Wet Tropics Management Authority

Annual Report 2023–24



WET TROPICS
MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

Purpose of the report

This annual report details the financial and non-financial performance of the Wet Tropics Management Authority (the Authority) from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024. It describes the achievements, performance, outlook and financial position of the Authority, and satisfies the requirements of the *Financial Accountability Act 2009*, Financial and Performance Management Standard 2009, the detailed requirements set out in the annual report requirements for Queensland Government agencies, Queensland's *Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993* and the Commonwealth's *Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area Conservation Act 1994*.

Feedback

This annual report is an important document representing communication and accountability. The Authority values comments and welcomes feedback from readers.

Public availability

This publication can be accessed and downloaded from www.wettropics.gov.au/annual-reports. Alternatively, hard copies of this publication can be obtained by emailing wettropics@wtma.qld.gov.au.

Interpreter service statement

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Disclaimer

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Further information

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WET TROPICS
MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

ISSN 2653-584X
ISBN 978-1-921591-92-1

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The Wet Tropics Management Authority acknowledges the spirit of Country of the Wet Tropics and recognises Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples as carrying custodial responsibility. We pay our respects to their ancestors and traditions.

Cover photo: Wallaman Falls, Warrgamay Country—Wet Tropics Images

10 September 2024

The Hon Leanne Linard MP
Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef,
Minister for Science and Innovation
GPO Box 5078
Brisbane QLD 4001

Dear Minister

I am pleased to submit for presentation to the Parliament the Annual Report 2023–24 and financial statements for the Wet Tropics Management Authority.

I certify this annual report complies with:

- the prescribed requirements of the *Financial Accountability Act 2009* and the Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019
- the *Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993* (Qld)
- the *Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area Conservation Act 1994* (Cwlth)

This Annual Report also meets the requirements set out in the annual report requirements for Queensland Government agencies. A checklist outlining the annual reporting requirements is provided at page 40 of this annual report.

Yours faithfully

Christine T. Grant

Ms Christine Grant
Chair, Wet Tropics Management Authority Board

WET TROPICS
MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

10 September 2024

The Hon Tanya Plibersek MP
Minister for the Environment and Water
PO Box 6022
House of Representatives
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Minister

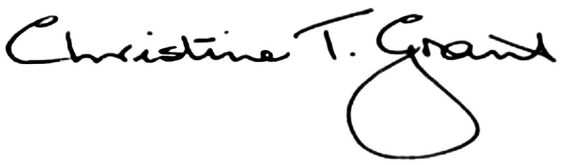
I am pleased to present the Annual Report 2023–24 for the Wet Tropics Management Authority.

Under the *Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area Conservation Act 1994* (Cwlth) section 10 (1), 'annual report' means a report given to the Australian Government under section 63 of the *Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993* (Qld).

Section 10 (2) requires you, as the Minister, to cause a copy of the annual report to be laid before each House of Parliament within 15 sitting days after the report is given to the Australian Government.

In submitting this report to you today, the Authority is fulfilling its responsibilities under Australian Government legislation.

Yours faithfully



Ms Christine Grant
Chair, Wet Tropics Management Authority Board

Message from the Chair

The Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area (the Area) contains some of the oldest continuously surviving tropical rainforests on Earth and has been named the second-most irreplaceable World Heritage Area in the world. Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples have been sustainably managing this Country for thousands of years, and the mosaic landscapes and diverse habitats are a result of this management. This is a cultural landscape.

The Wet Tropics Management Authority (the Authority) holds the obligation to protect, conserve, present, rehabilitate and transmit the Area to future generations. It does this work in the face of significant challenges—including increasing threats caused by climate change and growing biosecurity threats.

Tropical Cyclone Jasper and the extreme rainfall that followed in December 2023 brought these challenges into sharp focus, with the Authority and its partners working to quantify and understand impacts and prioritise on-the-ground action. The Authority undertook a number of actions including supporting the establishment of an Eastern Kuku Yalanji Elders Advisory Group to provide cultural advice to guide flood recovery efforts for displaced residents of Wujal Wujal; collaborating with the Department of Transport and Main Roads and relevant local government authorities to reopen damaged road networks; and supporting the recovery of essential community services infrastructure. While this recovery effort stretched our resources, through hard work we continued to ensure that appropriate use of the Area is balanced with protection of its World Heritage Outstanding Universal Value.

The 2023–24 year saw significant commitment to the Authority's relationships with Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples. The Eastern Kuku Yalanji Return to Country project commenced under a collaborative project agreement between the Authority and Jabalbina Yalanji Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC.

In partnership with Terrain NRM, we established the Indigenous Advisory Committee (IAC) who will advise the Boards of both organisations on strategic and operational priorities across the Wet Tropics. Our Bama Country and Culture project—which will deliver an online interactive story map to enhance awareness of connections with Country—is nearing completion, including videos featuring Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples responsible for Country across the Wet Tropics.

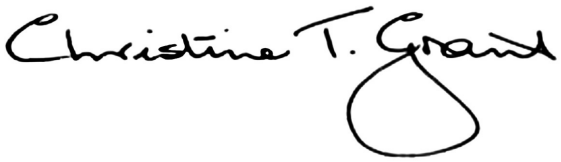
The Authority's Yellow Crazy Ant Eradication Program went from strength to strength—this year we celebrated the single largest yellow crazy ant eradication in the world to date. The program is recognised as a national if not global leader and lends its expertise to other eradication programs. We proudly presented our work to Minister Plibersek, Minister Linard and Senator Green who all attended our operations base to hear about our successes, meet our hard-working staff, and see our odour-detection dogs in action.

Presentation and promotion of the Area continues to grow, with significant progress made on our Wet Tropics World Heritage Guides tour guide training program—training packages are now in online production. A visual identity style guide for the Wet Tropics was developed with the Department of Environment, Science and Innovation to ensure consistent and effective World Heritage messaging in signage and interpretive material across the Area.

Restoration to build connectivity and resilience for habitats and species within and adjacent to the Area remained a key climate change mitigation focus of the Authority, with several well-attended field days conducted by the Wet Tropics Restoration Alliance. The foundation has been laid for some exciting partnerships that will allow for significant scaling up of restoration efforts to build resilience of Wet Tropics landscapes.

These are just some of the important and impactful actions undertaken by the Authority to ensure we deliver on our obligation to the Area. This annual report details the broad scope of work undertaken in close partnership with Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples, community, land managers, government agencies, research organisations, and the conservation sector over the 2023–24 financial year.

While the Authority's reducing funding base remains an ongoing challenge to be resolved, we strive to seek ways to address the growing threats and maintain the exceptional standard of conservation and presentation this globally significant Area deserves.



Ms Christine Grant

About the Wet Tropics

The Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area

World Heritage listing of a site is recognition by the UNESCO World Heritage Committee on behalf of the international community that the place is such an outstanding example of the world's natural and/or cultural heritage that its conservation is of value to all people and its species. The World Heritage List is currently comprised of 1,223 properties that the World Heritage Committee considers have Outstanding Universal Value—including 20 Australian properties, five of which are in Queensland.

The Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area (the Area) was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1988 for its natural values, meeting all four natural criteria for World Heritage listing and fulfilling the necessary conditions of integrity. The Area was also added to Australia's National Heritage List in 2007 for its natural values.

The Area is a rich, living cultural landscape for Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples, who have lived continuously in the rainforest environment for many thousands of years. It is the only Australian site where Aboriginal Peoples have permanently inhabited a tropical rainforest environment. While the World Heritage listing does not include its Indigenous cultural values, the National Heritage listing was expanded in 2012 to incorporate them.

The challenge

The Wet Tropics World Heritage Area is important on a global scale, but its conservation outlook has been listed as being of 'significant concern'[1] by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in all three of its World Heritage Outlook reports (2014, 2017 and 2020). This is only one step away from 'critical'. There is enormous pressure on the World Heritage values of the Area. In particular, mountaintop ecosystems and the species reliant on the health of those ecosystems (including possums, birds, frogs and lizards) are under serious threat from the impacts of climate change. For example, the impact of an extended heatwave could result in population collapses. Adding to this is the cumulative threat of invasive species—for example, feral pigs are destroying breeding sites of the critically endangered (and range restricted) mountain-top nursery frog.[2]

The Wet Tropics Management Authority's (the Authority) 2023–24 State of Wet Tropics Report considered existing information about the Area's World Heritage values in a pressure-state-response framework. Additionally, in June 2024, the Authority's Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) held an expert workshop on the 'Landscape resilience and recovery for the tropical northeastern forests of Queensland'. Part of the workshop was an assessment of threats and a prioritisation of management actions for threatened species and ecological communities in the Wet Tropics. Utilising the State of Wet Tropics Report and the final outcomes of the expert workshop, the Authority will work with natural resource management groups and others to develop a contemporary prioritised suite of coordinated on-ground actions to address threats and will seek funding for these through existing programs where possible, but also new initiatives where necessary.

While both the State of Wet Tropics Report and the outcomes report from the SAC's expert workshop identify actions that can be taken to address the key threats to the Area—and there are some exciting opportunities emerging—the overall message is sobering. Due to the effects of climate change, species extinctions are now all but inevitable. The ever-increasing list of biosecurity threats is arguably becoming

1 https://www.iucn.org/our-work/topic/world-heritage/our-work/iucn-world-heritage-outlook
2 https://www.dcceew.gov.au/environment/biodiversity/threatened/action-plan/priority-frogs/mountain-top-nursery-frog

unmanageable without significantly larger investment. This comes at a time after 20 straight years of decreasing base funding for the Authority.

To meet the range of increasing challenges and continue delivering world-class management and presentation of this globally significant place—and ultimately avoid the Area receiving a worsening rating by the IUCN, or even worse from the UNESCO World Heritage Committee—considerable changes and resources are needed. A rapid transition away from fossil fuels must be advocated for, invasive species must be managed, and additional on-ground actions must be implemented to protect endangered species and habitats.

