



Strategic Plan 2009-2012



The Tasmanian Environment Protection Authority (EPA) was established as an independent statutory authority under the *Environmental Management and Pollution Control Act 1994* (the Act) on 1 July 2008.

The EPA's first Strategic Plan (for 2009-2012) focuses on the priorities, objectives and tasks required for the 12 months commencing June 2009, consistent with the longer-term vision and purpose of the EPA.

The Plan will be reviewed when the Minister provides a new Statement of Expectation in 2010.

## OUR VALUES

### Independence

- Operate without fear or favour.
- Make informed decisions based on sound evidence.
- Answer to Parliament and the community for our performance.

### Leadership

- Lead positive, proactive change in support of our purpose and vision.
- Clearly express our opinions on significant issues.
- Positively influence (Government) policy in pursuit of environmental goals.

### Collaboration

- Consult with, and listen to, a wide range of interests, views and stakeholders across the community.
- Work in partnership with other organisations and agencies with complementary skills and resources.

### Transparency

- Communicate our role and goals explicitly.
- Share actions and progress openly and frequently.
- Show how we've delivered on our commitments and how we can improve.

## THE EPA'S FUNCTIONS

### Statutory Functions

The EPA's principal statutory functions are to administer and enforce the provisions of the *Environmental Management and Pollution Control Act 1994*, and in particular, to use its best endeavours to:

- Further the sustainable development and environmental management and pollution control objectives of the Act,
- Ensure that activities do not cause unacceptable pollution.
- Advise the Minister on any matter that may significantly affect the achievement of the objectives of the Act, and
- Ensure that economic instruments and issues are considered in policy and program implementation.

### Primary Operating Functions

In fulfilling its statutory functions, the EPA performs a range of operational activities including:

#### Assessing Development Proposals

Development proposals for certain activities must be referred to the Board, or may be called in by the Director for environmental impact assessment by the Board. These activities are generally large scale, with a moderate to high degree of technical or process complexity, considerable waste management issues and with significant potential to cause material or serious environmental harm. Other developments are assessed by planning authorities. A guide has been prepared to provide general information to proponents of projects and to the community on the EPA's environmental impact assessment process. The Board's assessment processes are rigorous and transparent and provide good opportunity for public awareness and consultation.

#### Setting Environmental Conditions and Performance Requirements

Following its environmental impact assessment of a particular proposal, the Board may require conditions to be imposed by the relevant planning authority, or direct the planning authority to refuse to grant a permit for the development. For activities that do not require a planning permit, the Board may impose conditions through a notice issued by the Director. The conditions imposed by the Board aim to limit the risk of environmental harm from the activity by ensuring a risk based approach to environmental planning, operational management, environmental monitoring, reporting and rehabilitation.

### Our Vision:

**"A Tasmania that is  
clean, healthy  
and sustainable"**





## Our Purpose:

**“To regulate developments and activities that impact on environmental quality and promote best practice, sustainable environmental management”**

### Facilitating Compliance and Enforcement

The EPA facilitates compliance with the *Environmental Management and Pollution Control Act 1994* by overseeing a range of activities, including compliance monitoring, education, community engagement and enforcement actions. Activities that are directly regulated by the EPA are subject to inspection, monitoring and audit programs. Key enforcement options include the issue of environment protection notices, imposition of environmental improvement programs, prosecution action and the issue of environmental infringement notices for prescribed offences.

### Responding to Incidents and Complaints

The EPA plays an important role in responding to, and investigating significant incidents of pollution that may cause or threaten environmental harm. It responds to calls from the public relating to pollution complaints and incidents and, where appropriate, refers complaints to other authorities where they fall within their jurisdiction.

### Informing Policy

The EPA has a key role in engaging and consulting with the community and stakeholders on emerging and strategic environmental management issues and informing environmental policy development. While not directly responsible for developing State government policy, the Authority has a key role in influencing and informing the environmental policy agenda and recommending strategic policy development. The EPA is the primary source of advice to the State government on the achievement of the objectives of the environmental management and pollution control system in Tasmania.

