza Carroll
Director-General

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Message from the Director-General

The 2019-20 year has been one of significant challenge and delivery for the Department of Housing and Public Works.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 saw the rapid pivot of the department's priorities and resources as we supported the Queensland Government's efforts to unite, respond and recover. This event also saw the transition of the department's workforce to remote and flexible work arrangements for an extended period of time.

The energy and commitment of the department in responding to the challenges of COVID-19 is worthy of acknowledgement and I thank all staff for their continued dedication and efforts. During this unprecedented event, we worked collaboratively to ensure continued frontline delivery of services to Queenslanders in housing and homelessness services and in the provision of critical cross-agency support in the areas of customer and digital services, procurement, cyber security and office accommodation, among others.

COVID-19 has further emphasised the importance of the department's future-ready focus, through our work as the lead agency for the 'Be a Responsive Government' priority, under *Our Future State: Advancing Queensland's Priorities* (AQP) program of work.

Digital connectedness has been brought firmly into focus during the pandemic, making our ongoing work in developing better customer-to-government interactions supported by technology more important than ever. This work continues to be at the heart of our development and delivery of responsive and joined-up services that help us meet the changing needs of Queenslanders and communities.

This annual report highlights the work we have done both as the lead agency for 'Be a Responsive Government', but also as a contributor to the five other AQP priorities. It also outlines what we have achieved together across our four strategic objective areas.

Services for Queenslanders

Our work across our housing, homelessness, sport and building policy areas has contributed to important outcomes for Queenslanders, from growing the supply of social and affordable housing through the Housing Construction Jobs Program, improving housing opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and encouraging Queenslanders of all ages to get out and active in their communities, to building a safer, fairer and more sustainable building and construction industry that supports the livelihoods of thousands of Queensland families.

During COVID-19, the agile efforts of these teams was demonstrated by the department's response in finding ways to support people and communities across the state. Initiatives such as the Housing and Homelessness Immediate Response Residential Rental Hub and *Sport and Recreation COVID SAFE Restart Plan* were developed and implemented rapidly, ensuring our communities were supported during this time.

The department's digital and information areas delivered across the key focus areas of government services, recordkeeping, archives and open government data and played a significant role during COVID-19 in leading a number of initiatives that supported the sector-wide response effort. The rapid establishment of a 134COVID phone service, the COVID19.qld.gov.au website and support for initiatives like the Care Army were some of the key outcomes that connected communities and provided vital information to Queenslanders.

Significant work was also accomplished in terms of contributing to the Queensland Government's Unite and Recover Economic Recovery Strategy through the development of programs and pipelines of work aimed at generating and supporting jobs across the state.



The energy and commitment of the department in responding to the challenges of COVID-19 is worthy of acknowledgement and I thank all staff for their continued dedication and efforts.

Services for Government

The department plays a critical role across government, delivering major projects, office accommodation and government employee housing, procurement and digital services. These services to government are delivered through the department and via our three commercialised business units – QBuild, CITEC and QFleet, and our shared service provider Queensland Shared Services.

Key highlights during 2019-20 included the Rebuilding QBuild initiative, which set out a roadmap for the employment of 240 tradespeople and 60 apprentices over the next three years, the delivery of the 25,000-seat North Queensland Stadium in Townsville, the implementation of the Buy Queensland Food and Beverage Supplier Directory, and the delivery of the Lattice Replacement Project which saw a further 16,000 Queensland Government employees brought onto a common payroll system.

We also continued to play a critical role in protecting the Queensland Government's digital assets, particularly during COVID-19 with our advanced cyber protection services to agencies preventing numerous cyber-attacks. The rapid establishment of a COVID-19 supplier portal for government buyers and work to secure personal protective equipment including hand sanitiser during the pandemic supported agencies as they responded to the challenges of COVID-19.

Future-facing Strategy and Policy

We delivered a number of initiatives during 2019-20 that will play a key role in supporting the development of our strategies and policies into the future.

The implementation of the *Human Rights Act 2019* saw the department's policies, procedures and complaints management processes updated to reflect the provisions of the Act across our work practices and decision-making processes.

A significant consultation exercise was also undertaken via the Open Doors to Renting Reform initiative, to ensure that the input of all stakeholders in the Queensland residential rental sector was considered in the development of the *Better Renting Future Reform Roadmap*.

The department also established a COVID-19 Taskforce to respond to the challenge of the pandemic, working across agencies to deliver critical information, health advice and support for staff as they transitioned from, and back to, their workplaces.

A Unified Organisation

Internally, we have maintained a strong focus on inclusivity and equipping our people with the support, tools and training they need to deliver their important work. This effort has in turn helped us strive to become a high-performance culture that values people, diversity, health, safety and wellbeing.

Some of the department's internal achievements during 2019-20 include the establishment of a number of Diversity and Inclusion Employee Networks to help ensure every person can be their whole selves in the workplace. Another significant undertaking has been the review of the department's *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advancement Framework*.

During COVID-19, the health, safety and wellbeing of our employees has been the highest priority, and critical support, advice, resources and flexible work arrangements were made available to our people during the health emergency, and as they transitioned out of, and back into, their workplaces.

The commitment and talent of our workforce has been at the fore, particularly as we navigated the challenge posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

It has been a great honour to lead the Department of Housing and Public Works over the past five years. The department is well positioned to deliver for Queenslanders into the future, in ways that will make a real difference. This delivery will continue to be underpinned by human-centred design, responsiveness, innovation and care, supporting our aspiration as a future-facing agency focussed on positive change.

In closing, I would like to reflect on, and pay tribute to, our QBuild colleagues Wayne Brischke, Henry Roebig, Wayne Ganter and contractor Mark Rawlings, as well as charter pilot Stuart Wavell, who tragically lost their lives on 11 March 2020 in an aviation accident at Lockhart River. The dedication, service and legacy of these members of the Housing and Public Works family will not be forgotten.

Liza Carroll

Director-General