Many of the identified actions require substantial ongoing on-ground work. Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and Partnerships look after more than 87% of the Area, with ranger teams covering large areas. Additional workforce is required. Scaling up support for existing and emerging Indigenous ranger programs is an obvious solution—who better to manage Country than the Traditional Custodians who can tap into extensive cultural knowledge of these systems that require support. While there is existing funding through both state and Commonwealth Indigenous ranger programs, there is huge potential for expansion. There are many aspirational or emerging Indigenous ranger teams that do not have funding or are operating on short-term grants. Long-term funding and coordinated action across the Area would make real impact in saving species and habitats from imminent decline and extinction. There would also be flow on benefits and development opportunities for regional communities.

The time to take such action is now, with urgency, otherwise we will be watching as a number of species —key to the Outstanding Universal Value of the Area disappear forever.

Relevant legislation

The Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area is managed under the *Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993* (the Queensland Act) and the *Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area Conservation Act 1994* (the Commonwealth Act). These Acts implement Australia's international duty for the protection, conservation, presentation, rehabilitation and transmission of the Area to future generations.

The Queensland Act established the Wet Tropics Management Authority and is the legal basis for the statutory Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998, which regulates land use activities in the Area through a zoning and permit system. The Management Scheme Intergovernmental Agreement for the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area is an agreement between the Queensland and Australian governments, originally signed by the Premier of Queensland and the Prime Minister of Australia in 1990. The latest version (agreed in 2012) continues to set out broad structural and funding arrangements for the management of the Area.

Our organisation

Our vision

To protect the values of the Wet Tropics through collaboration, culture, knowledge and passion

Our mission

To lead, inspire, advise and support the Australian and global community to protect and share the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area in perpetuity

Who we are

The Wet Tropics Management Authority (the Authority) was established to ensure Australia's obligation under the World Heritage Convention is met, in relation to the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area (the Area).

The Authority is a body corporate, with statutory powers defined under the *Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993* (the Queensland Act). The Authority's functions are fully defined under section 10 of the Queensland Act, and include to:

- develop and implement policies, plans and programs for management of the Area
- formulate performance indicators for the implementation of approved policies and programs
- advise, make recommendations and report to the relevant ministers on the state of the Area
- facilitate and enter into cooperative management agreements
- rehabilitate and restore the Area
- gather, research, analyse and disseminate information on the Area
- develop public and community education programs
- promote the Area locally, nationally and internationally
- monitor the state of the Area.

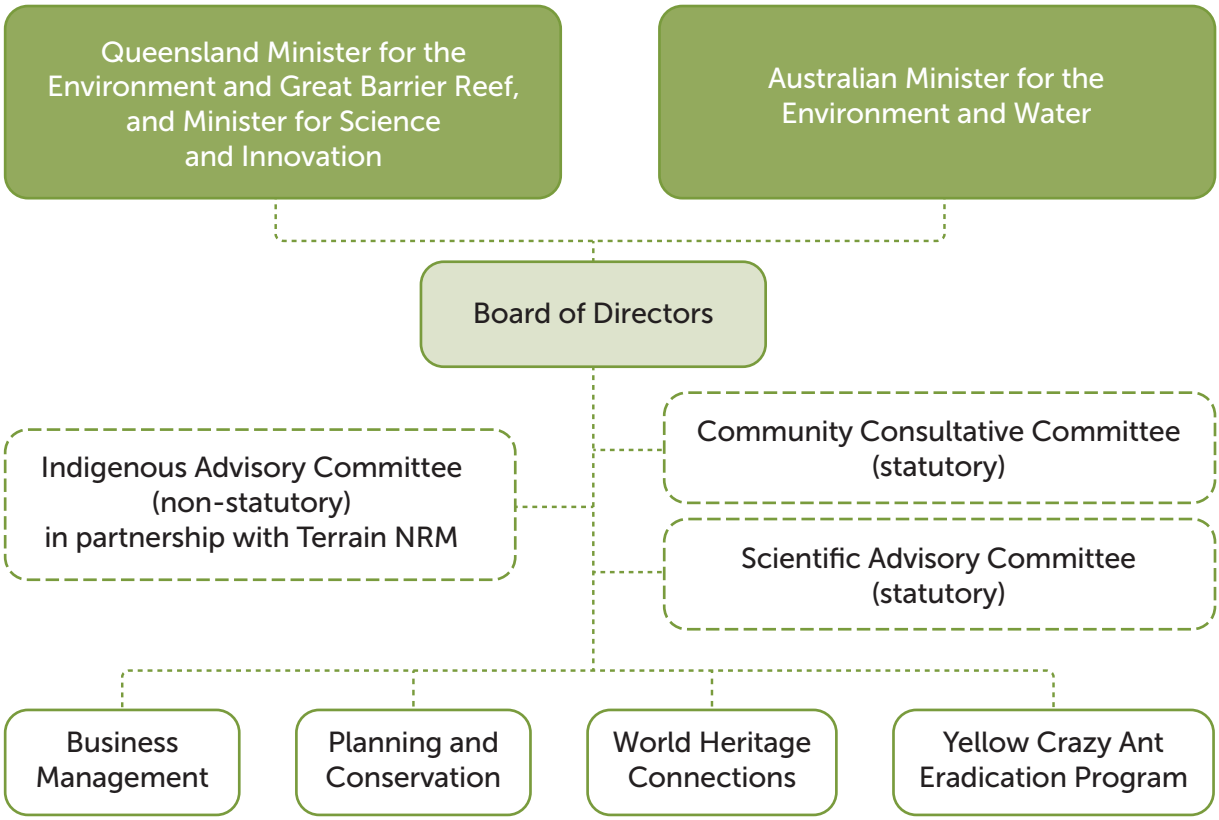
The Authority performs its functions in a way that protects the Area's natural heritage values and is consistent with the World Heritage Convention and relevant legislation. The Authority receives funding from the Australian and Queensland governments.

Our structure

As a body corporate operating under the requirements of Queensland and Australian legislation, the Authority's structure enshrines its engagement with both governments, and a range of industry and community stakeholders throughout the Wet Tropics region.

The Authority operates as an administrative unit within the Queensland Government's Department of Environment, Science and Innovation (DESI) and is subject to Queensland public sector legislation, regulations, standards and guidelines governing administrative functions and arrangements. The Director-General of DESI is the accountable officer for the Authority under the Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019. The Authority is responsible to the Director-General regarding compliance with Queensland Government administrative and financial standards.

Wet Tropics Management Authority reporting structure



Relevant ministers

The Management Scheme Intergovernmental Agreement for the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area and the Queensland Act recognise that both the Australian and Queensland governments have joint interests in and responsibilities for the Area. The Authority's Board of Directors reports to two ministers:

- The Hon. Leanne Linard MP, Queensland Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Innovation
- The Hon. Tanya Plibersek MP, Australian Minister for the Environment and Water.

Board of Directors

The Authority's Board of Directors (the Board) is established under the Queensland Act. The Board's key function is to implement programs to meet Australia's international obligation for the Area under the World Heritage Convention.

The Board consists of seven directors, six of whom are voting members and serve in a part-time capacity. The Authority's Executive Director is the seventh and non-voting director.

The Australian and Queensland governments nominate two directors each—Commonwealth legislation requires that at least one Australian Government nominee is an Aboriginal person. The relevant ministers also jointly nominate a Chair and an Aboriginal director. These requirements are as a result of the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area Regional Agreement[3] and ensure that the Board will always have at least two Aboriginal directors, one nominated by the Commonwealth minister, and one nominated jointly by both ministers.

3 The Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area Regional Agreement is a historical agreement signed in 2005 between 18 Rainforest Aboriginal tribal groups and the Australian and Queensland governments to cooperatively manage the Wet Tropics area

Statutory and non-statutory committees

The Authority has two statutory advisory committees appointed by the Board under section 40 (1) of the Queensland Act—the Community Consultative Committee and the Scientific Advisory Committee—and one non-statutory advisory committee—the Indigenous Advisory Committee (IAC), jointly appointed by the Authority's Board with the Board of Terrain NRM. The IAC has been established by the Authority and Terrain NRM Boards to advise on strategic and operational priorities across the Wet Tropics Biocultural Region. All three committees meet prior to Board meetings and advise the Board on programs and research for the management of the Area. Each committee is chaired by one of the Board's directors, providing a direct line of communication between the committees and the Board.

Our contribution to government objectives

Consistent with its legislative roles and functions, the Authority endeavours to ensure that its service delivery initiatives contribute to Australian and Queensland government objectives for the Wet Tropics.

The Authority implements programs under the Federation Funding Agreement between the Commonwealth of Australia and the State of Queensland for initiatives in the environment sector, namely the delivery of effective management of the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area in accordance with the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* and Australia's obligation under the World Heritage Convention.

The Authority's direction and service delivery contribute to the Queensland Government's objectives for the community by:

- supporting good, secure jobs in the tourism, Indigenous and natural resource management sectors
- investing in skills by refreshing our tour guide training program and partnering with universities
- protecting our environment, safeguarding this world-recognised natural landscape for future generations
- growing our region by attracting investment in science, education, nature-based and Indigenous tourism
- honouring and embracing our rich cultural history through partnerships and opportunities for Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples.

Reporting

As required under section 63 (1) of the *Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993* (the Queensland Act) and section 10, each year the Authority prepares an annual report (this report) which includes the financial statements and administration of the Acts. The Authority also prepares a yearly State of Wet Tropics Report.

As the Authority is specified as a statutory authority, and not a statutory body under the *Financial Accountability Act 2009* (FAA), the annual report requirements for Queensland Government agencies (ARRs) do not strictly apply to the Authority's reporting process. However, as the Authority is reported on under the ARRs through DESI, this report will closely follow the ARRs in terms of required content, and financial reporting process.

