



SWAN RIVER TRUST

ANNUAL REPORT 2023–2024

Swan River Trust Annual Report 2023-24

The Swan River Trust is an advisory body created by the *Swan and Canning Rivers Management Act 2006* (SCRM Act).

The Trust provides independent, high-level, strategic advice to the Minister for Environment and the Director General of the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) on matters affecting the Swan and Canning rivers.

The Trust acknowledges and respects the Whadjuk Noongar people as the traditional custodians of the Derbal Yiragan (Swan) and Djarlgarro (Canning) rivers and pays its respects to Elders past and present. The Trust Seeks to learn from their custodianship, culture and knowledge.

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Front Cover photo: Egrets on the South Perth Foreshore. *Photo – DBCA*

Back Cover photo: Dolphins Bottomslice and Blackwall surfacing. *Photo – Dr Delphine Chabanne*

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Swan River Trust Overview

The Trust is an advisory body created by the *Swan and Canning Rivers Management Act 2006* (SCRM Act).

The Trust provides independent, high-level, strategic advice to the Minister for Environment and the Director General of the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) on matters affecting the Swan and Canning rivers.

Under the SCRM Act, the Trust is vested with the care, control and management of the Swan Canning River reserve – the waterway – with various responsibilities including developing policies and preparing and reporting on strategic documents relating to the Swan Canning Riverpark (Riverpark), which includes public lands adjoining the Swan and Canning rivers.

The Trust's other key role is overseeing the development and implementation of the Swan Canning River Protection Strategy (RPS) to ensure coordinated management efforts across government to help protect the Riverpark.

Over the past year, the Trust has continued to be supported by DBCA given the department's significant operational and management responsibilities within the Riverpark and Swan Canning development control area (DCA) as outlined under the SCRM Act.

Our purpose

To work with others to protect the Riverpark and enhance its ecological and community benefits and amenity.

Our vision

A healthy river for all. To be enjoyed and shared, now and in the future.

Desired outcomes

The ecological health, amenity, sense of place and community benefits of the Swan Canning river system are protected and enhanced.

How we function

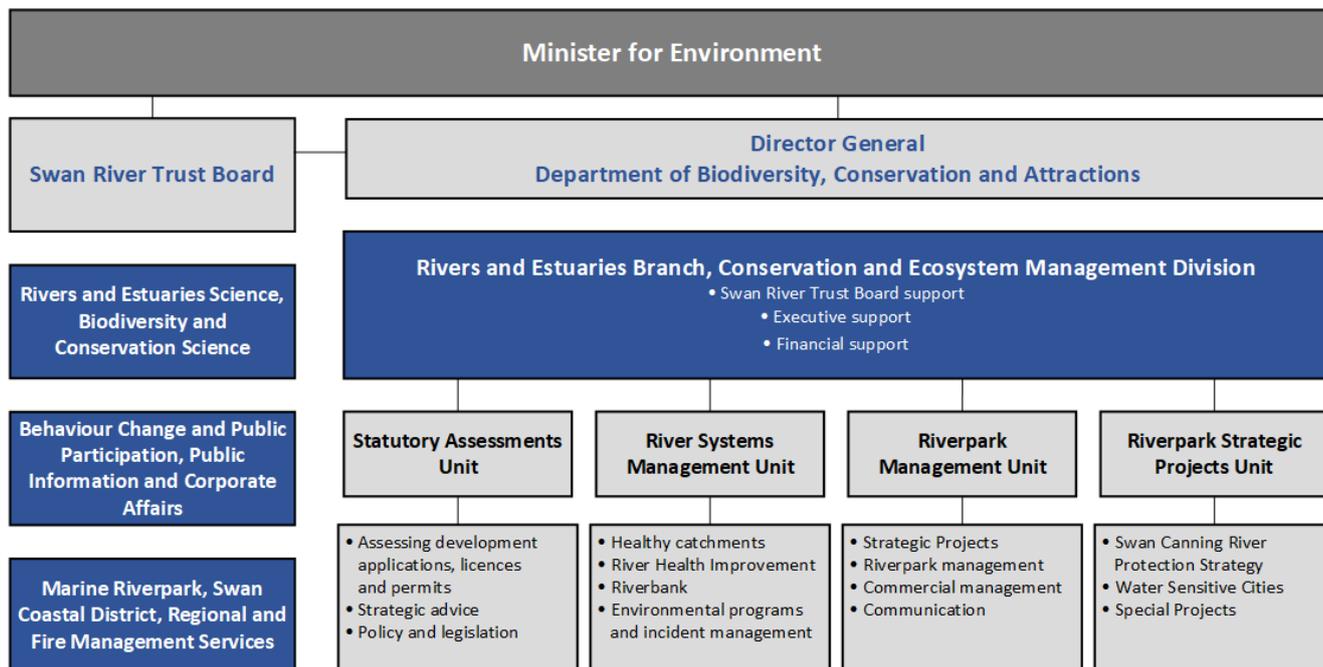
The Trust operates under the SCRM Act to provide advice and perform functions in respect of the Swan and Canning rivers and associated lands. A primary focus for the Trust is to provide advice and strategic direction regarding development proposals in and around the Swan Canning DCA.

DBCA has provided financial, technical and staff resources to the Trust throughout the year to enable the Trust to undertake its functions.