### Monitoring Environmental Conditions

The EPA monitors the condition of the environment in relation to air quality, water quality, contaminated land and noise. It also has a role in monitoring wastes disposed to landfill and efforts to recover waste materials. Science-based research programs are undertaken to provide a better understanding of environments under stress to inform policy and management responses.

### Promoting Sustainability

The EPA promotes and facilitates programs across industry, business and the community, which aim to encourage the development and uptake of sustainable environmental practices and behaviours. Such programs often demonstrate opportunities to reduce operating costs, enhance reputation and build business competitive advantage.

## OUR GOALS

### Clean Air

Clean air is vital for the health of the community and is important to a number of key industries and the economy. The EPA will pursue this goal by implementing the Act and the Environment Protection Policy on Air Quality. Our success will be measured against the requirements of the policy and national air quality standards.

### Clean Water

Water quality that is safe for community use and meets environmental requirements is a critical concern and is important for many key Tasmanian industries. The EPA will pursue this goal by implementing the Act and the State Policy on Water Quality Management. Our success will be measured by the achievement and maintenance of water quality objectives.

### Clean Land

Land contaminated by environmentally hazardous materials can potentially affect the health and amenity of communities and cause surface and ground waters to become contaminated. It represents a burden for future generations. The EPA will pursue this goal by using the Act to prevent future contamination and remediate past contamination. Our success will be measured by a declining trend of land requiring remediation.

### Acceptable Noise

Continued exposure to unacceptable noise levels can have adverse effects on human health and the community's quality of life. The EPA will pursue this goal by implementing the Act and the Environment Protection Policy on Noise. Our success will be measured by the implementation of the Environment Protection Policy on Noise.

### Sustainable Use of Resources

Waste and pollution are often the result of the unsustainable and inefficient use of environmental resources such as water, energy and raw materials. Sustainable resource use will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and help meet our current needs and the capacity of future generations to meet their needs. The EPA will pursue this goal by furthering the sustainable development objectives of the Act. Our success will be measured by the successful implementation of the Tasmanian Waste and Resource Management Strategy.



## KEY FOCUS AREAS FOR 2009-2010

The EPA has identified four key priorities for immediate action that underpin our ability to deliver on our strategic Goals.

### 1. Effective regulation

Continue to establish and maintain effective regulatory systems and processes with the ability and determination to enforce credible, grounded regulation whenever necessary, by:

- reviewing and refreshing existing processes, including the assessment process
- reviewing the EPA's policies and procedures on enforcement
- setting clear standards and implementing them consistently
- reviewing the role of EPA regulatory processes in addressing Climate Change issues.

### 2. Environmental Performance

Monitor and communicate progress on key goals to enable the effectiveness of strategies and actions to be evaluated, by:

- defining standards and critical measures of success for each Goal
- measuring, assessing and reporting regular measures of Tasmania's environmental quality performance against each Goal
- tabling an EPA Annual Report in Parliament.

### 3. Community Empowerment

Grow capacity outside the EPA to operate sustainably so industry, government, regulators and individuals are able to take positive action, by:

- developing a communication strategy that gives key audiences the understanding, willingness and ability to take action
- supporting existing and new programs to raise awareness and capacity
- helping those needing to deal with environmental issues to access technologies and resources to address them.

### 4. Community Engagement

Involve and engage key stakeholders and the community to support the EPA's vision and help achieve its goals by:

- articulating the EPA's role and contribution
- communicating our goals and how we will deliver them
- consulting actively and listening to stakeholders and the community
- making it easy for stakeholders to contact the EPA and responding accordingly
- making information available through an accessible and contemporary website
- developing and formalising strong partnerships, including other regulators
- explaining how the EPA works alongside other agencies and regulators.



ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AUTHORITY

## CONTACTING THE EPA

For general enquiries please contact (03) 6233 6518.

The EPA Board welcomes your questions, feedback or suggestions on the content of this Plan.

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## THE EPA BOARD

In establishing the EPA, the Act specifies that the Authority comprises a Board and Director. The Board has an independent chairperson, deputy chairperson and two other independent members alongside the Director.

The members are as follows:



John Ramsay (Chairperson)



Dr Christine Mucha  
(Deputy Chairperson)



Ian Abernethy



Wayne Petrass



Warren Jones (Director)