Our performance

This annual report outlines the Wet Tropics Management Authority's (the Authority) progress against the Wet Tropics Strategic Plan 2020–2030 (the Strategic Plan). The Strategic Plan outlines how the Authority will work with partners and the community to effectively manage and protect the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area (the Area) and ensure cooperative management with Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples.

Five high-level strategies of the Authority are identified in the Strategic Plan, and the Authority's achievements for the 2023–24 year are detailed for each of these:

- Strategy 1—Climate change and other threats (see page 14)
- Strategy 2—Support Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples (see page 17)
- Strategy 3—Involve the community (see page 19)
- Strategy 4—World-class tourism and recreation (see page 21)
- Strategy 5—Minimise impacts (see page 23)

To ensure financial and business planning appropriately supports and enhances the achievement of strategic goals, the Authority's commitment to excellence in corporate governance and management, as well as to fostering a healthy organisation and meeting human rights obligations, is also reported against:

- High quality executive, partnership and governance work to ensure the Authority remains an accountable and capable organisation (see page 25).

Strategy 1 — Climate change and other threats: respond to the impacts of climate change and priority cross-tenure threats to the Area

Disaster recovery

Tropical Cyclone Jasper, crossing the Queensland coast in December 2023, and the subsequent extreme rainfall event caused significant flooding and damage in the northern part of the Area, emphasising the need to address and mitigate the effects of climate change. This event impacted the OUV of the Area through the destruction of critical habitat through landslides, creek scouring and flooding. There was damage to built infrastructure and scenic amenity that will take many years to restore. The full extent of the effect on World Heritage values is yet to be determined, and impacts are likely to exacerbate ongoing threats to the integrity of the Area including invasive species, fragmentation, and unplanned fires.

The Authority supported recovery through a number of actions including:

- collaborating with the Department of Transport and Main Roads and relevant local government authorities to reopen damaged road networks in a timely manner, while ensuring a focus on protecting OUV of the Area
- working with the Cairns Regional Council, CleanCo, Cook Shire Council, Department of Transport and Main Roads, Douglas Shire Council, and Queensland Rail to inspect damage to essential community infrastructure, and collaborating on solutions to ensure environmentally sensitive service delivery
- supporting the establishment of an Eastern Kuku Yalanji Elders Advisory Group to provide cultural advice to guide flood recovery efforts for displaced residents of Wujal Wujal.

Climate change adaptation and restoration work

The Authority's Wet Tropics Restoration Program progressed restoration planning projects in the Daintree lowlands and southern Atherton Tableland, including supporting the production of Jabalbina Yalanji Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC's draft 'Green economy' plan for Eastern Kuku Yalanji People's Native Title lands in the Daintree.

The Authority supported the Interim Steering Group for the Wet Tropics Restoration Alliance (a coalition of member organisations) to develop governance and engagement models. In December, an Alliance event visited different restoration sites on the Cassowary Coast and members workshopped priorities and ways to overcome barriers to upscaling restoration across the region. There were 55 participants, with more than half being from Indigenous organisations and/or Indigenous Land and Sea Ranger programs.



Wet Tropics Restoration Alliance members at Gurrbum Nature Refuge, Smiths Gap, Gulnay and Djiru Country—Wet Tropics Images

The Authority signed a collaborative agreement with the North Queensland Dairy Development Association to identify opportunities on southern Atherton Tableland dairy farms to enhance carbon storage and biodiversity through tree planting and restoration on appropriate areas (such as marginally productive areas) and through wind breaks. Expected results include additional revenue for farmers in the form of nature-based credits (carbon, water quality, biodiversity) and better biodiversity outcomes. The Authority also commissioned a technical report for assessing carbon in the Wet Tropics, which will inform opportunities for carbon based natural capital investments.

Yellow crazy ant eradication

The Authority continued to track successfully against project objectives of the Yellow Crazy Ant Eradication Program, with the program nationally recognised as an exemplar in biosecurity management. This year the Authority celebrated the single largest eradication in the world to date. This eradication of yellow crazy ants from 390ha of rainforest, farmland and suburban areas south of Cairns was a major milestone. It included 267ha of forest inside and adjacent to the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area and the greatest number of residential properties to be declared eradicated so far. This included 615 residential properties (57ha) at Bentley Park, as well as 41ha of sugarcane and a local turf farm. This brought the total area of announced eradication for 2023–24 to 438ha. Currently 2,300ha remains under management, with the majority under transition surveys showing minimal to zero ant presence. The program is funded jointly by the Australian and Queensland governments.



Wet Tropics Management Authority's Yellow Crazy Ant Eradication Program staff in the lab at James Cook University, Yirrganydji Country—Wet Tropics Images

The Authority collaborates through partnerships with other ant eradication teams across Queensland and the Northern Territory, sharing knowledge and expertise. A data sharing agreement was established with Townsville City Council for enhanced management of yellow crazy ant infestations. The Authority worked jointly with Biosecurity Queensland's National Electric Ant Eradication Program to deliver training in detection and survey methods to the Djabugay Bulmba Rangers, drone-mediated treatments, and to create the 'AntZone' map—a user-friendly online map showing where yellow crazy ant and electric ant infestations are found.

Community outreach remained a core focus. Awareness was increased and partnerships created through events such as visits to local schools and industry engagements. Contract negotiations and extensions ensured ongoing arrangements with Abriculture Pty Ltd, Kuranda Envirocare, North Queensland Land Management Services, as well as odour-detection dogs support through Credible Canines. The research partnership with James Cook University continued, providing valuable data through experiments and supporting ongoing research including eDNA, terrestrial invertebrates and ecological process trials. Attendance at conferences and forums—including the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and Partnerships (QPWS&P) Annual Pest Forum—showcased the Authority's methods and successes.

Threatened species recovery

The Authority's 2022–23 State of Wet Tropics Report emphasised the urgency for resources, supportive laws, and monitoring systems to track and aid the rescue and recovery of endangered species and habitats in the face of increasing threats such as climate change. The report called for improved management, and for the support for leadership by Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples.

The Area is at the core of a priority place for threatened species and ecological community recovery—the Eastern Forests of Far North Queensland—as identified in the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water's (DCCEEW) Threatened Species Action Plan 2022–2032. The priority place encompasses approximately 105,000km² over a multitude of land tenures and habitats. In June the Authority's Scientific Advisory Committee brought together 16 key scientists (from James Cook University, QPWS&P, the Australian Tropical Herbarium, and others) and regional natural resource management organisations (Terrain NRM, Cape York NRM, Gulf Savannah NRM and NQ Dry Tropics) for an expert workshop. The workshop—'Landscape resilience and recovery for the tropical northeastern forests of Queensland'—examined historical and current research to assess which threats, species and ecological communities must take priority, and make plans to address these through on-ground action into the future. A final report from the workshop is due in late 2024.

The Authority continued to be an active participant in threatened species recovery teams—a program supported by the DCCEEW—including as Secretariat of the Southern Cassowary Recovery Team. The Authority held three meetings for this recovery team, and further participated in the northern bettong (three meetings), mahogany glider (one meeting), and spectacled flying-fox (five meetings) recovery team meetings. An additional two-day workshop was hosted by the Authority to steer research for spectacled flying-fox recovery.

Strategy 2 — Support Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples: promote and incorporate the rights, interests and aspirations of Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples in the management of the Area

Embedding an Indigenous rights-based approach

To enhance cultural understanding and sensitivity, the Authority conducted an all-staff workshop to unpack the meaning and application of a rights-based approach, further strengthening the organisation's commitment to inclusivity and respect for Indigenous perspectives.

The Authority established an Indigenous Advisory Committee (IAC) in partnership with Terrain NRM, following the 2023 Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples' Regional Forum where attendees passed a resolution in support. The IAC—a skills-based committee—will advise the Boards of both organisations to ensure the views, interests and aspirations of Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples are included in delivery of their plans, policies and programs at a strategic level. Following an expression of interest process five applicants were endorsed as members of the IAC for an initial term of 12 months. The IAC held its inaugural meeting in May, marking the beginning of its advisory role.

The Authority presented to the Queensland Government's Treaty Readiness Team on key priority actions under the Wet Tropics Sustainable Tourism Plan 2021–2031 that support Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples' initiatives that may contribute to treaty readiness.

Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples' Regional Forum

The 2023 Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples' Regional Forum took place from 11–13 October in Cairns. This significant gathering drew more than 60 Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples, with support and joint funding from the Authority, Terrain NRM and the Department of Environment, Science and Innovation (DESI).

Attendees had the opportunity to share knowledge and hear presentations from various Rainforest Aboriginal groups about the crucial work being done on Country. A range of resolutions were adopted, including an endorsement and show of support for the National First Nations' Dingo Declaration (recognising the dingo's cultural significance throughout the Wet Tropics); support for the process of recruiting IAC members; and in-principle endorsement for the inclusion of cultural values in the existing World Heritage listing for the Area.

Following the forum, a comprehensive outcomes report was distributed to Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples' groups and is available on the Authority's website.

Positive wellbeing and livelihood outcomes

The Authority's commitment to positive outcomes for Indigenous communities was evidenced through ongoing support for Rainforest Aboriginal groups in their projects and priorities as well as participation in the Queensland Tourism Industry Council's Destination IQ conference, centred on Indigenous tourism.

Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) negotiations commenced between the Authority, QPWS&P and various Aboriginal corporations concerning the management of Native Title determined areas within the Area.

The Bama Country and Culture (BCC) project, funded by the Australian Heritage Grants program, advanced considerably through a partnership with Sharing Stories Foundation under a collaborative project agreement. A skills-based Rainforest Aboriginal working group was established to oversee the project, ensuring culturally appropriate delivery. A BCC workshop was conducted during the 2023 Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples' Regional Forum, allowing participants to discuss and ultimately endorse the product name ('Rainforest People Country Culture'), colour palette and artwork. Intellectual property rights were addressed by engaging Marrawah Law to create a toolkit for protecting Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property through formal agreements. An expression of interest process inviting Rainforest Aboriginal

Peoples' groups to participate resulted in 11 individual videos being targeted for development, each representing different themes for 10 distinct Rainforest Aboriginal groups.

Research protocols for work on Country

The Application for Research Endorsement (ARE) process (developed by the Authority and QPWS&P) aims to ensure adequate and effective engagement between researchers and appropriate Traditional Owners is undertaken as early as possible prior to works on QPWS&P-managed estate in the Area.

The Authority engaged with Rainforest Aboriginal groups to broaden understanding of the ARE process and determine established research protocols. In cases where such protocols are absent, the ARE process is being integrated into the management planning and agreement formation of QPWS&P through the Values Based Management Framework and MoUs.



Filming for the Bama Country Culture project with Indigenous rangers, Gunggandji-Mandingalbay Yidinji Country—Wet Tropics Images

At the 2023 Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples' Regional Forum, the Authority and QPWS&P presented the outcomes of the ARE process so far. Feedback was encouraged to aid ongoing review and shape recommendations for future enhancements.

Uphold and strengthen custodial relationships

The Authority was involved in QPWS&P's Values Based Management Framework process to support the reflection of interests and aspirations of Traditional Owners. This included working with the Wadjanbarra Tablelands Yidinji RNTBC for lands near Lake Tinaroo (Danbulla National Park) and the Wabubadda Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC for the Herberton Range National Park and Conservation Park, as well as Jabalbina Yalanji Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC for Cape York Peninsula Aboriginal Land (CYPAL) parks in Eastern Kuku Yalanji Country.

The Eastern Kuku Yalanji Return to Country project commenced—this $1.0 million initiative, funded by the Queensland Government, aims to support the return to Country aspirations of Eastern Kuku Yalanji Rainforest Bama (Aboriginal Peoples) to live on, care for, and continue to survive on their Bubu (land) and Jalun (sea) Country within the Area. A collaborative project agreement was made with the Jabalbina Yalanji Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC and a project plan developed, leading to the recruitment of a project manager and GIS specialist. Work progressed with the completion of the first draft of land use spatial analysis, and an Elders Advisory Group was convened. Following the impacts of flooding after Tropical Cyclone Jasper, efforts were refocused on assisting displaced Wujal Wujal residents to find temporary accommodation on Country while their homes were repaired.

The Authority participated alongside the Australian World Heritage Advisory Committee in a Cultural Values Working Group, and also provided feedback on the Mandingalbay Yidinji Aboriginal Corporation's draft Mandingalbay Yidinji Indigenous Protected Area Management Plan for 2023–2033.

Strategy 3 — Involve the community: optimise community participation and connection with the Area through innovative interpretation, with a focus on education, volunteering and social inclusion

Awareness and engagement

The Authority participated in key regional community events including Ecofiesta—Queensland's premier sustainability festival—and NAIDOC in the Park, sharing a stall with the Gimuy Abriculture rangers. The Authority hosted two events for National Reconciliation Week and participated in the Global Gifted Green program launch, aimed at enriching sustainability competencies among year 5 students with the UN Sustainable Development Goals as a foundation.

The Authority's Cassowary Awards, held every two years, are the only awards program in Australia to celebrate community contributions to World Heritage management. Preparations for the 20th Cassowary Awards—scheduled for September 2024—began, including the development of new branding and refreshed award categories.

A range of media releases were distributed to raise the profile of the Area and the Authority's work including:

- yellow crazy ant eradications
- the reappointment of Dr Sally Driml to the Authority's Board of Directors
- the cassowary land bridge (a wildlife overpass, funded by the Australian Government and constructed by the Department of Transport and Main Roads, crossing the Bruce Highway)
- the launch of Peter Valentine's book 'World Heritage Sites of Australia'
- the opening of nominations for the Cassowary Awards.



Wet Tropics Management Authority staff at Ecofiesta in Cairns, Gimuy Walubara Yidinji and Yirrganydji Country—Wet Tropics Images

These releases resulted in positive coverage across TV, radio, print and online media outlets including interviews with Authority representatives. The Authority maintained a consistent social media presence with 13,000+ followers across Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn.

Presentations about the Area were made to school groups including Yarrabah State School, Kuranda District State College, and interstate school groups travelling with Small World Journeys.

Our statutory committees

The Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) met three times to deliberate on several critical issues. The first two meetings focused on threatened species research priorities in line with the National Environmental Science Program, the draft of the State of Wet Tropics Report for 2023–24, and the Eastern Forests of Far North Queensland priority place (which includes the Wet Tropics). The third meeting included a post Tropical Cyclone Jasper environmental recovery workshop with invited experts. The insights gained from this workshop aided priority recovery efforts at local and state government levels. The SAC also held a three-day expert workshop (including key scientists and regional NRM groups) to prioritise actions around threatened species recovery.

The Community Consultative Committee (CCC) met four times, with discussions revolving around community-submitted issues that align with the Authority's strategic goals, strong concerns over the impacts of climate change, flooding caused by Tropical Cyclone Jasper, and the development of the Wangetti Trail.

Both committees engaged in detailed deliberations to develop advice for the Board, and guide committee actions that harmonise with the community and environmental needs in the Wet Tropics.

Strategy 4 — World-class tourism and recreation: enhance World Heritage presentation and support opportunities for nature and cultural tourism and recreation

Presenting the Wet Tropics

A key aim of the Wet Tropics Sustainable Tourism Plan 2021–2031 is to enhance presentation of the Wet Tropics to elevate its World Heritage status at a local, national and international level, and build awareness of this unique region and its OUV through consistent messaging and branding.

The Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area Visual Identity Style Guide (VISG) was developed as part of a broader DESI UNESCO World Heritage Areas initiative. This supports consistent presentation (such as signage) across the Area, and across Queensland's other terrestrial World Heritage properties. First Nations creative services were engaged to provide artwork for the VISG, which highlights both the natural and the cultural values of the Area—elements of this were applied to the 'Rainforest People Country Culture' project, and the new Cassowary Awards branding.

The Authority commenced planning to support DESI's $800k, 3-year World Heritage Enhanced Interpretation and Signage project to upgrade World Heritage signage at Queensland's terrestrial World Heritage sites. This involves pinpointing priority locations and consultations to expedite the installation of identity columns, as developed through the VISG. Identity columns will progressively be installed at key visitor sites across the Area.

The Authority continued to collaborate with QPWS&P to elevate World Heritage presentation through planned capital works and interpretation projects. This included feedback on the draft concept for Lake Eacham day-use area and interpretive framework plans for the Wangetti Trail, and engaging with Traditional Custodians during site visits to Wallaman Falls. Additionally, input was provided on the Walu Wugirriga (Mount Alexandra) lookout draft concept designs.



Murray Falls, Girramay National Park, Girramay Country—Tourism and Events Queensland

Authority staff presented to Tourism Tropical North Queensland (TTNQ) on the OUV of the Area, promoting accurate key messaging as part of a longer-term plan to ensure consistency. A licensing agreement was arranged with Tourism and Events Queensland (TEQ) permitting the Authority to use select Wet Tropics video content, and the Area was profiled at major tourism events including Queensland Tourism Industry Council's (QTIC) and Tourism Australia's G'day Australia trade event, which hosted 300+ international travel agents.

Wet Tropics World Heritage Guides

The Authority, in partnership with DESI and TEQ, is building on previous successful tour guide programs to develop the Wet Tropics World Heritage Guides (WTWHG), which will enhance World Heritage presentation, interpretation and experience delivery.

The training framework was refined and online production commenced, with subject matter experts and targeted stakeholder engagement informing the detail. Work with Kelp Creative supported online production and content generation, and a workshop with DESI informed the Safe, sustainable and responsible tours module. Savannah Guides were contracted to review certain learning modules and provide user testing. Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples were engaged to provide cultural oversight for the development of the Respect Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples, Country and Culture module. WTWHG will be ready for implementation in late 2024/early 2025.

Industry engagement

To build profile within the industry and demonstrate engagement and support, the Authority attended several TTNQ member networking functions as well as major tourism industry events including TTNQ's My Queensland TNQ (Tropical North Queensland) Tourism Conference, QTIC's 2023 Tourism Awards, TEQ's Destination Q and Global Market Briefing, plus Ecotourism Australia's Global Sustainable Tourism Summit.

The Authority engaged in several high-profile advisory initiatives, including attending three TTNQ Destination Management Planning workshops to advocate for sustainable development activities in the Area to drive Towards Tourism 2032 and beyond.

Ms Chrissy Grant, the Authority's Chair, shared the Authority's key roles, objectives and activities through a panel discussion on the topic 'Sustainability: from climate change to overtourism' at QTIC's Destination IQ event.

Participation in the TNQ Indigenous Experiences Cluster Group provided a platform to engage with Indigenous tourism operators, with the Authority leading key actions from the TNQ First Nations Tourism Action Plan that align with goals from the Wet Tropics Sustainable Tourism Plan 2021–2031.

Collaborative opportunities

The Authority sought collaborative opportunities with Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples, the tourism industry and management agencies to produce engaging interpretive products and increase broader community advocacy for the protection of the Area.

The Authority attended a workshop and provided input to QPWS&P and Jabalbina Yalanji Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC on elevating World Heritage presentation in the Daintree National Park (CYPAL) VISG and new interpretive framework.

In addition, the Authority participated in expert working groups including:

- DESI's World Heritage Presentation on National Parks meetings, making connections between key QPWS&P teams (visitor experience, and interpretation and signage) and Queensland's terrestrial World Heritage Area managers to share learnings and progress key presentation projects
- Australia's Tourism and Parks Agencies quarterly forum, which is a collaboration to enhance and increase environmental, social and economic benefits to the community, industry and government
- the Interagency Working Group—ecotourism projects, which provides a framework for key state government agencies to collaborate on common ecotourism goals that deliver on cross-agency strategic objectives and legislative obligations.

Strategy 5 — Minimise impacts: appropriately manage activities that may have an impact on the Area's values through a regulated permit and zoning system

Community services infrastructure and activities

The Authority is responsible for striking the balance between protecting the OUV of the Area while allowing for appropriate development, tourism opportunities, community enjoyment, and the construction and maintenance of essential community services infrastructure. This is achieved by working with a range of stakeholders including landowners, Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples, local and state government agencies, service providers and tourism businesses.

Tropical Cyclone Jasper and the subsequent extreme rainfall event in December 2023 led to widespread impacts and disruption in the northern part of the Area including landslides, the destruction of roadways, water and electricity supply disruptions, and damage to personal property through flooding. In the aftermath of the event, the Authority worked with communities, local government, and service providers on recovery efforts particularly around clean-ups, including appropriate disposal of soil and vegetation.

Nowhere felt the impacts of that extreme rainfall event more severely than the community of Wujal Wujal, south of Cooktown, with the entire township evacuated due to flooding. The community of Cape Tribulation also found themselves isolated for an extended period due to a significant landslip on the Noah Range and the complete closure of the Bloomfield Track. The Authority worked with Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Council, Douglas Shire Council, Cook Shire Council, the Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR), and other agencies to support the reinstatement of essential infrastructure.

The Authority continued to issue maintenance permits to service providers including local governments, the Department of Defence, and TMR. The Authority also took part in discussions and provided assessments for the staged development and construction of the Wangetti Trail.



Wet Tropics Management Authority and Douglas Shire Council staff inspect flood damage at Rykers Bridge, Cape Tribulation, Eastern Kuku Yalanji Country—Wet Tropics Images

Guidelines, plans and policies

Work commenced on a key guideline to inform assessment for appropriate tourism infrastructure in the Area related to limited and developed visitor infrastructure—this guideline will support appropriate siting, scale and design of proposed visitor infrastructure, while ensuring the OUV of the Area is protected.

A comprehensive audit of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area zoning map is underway, to ensure the existing boundaries are accurately depicted in accordance with the most recent digital cadastral database.

The Authority worked with the Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning on the review of their Far North Queensland Regional Plan and its supporting infrastructure plan. Key outcomes sought were to ensure the Area is not unnecessarily impacted by: significant infrastructure upgrades; the allocation of land for urban development, renewable energy, mining and agricultural uses; or the allocation of water and other resources. The Authority also sought to reinforce existing mapped strategic rehabilitation areas with the addition of priority corridors that will support connectivity between fragmented segments of the Area.

The Authority contributed to multiple QPWS&P policy reviews, addressing issues such as the transitioning of forest reserves to national parks, grazing in state forests, and the Values Based Management Framework.

The Authority made a submission to the Queensland Government's review of its wind farm code (State code 23: Wind farm development), and advice was also provided to DCCEEW on the potential impact of proposed wind farms on the boundary of the Area.

Contemporary legislation

The Authority coordinated with Department of Resources and Titles Queensland to apply a provision to the *Land Titles Act 1994* which requires written consent from the Authority to register a 'plan of subdivision' (lodge a survey plan) with Titles Queensland where it affects land in the Area. This requirement ensures that any relevant permit for reconfiguring a lot has been obtained before the title is created. To make this change workable, an administrative advice has been applied to all titles within the Area for the purpose of alerting a landholder and Titles Queensland to their obligations under Wet Tropics legislation.

The Authority began preparing a third set of amendments to the *Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993*, focusing on updating compliance and enforcement provisions.

Strategy 6 — High quality executive, partnership and governance work to ensure the Authority remains an accountable and capable organisation

Delivery of high quality administration and governance

Commitment to excellence in corporate governance and management were demonstrated through ongoing business planning, implementation, and reporting that supported the Authority's goals and obligations. This was evidenced by the on-time delivery of the annual report and 2022–23 State of Wet Tropics Report, and progress towards finalising a new partnership agreement between the Authority and QPWS&P.

The highest legislative standards—such as those related to health and safety and human resources—continued to be maintained.

The Commonwealth Project Agreement for 2023–2028 was signed off between the Queensland and Australian governments and its implementation commenced. Subsequently, the Authority produced a new 5-year business strategy which will guide the annual implementation plans delivering on our strategic plan and will be the basis of quarterly and annual milestone reporting.



Wet Tropics Management Authority Board Directors, Gimuy and Yirrganydji Country—Wet Tropics Images

Continuing to grow a respectful workplace

When developing its 5-year business strategy, the Authority took the opportunity to further develop plans and tools to foster 'a healthy organisation'. During two collaborative workshops, Authority staff identified the principles they see as central to the Authority's workplace culture. A list of values emerged:

Our values

- **Respect lies at the heart of who we are and how we operate**. It is foundational to how we conduct ourselves, carry out our daily activities, and interact with others.
- **We act with integrity. We are genuine, honest, fair and transparent in the way we operate**. We take responsibility for our actions and hold ourselves accountable to the highest professional standards.
- **We build trust. We are consistent and reliable, honour commitments and don't overpromise**. We 'walk the talk' when it comes to practicing our values.
- **We unite around our shared vision and common goals**. We are focused on our objectives and working together to achieve them. We are constantly learning and adapting to our changing environment.
- **We bring passion, positivity and pride to our work**. We have a positive 'can-do' attitude, see the possibilities and look for solutions. We are open-hearted and kind. We care about what we do.
- **We value, support and empower each other**. We acknowledge and value people's work and contributions. We learn from our mistakes, support people to develop new skills, and celebrate achievements.
- **We embrace diversity and are committed to providing a safe and inclusive work environment**. We recognise safety encompasses people's physical, mental and cultural health and wellbeing. We accept and value people, regardless of their identity or background.
- **We practice open, clear, honest and inclusive communication**. We listen to understand and with good intent. We foster collaborative approaches founded on mutual respect and trust.

These values have been adopted by the Authority's staff and will be embedded into daily activities and practices through a set of tools and approaches. For example, these values will make up part of staff inductions, form the basis of formal and informal staff interactions such as meetings and planning days, and be integrated into terms of reference for internal working groups and teams.

Financial overview 2023–24

The Authority recorded an operating deficit of $98,000 for the 2023–24 financial year, an increase of $17,000 from the previous financial year.

The deficit reflects expenses in two funding streams where offsetting revenue was collected and recognised in a prior period. It therefore reflects a timing mismatch between when the revenue and expense is recognised under accrual accounting.

The expenses contributing to the deficit were fully funded with $175K in unspent cash being available to the Authority for allocation to projects in 23-24 FY. The unspent cash reflects unspent revenue collected and recognised in the prior year.

Table 1: Wet Tropics Management Authority operating statement

Controlled revenue and expenses	2023–24	2022–23
Revenue	**$,000**	**$,000**
Revenue from government		
Payments for outputs	5,927	5,417
Subtotal government revenue	**5,927**	**5,417**
Own source revenue		
Grants and other contributions*	7,109	6,051
Other revenue	98	40
Subtotal own source revenue	**7,207**	**6,091**
Total revenue	**13,134**	**11,508**
Expenses	**$,000**	**$,000**
Operating expenses		
Wet Tropics Management Authority	13,194	11,582
Subtotal operating expenses	**13,194**	**11,582**
Non-operating expenses		
Depreciation	14	7
Asset write-downs/loss on disposal	24	–
Subtotal non-operating expenses	**38**	**7**
Total expenses	**13,232**	**11,589**
Operating result	**-98^**	**-81^**

* Commonwealth funding provided to the Authority is recorded as Commonwealth Appropriation paid via Queensland Treasury. For transparency purposes, these payments are reflected as 'own source revenue'. Any funding unspent at the end of the financial year is returned to the Authority in the next financial year for allocation to expenditure.

^ Reported deficit is a result of actual expenditure against Commonwealth and external funding (own source) exceeding revenue for the reportable financial year.

Table 2 – Wet Tropics Management Authority capital spend

Capital Budget	2023–24	2022–23
Funding	**$'000**	**$'000**
Funding from government	12	–
Grants and other contributions*	31	–
Total Funding	43	–
Capital Acquisitions	**$'000**	**$'000**
Total expenditure	43	–

* Commonwealth funding provided to the Authority.

During the reporting period, the Authority invested a total of $43,000 in essential equipment to enhance our Yellow Crazy Ant Eradication Program. This investment included the acquisition of a high-performance drone, accompanying accessories, and a specialised trailer.

Revenue

The Authority's 2023–24 recorded revenue of $13.134 million includes Commonwealth appropriation funding which is distributed to the Authority via Queensland Treasury totalling $7.059 million (includes carry over funds from previous financial year), and other minor external funds totalling $98,000. This funding ensures the continuity of vital daily operations for the Authority including the Yellow Crazy Ant Eradication Program.

The Australian Government also provided further funding of $50,000 for the Wet Tropics Cultural Landscape Hub—a program that aims to educate and enhance awareness and recognition of the cultural landscape and Indigenous heritage values of the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area (the Area).

Funding from the Queensland Government included $1.8 million for the WTMA–QPWS Partnership Agreement to support our contribution to the management, protection, and rehabilitation of the Area, $2.613 million as a co-contribution to the Yellow Crazy Ant Eradication Program.

Other funds welcomed from the Queensland Government included appropriations from the Department of Environment, Science and Innovation (DESI) for the following programs:

1. Accelerating landscape restoration - $231,000
2. Reef Assist - $458,000
3. Eastern Kuku Yalanji Return to Country - $568,000
4. Administration and Accommodation fixed costs including insurance - $257,000

Table 3: Wet Tropics Management Authority revenue sources

Revenue	2023–24
Australian Government	**$'000**
National Federation Funding—Wet Tropics World Heritage Area	2,578
National Federation Funding—Yellow Crazy Ant Eradication Program	4,481
Australian Heritage Grant—Wet Tropics Cultural Landscape Hub	50
Other external funds	98
Total Australian Government revenue	**7,207**
Queensland Government	**$'000**
WTMA–QPWS Partnership Agreement *	1,800
WTMA – Administration and Fixed Accommodation	257
Accelerating landscape restoration across the Wet Tropics	231
Reef Assist Program	458
Eastern Kuku Yalanji Return to Country	568
Yellow Crazy Ant Eradication Program	2,613
Total Queensland Government revenue	**5,927**

* The total Queensland Government contribution to the WTMA–QPWS Partnership Agreement is provided to Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and Partnerships in accordance with the Partnership Agreement.

Expenses

The Authority's total 2023–24 expenses of $13.232 million primarily consist of employee expenses, corporate costs and operating expenses relating to the supply of goods and services, grants, and outsourced delivery of labour. Of this total, $7.094 million is allocated to the Yellow Crazy Ant Eradication Program. Continued and appropriate funding has enabled this program to flourish and achieve success both in its operations and technical service delivery.

Employee expenses totalling $5.563 million include salaries, travel, training and development, information technology (network and computers), and Board and committee costs (sitting fees, travel and allowances), representing 42% of total expenses.

Corporate costs totalling $1.157 million pertain to the leasing of accommodation and related expenses, vehicle leasing, telecommunications, and asset depreciation, representing 9% of total expenses.

Of the operational costs, totalling $6.512 million, incurred during the year, the significant expenses include:

- annual WTMA – QPWS Partnership Agreement of $1.8 million—administered in full to Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service to deliver specific services
- contracted services delivery of $2.465 million – field operations service for the Yellow Crazy Ant Eradication Program
- analytical and data collection services of $508,000 – costs associated with yellow crazy ant monitoring in collaboration with James Cook University
- specialist services – $165,000 provided for Land Restoration, spectacled flying-fox activities and State of Wet Tropics Report
- grants of $844,000 – distributed to Aboriginal corporations and other Wet Tropics natural resource management service providers.

Operational costs occupy 49% of the Authority's total expenditure.

Table 4: Wet Tropics Management Authority expenditure

Expenses	2023–24
	$'000
Employee expenses	5,563
Corporate costs	1,157
Operational costs	6,512
Total expenses	13,232

Financial management

As a statutory body, the Authority's overall fiscal transactions are incorporated into the DESI financial statement for 2023–24. The full-time equivalent (FTE) data—including Authority staff—are included in the financial statements for DESI employee expenses.

Internal and external audit

Internal audit is a key component of the Authority's corporate governance. The Authority adopts a systematic and disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, internal controls, and governance. This approach safeguards the Director-General of DESI in discharging his responsibilities as set out in section 78 (1) of the *Financial Accountability Act 2009*.

The Authority must be compliant and meet its obligations by ensuring the operations of its business group are carried out efficiently, effectively, and economically. The Authority is subject to DESI's controlled self-assessment process and internal audits, in conjunction with external requests from the Queensland Audit Office.

Information systems and record keeping

Information is a critical asset enabling the Authority to deliver its services effectively, efficiently, and consistently. Data integrity, management and security through proprietary systems support all aspects of the Authority's operations. The Authority complies with the *Public Records Act 2023*, *Public Sector Act 2022*, and the Queensland State Archives Records Governance Policy 2019, and keeps complete and accurate records of its activities.

The Authority abides by the DESI suite of records management and governance policies which define the expectations of staff in the day-to-day management of its records by:

- documenting decision-making and actions
- mitigating exposure to risk
- safeguarding the Authority's history and knowledge.

The Authority maintains additional critical information systems to support its services, including:

- administrative records are retained securely and disposed of appropriately, in accordance with the Queensland Government's General records and disposal schedule
- an online mapping system to define the statutory zoning map for the *Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998* (the Management Plan). The system also supports interpretive information that assists Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples to understand this zoning in relation to their own Native Title interests. It allows boundary maintenance of the Area in Queensland Globe to ensure that these resources are available to the public and can be used with other state and local government mapping
- a comprehensive database to maintain accurate records of permit applications assessed and granted under the Management Plan
- the Department's whole-of-government SAP (systems, applications and processes) data management tool for financial performance management and Aurion for human resource management.

The Authority collects a great deal of information while undertaking surveys, research, and treatment activities for the Yellow Crazy Ant Eradication Program. This data is used – along with data from other sources such as Queensland Spatial Catalogue and industry partners including MSF Sugar – to evaluate the effectiveness of program activities, to guide decision-making, and to create visual products like maps.

The functionality of the field data collection system is configured on ESRI's ArcGIS Online and ArcGIS Pro systems, aligning with DESI, Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, Department of Resources, and others. This facilitates collaboration with other government agencies and program partners.

As a statutory body, the Authority complies with DESI information security requirements and is incorporated into the department's preparation and lodgement of the Information Security Annual Return.

Integrated services through robust governance practices

Public sector ethics

The Authority's staff are public sector employees and are bound by the *Public Sector Act 2022*, the *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994*, and the Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service (the code of conduct).

The code of conduct requires Authority staff to:

- act with integrity and impartiality by being honest, fair, and respectful, and ensuring decisions are unprejudiced, unbiased, and just
- promote the public good when delivering the programs and services that benefit the people of Queensland
- commit to the system of government with respect for government and its institutions and by upholding the law
- be accountable and transparent when taking responsible action and making decisions that can be explained and easily understood.

The DESI Workforce Relations and Integrity team provides general advice to the Authority on a variety of issues including the code of conduct, ethical dilemmas, conflict of interest and other employment issues. Its objective is to support and promote a culture of integrity and accountability. This team also investigates and reports misconduct and corruption, liaises with the Crime and Corruption Commission Queensland and leads public interest disclosure protection.

The DESI Workforce Strategy and Capability team supports the Authority through their oversight of the department's integrity framework and their focus on fraud and corruption prevention.

Education and training

The Authority continues to build a strong and accountable workforce by ensuring high ethical standards and values, and adherence to the code of conduct. Every new employee completes the DESI Corporate Induction Program as well as the Authority's induction training. Ongoing staff undertake mandatory annual refreshers in the code of conduct as well as emergency safety, fraud and corruption awareness, and information security and privacy awareness.

The Yellow Crazy Ant Eradication Program is delivered in a higher-risk environment which includes extensive field work in rugged terrain, handling of chemicals, flying drones and managing working dogs. This environment has a breadth and diversity of risks that the Authority mitigates through consistent, focused, high quality training of public sector employees and service delivery contractors.

In 2023–24, Authority staff undertook training in workplace health and safety, cultural awareness, unconscious bias, public sector management, human rights, procurement, disability awareness, and domestic and family violence. Regular skills updates undertaken included four-wheel-drive training (basic and advanced), and first aid training. The Authority also invested in specialist capability development such as safety skills for remote area working, Certificate IV in Training and Assessment and WH&S, and Civil Aviation Safety Authority accredited drone pilot training.

During 2023–24, DESI launched an updated Performance and Development Planning (PDP) process and supported the introduction with training in conducting effective performance conversations. The Authority

has incorporated this PDP process into its management approach with a focus on a supporting a resilient, inclusive, and healthy organisational culture.

To launch the Authority's digital transformation project, SharePoint training for all staff was provided through the DESI Digital Strategy and the Authority followed up with refresher and extension training in the Microsoft 365 applications.

With the release in April 2023 of the *Queensland Managing the risk of psychosocial hazards at work: Code of Practice 2022*, managers across the Authority attended a TELUS Health-Australia webinar highlighting proactive management strategies being implemented in organisations to assess and mitigate these risks.

Maintaining up-to-date knowledge to support the specialist expertise was also targeted through conference attendance, presentations, and workshops across key areas. Themes included approaches to conserving threatened species, climate change, national and global eco-tourism, and emerging environmental markets and economics.

Two all-staff workshops were undertaken over the year. They contributed to the review of the 5-year business plan strategies, collegiately developed the organisation's values statement, and reinforced a commitment to an Indigenous rights-based approach for the Authority. The outcomes of these consultative processes continue to inform the culture within the Authority, its business practices, and engagements with clients, communities, and stakeholders.

Procedures and practices

Under subdivision 4 of the *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994* and DESI administrative procedures and management practices, the Authority must have proper regard to the values and principles of this Act. These are reflected in and implemented through the Authority's:

- human resource management policies, practices, and procedures
- organisational culture which includes a growth mindset, and policies addressing diversity and inclusion, commitment to end domestic and family violence, the *Human Rights Act 2019*, and respectful workplaces
- performance and capability including performance and development planning, reward and recognition, leadership capability and competencies framework.

Human rights

The Authority continues to build a workplace culture that clearly demonstrates its ongoing commitment to protect, respect and promote human rights. All new and reviewed policies, operational procedures, and decision-making frameworks of the Authority are checked to ensure that they reflect the principles and intent of Queensland's *Human Rights Act 2019* (the Human Rights Act) as a matter of practice.

In everyday practices across the Authority, and in the decisions of the Wet Tropics Management Authority Board, consideration is given to the impact of these actions on human rights. Over the course of the year, the Board makes many decisions that require assurance that the impact on human rights and the observation of the principles and intent of the Human Rights Act have been assessed and applied. The Board induction and annual governance training includes the Human Rights Act and discussion of its practical implications for the business of the Authority.

Since commencement of the Human Rights Act, the Authority has not received any human rights complaints and therefore has not needed to engage in complaints reporting under section 97(2)(b) of this Act.

An Indigenous rights-based approach

An internal workshop was held to ensure the Authority continues to be an organisation that supports employees and engages with partners and stakeholders with integrity, building trust. A key component was building understanding of what a rights-based approach looks like regarding the Authority's engagement and partnerships with Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples for the management of the Area.

The Authority acknowledges Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples' distinctive and diverse spiritual, material and economic relationship with their traditional lands, waters, and other natural resources. The Authority works closely with Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples, applying a rights-based approach in the delivery of all its programs to ensure the rights and interests of Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples are reflected.

The Authority's induction process and ongoing training ensures staff are aware of obligations under the Human Rights Act, and the rights of Aboriginal Peoples and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as Australia's First Peoples. Further opportunities for cultural capacity building are provided.

The Authority consults and cooperates in good faith with Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples, through their own representative bodies, to obtain their free, prior, and informed consent before adopting and implementing legislative or administrative measures that may affect them. This includes when undertaking projects that affect Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples' rights to land and resources, including access and benefit sharing and the utilisation of natural resources, and their Native Title rights as described in the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth).

Governance—Human resources

Workforce profile

As of 30 June 2024, the Authority employed 51 staff members in both full-time and part-time roles (active paid employees only), resulting in a total of 48.8 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions. Additional details regarding the workforce profile can be found in tables 4–9 below.

Table 5: Occupation types by FTE

Occupation type	FTE	Percentage of total workforce
Corporate	23.9	48.98%
Frontline and frontline support	24.90	51.02%
Total	48.80	100.0%

Table 6: Appointment types by FTE

Appointment type	FTE	Percentage of total workforce
Permanent	33.00	67.62%
Temporary	14.80	30.33%
Contract	1	2.05%
Casual	0	0%
Total	48.80	100%

Table 7: Employment status by headcount

Employment status	Headcount	Percentage of total workforce
Full-time	44	86.27%
Part-time	7	13.73%
Casual	0	0%
Total	51	100%

Table 8: Gender		
Employment status ^	**Headcount**	**Percentage of total workforce**
Women *	NR	NR
Men *	NR	NR
Non-binary *	NR	NR

* Not reported (NR)

^ Note. The Authority supports inclusive and respectful workforces and aims for diversity in its workforce. The gender of the staff reflects this diversity, including people who identify as male, female and non-binary. As well as respecting diversity we also respect privacy as an important consideration in a small organisation.

Table 9: Diversity target group data*		
Diversity groups	**Headcount**	**Percentage of total workforce**
Women ^	NR	NR
Aboriginal Peoples and Torres Strait Islander Peoples	<5	<5
People with a disability	<5	<5
Culturally and linguistically diverse—speak a language at home other than English	<5	<5

* To ensure privacy, in tables where there are less than 5 respondents in a category, specific numbers have been replaced by <5.

^ The Authority supports inclusive and respectful workforces and aims for diversity in its workforce. As well as respecting diversity we also respect privacy as an important consideration in a small organisation.

Table 10: Target group for women in senior leadership roles*		
Group^ **	**Headcount**	**Percentage of total leadership cohort**
Senior Officers (Classified and s122 equivalent combined)	0	0%
Senior Executive Service and Chief Executives (Classified and s122 equivalent combined)	0	0%

* To ensure privacy, in tables where there are less than 5 respondents in a category, specific numbers should be replaced by <5.

^ Women in senior leadership roles are positions of Senior Officer or equivalent and above, noting that there are no Senior Officer roles in the Authority's structure, and there is only one Senior Executive role.

** Note that for all positions classified AO6 level and above (leadership roles) in the Authority, the percentage of women represented is 53.85%

Strategic workforce planning and performance

The second half of the financial year saw the review of the 2020–24 Strategic Workforce Plan. Extensive consultation with the Authority's management and staff was undertaken over several months. A guided workshop conducted by DESI HR Corporate Services refined the draft strategies and actions and delivered the Strategic Workforce Plan 2024–28. The process ensured all staff were aware of the challenges, opportunities and risks that inform the Authority's priorities in planning for and maintaining a change-ready and capable workforce.

Leadership and management development

The Authority's managers and leaders have a vital role in delivering business outcomes and building the capabilities of staff. The development needs of managers focused on opportunities related to leadership skills in communication and their program specialisation. These were aligned to the whole-of-organisation commitment to implementing the professional development focus in their development plans. Professional development comprised contract management, leadership coaching and professional writing, while other specialist development included:

- global sustainable tourism
- natural capital economics
- carbon farming
- plant recognition taxonomy
- responsible investment: First Nations investment markets, nature positive, greenwashing
- conservation, restoration, and rehabilitation of unique rainforest habitats
- Queensland legislation and regulatory framework.

Working for Queensland survey

The annual Working for Queensland survey is designed to explore employee perceptions of the workplace climate in areas such as employee engagement, job satisfaction and leadership in the public sector. The survey (undertaken in September with results provided in November) informs team discussions and management actions to acknowledge strengths and improve in the areas that need change.

The Authority had 80% staff participation in the 2023 survey with an employee engagement overall score of 68%—healthy by most standards, and 10% higher than that of DESI. However, given the Authority had a 100% participation and an employee engagement overall score of 78% the previous year, this decline in both scores was one of the motivators of the two all-staff workshops.

Our strengths

Leadership

"The executive group models the values or principals of the organisation, and acts with a high level of integrity"—97% of respondents agreed with this statement. When asked about their own senior manager 91% agreed or were neutral.

Inclusion and diversity

Ninety-three percent of the survey respondents agreed that the Authority demonstrates respectful practices, including acknowledgment and celebration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

Ninety-two percent of respondents indicated that gender diversity is not a barrier to success.

Flexible work arrangements

Flexible arrangements are now incorporated into business practices and the survey responses confirm these are working well where operationally achievable.

Improvement focus for 2024

Recruitment

Fairness and transparency of recruitment processes along with promotion decisions based on clear criteria have remained improvement targets for two years. Mitigation strategies employed over the past year include ensuring all opportunities are directly communicated to all Authority staff at the time of advertising, and staff have been actively encouraged to take up higher duties roles. These initiatives have benefitted both staff and the Authority through the exchange of knowledge and perspectives.

Workload

The survey results indicated some respondents find their job emotionally demanding (26%) or feel exhausted (17%), with 10% feeling overloaded or that they need to work long hours. Within teams, 24% of respondents felt that duties were not shared equally. Workload balance has been a persistent area for improvement over the last two surveys and has proved difficult to successfully mitigate. It remains an improvement focus.

Performance Development Plan (PDP) implementation

This year saw the full PDP process cycle embedded across the Authority and for many staff it was their first experience. A focus on PDP development in the first quarter of the financial year combined with low levels of staff confidence in the new process may have contributed to the poor experience reported. Only 25% of respondents agreed with positive statements on professional development and performance discussions.

Communication

Of the 30 survey respondents, 43% were ambivalent and 7% disagreed that the executive group keep employees informed of what is going on. In response there has been a conscious focus on involving all staff, such as in the review of the 5-year business plan, the healthy organisation initiative and the development of the Authority's values statement. These elements contribute to a shared understanding of the scope of works that the organisation delivers and improves communication and knowledge of the Authority's diverse work program and legislative obligations. Weekly all-staff meetings are used to keep staff updated, with the chairing of the meeting shared on rotation and staff at all levels reporting on the work of their program.

Reward and recognition

Recognition of achievements is embedded in the Authority's organisational culture. Weekly staff meetings, team meetings, emails of acknowledgement from the Executive Director and staff across the Authority recognise personal and professional achievements within the organisation. PDP conversations ensure a regular opportunity for supervisors and managers to recognise the achievements and contributions of their staff. Staff achievements are also shared on the DESI intranet. These practices build appreciation amongst colleagues and inform a respectful culture. A few of the external recognition highlights include:

- Project Manager Lucy Karger was listed amongst the top 150 most influential people in Far North Queensland as reported in the Cairns Post for her leadership of the Yellow Crazy Ant Eradication Program.
- Principal Planning Officer Julie Colman—who successfully led the amendments to both the *Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993* and the Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998—was elected a Fellow of the Planning Institute of Australia.
- Field Supervisor Jules Seabright was honoured with the 2023 DESI Excellence Award for contributions to diversity, equity, and inclusion within the department.
- Field Officer Nicklous Gibb and Logistics Coordinator Phillip Polden were commended for their efforts to create a safe workplace in the Director-General's Safety Behaviour Awards. Nicklous and Phil jointly received the Safety in Action Award, which recognises significant commitment to improving operational safety through innovation, transforming ideas into action, being courageous or empowering people.

Employee health and wellbeing

The Authority is committed to cultivating a supportive workplace and demonstrates a strong commitment to staff health, safety, and wellbeing—these are standing agenda items at fortnightly Management Forum meetings. With a focus on staff wellbeing, the use of stand-up desks and multiple monitors is a customised practice in the Authority that supports staff and productivity.

The Authority utilises risk management techniques and approaches, follows and adapts DESI procedures, and engages in processes to identify, manage, and reduce risk, hazards, and work-related incidents. The SHINE (System for Hazard and Incident Notification and Evaluation) management system is a valued part of

the safety culture and an effective monitoring and recording tool that provides comprehensive fortnightly reports for the Management Forum's review.

Management and staff take a proactive, 'RUOK' approach to support colleagues who may be experiencing mental health issues. The Authority promotes best practice in early intervention strategies to appropriately manage injury and illness cases and ensure the best possible return-to-work outcomes. Staff accessed the DESI wellness program including free skin cancer checks, flu vaccinations and mental health awareness sessions.

Managing psychosocial hazards and risks in the workplace is as important as managing physical risks. With the release of the Managing Psychosocial Hazards at Work Code of Practice 2022, Managers in the Authority participated in a range of training with a view to maintaining a healthy organisation and continuing to implement strategies that support staff wellbeing.

The Authority's natural disaster policy procedures were put to the test during Tropical Cyclone Jasper and served the organisation well. Staff were prepared, the offices and equipment were efficiently made cyclone-ready, and communications were enacted throughout the event.

Flexible working arrangements

Under the *Industrial Relations Act 2016*, employees may be able to access a range of flexible work arrangements. However, this is not an automatic right—many considerations need to be made.

Commonly implemented arrangements across the Authority include working part-time, working from an alternative office, working split hours to accommodate school pick-up arrangements, and working from home up to 50% of the agreed fortnightly hours.

The Authority works from two sites: an office-based site, and an operations-based site. Flexible working arrangements are managed within teams and coordinated by site and vary according to work requirements. The Microsoft Teams environment, SharePoint collaboration features, whole-of-Authority email distribution lists and hot desks support communication and connectivity.

Industrial and employee relations framework

The Authority operates within the tenets of the DESI industrial and employee relations frameworks under the *Industrial Relations Act 2016*. This Act provides a framework for fair, balanced, and co-operative industrial relations that includes a set of minimum employment conditions and standards, collective bargaining for setting wages, and individual rights to fair treatment. In addition, the *Public Sector Act 2022*, the Queensland Public Service Officers and Other Employees Award—State 2015, and the State Government Entities Certified Agreement—State 2023 prescribe the arrangements and responsibilities specific to the public sector employees.

Early retirement, redundance and retrenchment

No redundancy, early retirement, or retrenchment packages were paid during the reporting period.

Attachment 1—Wet Tropics Management Authority Board of Directors

Wet Tropics Management Authority Board	
Act or instrument	The Board's authority is prescribed in the *Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993 (the Queensland Act)* and the Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998.
Functions	The Wet Tropics Management Authority (the Authority) was established to ensure Australia's obligation to the World Heritage Convention is met in relation to the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area (the Area). The specific functions of the Authority are detailed in section 10 (1) of the Queensland Act. The Authority has a Board of Directors (the Board) that is responsible for the way in which the Authority performs its functions and exercises its powers. The specifics of the Board are detailed in divisions 2-5 of the Queensland Act.
Achievements	• Established the Indigenous Advisory Committee—a joint initiative with Terrain NRM Board to advise both Boards on strategic and operational priorities across the Wet Tropics Biocultural Region. • Coordinated two key workshops through the Scientific Advisory Committee: » A one-day recovery prioritisation workshop in the wake of Tropical Cyclone Jasper » A three-day expert workshop to identify and refine priorities for actions for the Eastern Forests of Far North Queensland Priority Place. • Advised and provided expert direction to the implementation of an Indigenous rights-based approach within the Authority's work. • Engaged at key industry events including the Chair, Ms Chrissy Grant, participating in a panel discussion at Queensland Tourism Industry Council's Destination IQ event in Cairns. • Approved the revoking of seven policies as part of an ongoing review and update of policies, procedures and guidelines. • Approved the commencement of a Communications Strategy, providing guidance to staff and feedback to contractors. • Endorsed amendments to the 5-year business plan to strengthen our focus on a healthy organisation and highlighting the cross-cutting themes of communication, knowledge, partnerships and an Indigenous rights-based approach. The cross-cutting actions are the functional enablers that direct how we do business. • Supported the Authority's response to the impacts of the significant flooding event post-Tropical Cyclone Jasper in December 2023. This included providing advice on agency engagement and appropriate cultural considerations for ongoing scientific investigations and responses to impacts on ecological values. • The Board continued its oversight of the Yellow Crazy Ant Eradication Program which celebrated the single largest yellow crazy ant eradication in the world to date and the most area declared eradicated inside the Area, as well as the greatest number of residential properties to be declared eradicated so far. • Provided direction and expert and cultural advice on the delivery of the Eastern Kuku Yalanji (EKY) Return to Country project. The project is focussing efforts on working with EKY Peoples to identify pathways for living on Country in the future. • Endorsed the roll out of the Bama Country and Culture project in partnership with SharingStories Foundation. The Board also provided considered direction on addressing and protecting Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property as part of the program. • Continued to actively participate in the Wet Tropics Restoration Alliance activities.

Financial reporting	The Authority provides audited financial statements as required under the Financial Accounting Regulation 2009.

Remuneration

Position	Name	Meeting attendance	Approved annual, sessional or daily fee	Approved sub-committee fees if applicable	Actual fees received ^
Chair	Christine Grant	Number of meetings attended: 4	$520 daily	N/A	$10,400
Director	Dr Sally Driml	Number of meetings attended: 4	$400 daily	N/A	$6,200 Chairs the Community Consultative Committee
Director	Ailsa Lively	Number of meetings attended: 4	$400 daily	N/A	$4,000
Director	Robin Clark	Number of meetings attended: 4	$400 daily	N/A	$4,400
Director	Professor Stephen Williams	Number of meetings attended: 4	$400 daily	N/A	$6,000 Chairs the Scientific Advisory Committee
Director	William Enoch-Tranby	Number of meetings attended: 1	$400 daily	N/A	$3,400

No. scheduled meetings/ sessions	**The Board met on 4 occasions for Board meetings in 2023–24:** • 15 August 2023 (meeting #124): 1-day meeting in Cairns • 7–8 November 2023 (meeting #125): 1.5-day online meeting • 20 February 2024 (meeting #126): 1-day online meeting • 14 June 2024 (meeting #127): 1-day meeting in Cairns **Other activities:** • 13 July 2023: Board governance training (1-day) • 14 August 2023: Board Director induction/refresher training • Consideration of out of session papers #444, #445, #446, #447 (online deliberation)
Total out of pocket expenses	The Chair and Board of Directors were reimbursed a combined total of $1,071 out-of-pocket expenses including taxi fares, and travel allowances.
Remuneration Procedures for Part-time Chairs and Members of Queensland Government Bodies – Regulation, Administration and Advice Level 2 (Daily)	The Board is fully funded by the Australian Government. The Queensland Government does not contribute to the operational costs of the Board.

^ In addition to daily fees to attend Board meetings, the Chair and Board Directors are eligible to be remunerated for additional work time required to carry out their role (i.e. to prepare for meetings, write reports or correspondence, undertake consultation, represent the Authority and/or to provide specific strategic advice). This may include chairing the Authority's advisory committees. Chairs and members may also be compensated for their travel time to attend the Authority's meetings and/or other strategic events on behalf of the Authority.

Attachment 2—Compliance checklist

Summary of requirement	Basis for requirement*	Annual report reference
Letter of compliance		
A letter of compliance from the accountable officer or statutory body to the relevant Minister/s	ARRs—section 7	Page 4/5
Accessibility		
Table of contents	ARRs—section 9.1	Page 3
Glossary		Page 42
Public availability	ARRs—section 9.2	Page 2
Interpreter service statement	Queensland Government Language Services Policy ARRs—section 9.3	Page 2
Copyright notice	*Copyright Act 1968* ARRs—section 9.4	Page 2
Information licensing	Queensland Government Enterprise Architecture Information Licensing ARRs—section 9.5	Page 2
General information		
Introductory information	ARRs—section 10	Pages 8-12
Non-financial performance		
Government objectives for the community and whole-of-government plans/specific initiatives	ARRs—section 11.1	Page 12
Agency objectives and performance indicators	ARRs—section 11.2	Page 13
Agency service areas, service standards	ARRs—section 11.3	Refer DESI AR
Financial performance		
Summary of financial performance	ARRs – section 12.1	Page 27-29
Governance—management and structure		
Organisational structure	ARRs—section 13.1	Page 11
Executive management	ARRs—section 13.2	Page 11
Government bodies (statutory bodies and other entities)	ARRs—section 13.3	Page 12
Public Sector Ethics Act 1994	ARRs—section 13.4	Page 31
Human Rights Act 2019	ARRs—section 13.5	Page 32
Queensland Public Service values	ARRs—section 13.6	Refer DESI AR
Governance—risk management and accountability		
Risk management	ARRs—section 14.1	Refer DESI AR
Audit committee	ARRs—section 14.2	Refer DESI AR
Internal audit	ARRs—section 14.3	Page 30
External scrutiny	ARRs—section 14.4	Page 30
Information systems and record keeping	ARRs—section 14.5	Page 30
Information security attestation	ARRs—section 14.6	Page 30

Summary of requirement	Basis for requirement*	Annual report reference
Governance—human resources		
Strategic workforce planning and performance	ARRs—section 15.1	Page 34
Early retirement, redundancy and retrenchment	Directive No.04/18, Early retirement Redundancy and retrenchments ARRs Section 15.2	Page 37
Open data		
Statement advising publication of information	ARRs – section 16.0	N/A
Consultancies	ARRs—section 31.1	N/A
Overseas travel	ARRs—section 31.2	N/A
Queensland Language Services Policy	ARRs—section 31.3	N/A
Financial statements		
Certification of financial statements	FAA—section 62 FPMS—section 38, 39 and 46 ARRs—section 17.1	Refer DESI AR
Independent Auditor's report	FAA—section 62 FPMS—section 46 ARRs—section 17.2	Refer DESI AR

* ARRs Annual report requirements for Queensland Government agencies

DESI AR Department of Environment, Science and Innovation Annual Report

FAA *Financial Accountability Act 2009*

FPMS Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019

Glossary

Meaning	Term
Area	Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area
Authority	Wet Tropics Management Authority
Board	Wet Tropics Management Authority Board of Directors
CCC	Community Consultative Committee
Commonwealth Act	*Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area Conservation Act 1994*
CYPAL	Cape York Peninsula Aboriginal Land
DESI	Department of Environment, Science and Innovation
IAC	Indigenous Advisory Committee
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
OUV	Outstanding Universal Value
PDP	Performance and Development Plan
QPWS&P	Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and Partnerships
Queensland Act	*Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993*
RNTBC	Registered Native Title Body Corporate
SAC	Scientific Advisory Committee
Strategic Plan	Wet Tropics Strategic Plan 2020–2030
TEQ	Tourism and Events Queensland
Terrain NRM	Terrain Natural Resource Management
Tourism Plan	Wet Tropics Sustainable Tourism Plan 2021–2031
TTNQ	Tourism Tropical North Queensland
World Heritage Convention	Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage


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