The Trust has the following functions under section 23 of the SCRM Act:

- Develop policies for the protection and enhancement of the DCA, the Riverpark and the Riverpark shoreline
- Establish targets for ecological and community benefits and amenity of the Riverpark and mechanisms for achieving those
- Prepare and implement strategic Riverpark planning and management documents
- Advise the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of DBCA on matters relating to development
- Advise the CEO of DBCA on promoting the activities of other bodies having functions in the catchment affecting the Riverpark
- Report to the Minister for Environment on the state of the DCA and development on and adjoining the DCA
- Provide advice to planning authorities so that proper provision can be made in planning schemes for the protection and future use of river foreshores, protection and public use of land and water and protection of wildlife
- Provide advice and promote public education on any matter within its functions
- Any other functions as described in the SCRM Act or other laws. Under section 11 of the SCRM Act the care, control and management of the River reserve – that is the waterways of the Swan and Canning rivers – is placed with the Trust. The day-to-day management of the River reserve is undertaken by DBCA on behalf of the Trust.

Swan River Trust Arrangements During 2023-24



Funding and administrative arrangements

Table 1. Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions financial support for the Swan River Trust 2023-24

	Amount
Board sitting fees	\$ 39,946
Meeting costs	\$ 1,112
Education and training	\$ 4,400
Professional services	\$ 19,850
Total	\$ 65,308

Operational Agreement between the Trust and DBCA 2021-22 – 2023-24

Under the SCRM Act, the CEO of the department is required to provide the Trust with any assistance, staff and facilities of the department the Trust may reasonably require to carry out its functions. There was an Operational Agreement (the Agreement) between the Trust and DBCA, that was valid for three years, from July 2021 – June 2024.

The Agreement detailed the agreed service arrangements and information about the relationship between the Trust and DBCA. Ahead of the 2023-24 financial year, Schedule 1 of the operational agreement between the Trust and DBCA was updated to reflect the anticipated financial support for the 2023-24 financial year. The agreement did not include DBCA staff time that was directed towards supporting the Trust.

A new Operational Agreement has been developed and entered into for 2024-25 – 2027-28.

Chair's Report

The 2023-24 year was my first full reporting year as Chair, and I am really pleased to be able to note the progress that the Swan River Trust and its Board has made to deliver on the priorities foreshadowed in my first Annual Report. Connecting with our stakeholders, guardians, users and land managers through our commitment to lay out the strategic direction for the Trust and the Swan (Derbal Yiragan) and Canning (Djarlgarro) Riverpark through a new River Protection Strategy has been a genuinely rewarding experience.

Over the coming year, the Trust will undertake advertising for community comment on two significant documents:

The first, our draft River Protection Strategy, is the culmination of a year of collaborative work with many users, clubs, natural resource management and catchment council groups, local governments and state agencies and departments. It's been an opportunity for the Trust, along with the DBCA's Rivers and Estuaries team to present an overarching strategy for the Riverpark, for tourism and visitor experiences; ongoing science and research into waterways and ecosystems; improved connection to country and engagement with Whadjuk Traditional Owners; and balancing vibrancy, activation and development opportunities with ongoing climate change challenges.

The second is our draft Swan Canning Riverpark Mooring Management Program. The finalisation of the Program allows the Trust and its partners DBCA and the Department of Transport to authorise, coordinate and manage swing moorings in the Riverpark. It's been nearly 10 years since the last Mooring Management program was approved and much has changed in the intervening period.

The summer and autumn period of 2023-24 was a particularly dry period for Perth and the Swan and Canning rivers catchment. I have been enormously impressed with the proactive way DBCA's Incident Management Team, including Rivers and Estuaries Science, work together to monitor and constantly advise and update on water quality in the rivers. The safety of river users, with the presence and risks associated with *Alexandrium* and *Karlodinium* algal species, has been at the forefront of issues for the Trust this year. This kind of collaboration and proactive role in working with local governments and local NRM groups to coordinate appropriate responses and management has been particularly impressive.

The Trust and DBCA's Statutory Assessments Unit has continued to work in a collaborative manner, providing independent and timely strategic advice to the Minister for Environment and the Director General of DBCA on a range of complex development proposals affecting the DCA. The Board has been involved in some major river crossing related projects this year including the Causeway Cycling and Pedestrian Bridge and the replacement Fremantle Traffic Bridge.

This year the Trust provided advice to the Director General of DBCA on eight development applications, in accordance with Part 5 of the *Swan and Canning Rivers Management Act 2006*. DBCA officers have also assessed and provided advice on 106 development applications on behalf of the Trust in accordance with the Metropolitan Region Scheme. There were also 81 tourism operator permits approved during the year.

Going forward, the priority focus areas for the Trust will include finalising our strategic documents in the River Protection Strategy and the Mooring Management Program, as well as building our profile as an agent for change with our stakeholders and community.

I would like to thank my Deputy Chair Peter King for his hard work, mentoring and advice and all my fellow Board members for ongoing exemplary guidance, input and commitment. We welcomed two new members during the year who have made an outstanding start and I also acknowledge the contribution of retiring member, Dr Penny O'Connor who was successful in becoming a Councillor of the City of Subiaco.

This annual report outlines how broad and varied the Trust's role is, and I join with the Board in extending my thanks and appreciation to DBCA staff for their stewardship, passion and ongoing commitment. The Board also thanks the community for their continuing support along with all the volunteers, River Guardians and Dolphin Watch volunteers for their dedication and commitment to our Riverpark.

David McFerran
Chair Swan River Trust Board

General Information

Legislative context

The Trust undertakes its functions in accordance with the SCRM Act. Under the SCRM Act, the Trust is the vesting authority for the River reserve. It has functions in relation to the River reserve, the Riverpark, the DCA and the broader catchment area.

River reserve

The River reserve contains the waterways of the Swan and Canning rivers, Helena River and Southern River.

Swan Canning Riverpark

The Riverpark consists of the land and waterways of the Swan, Canning, Helena and Southern rivers and public foreshore reserves surrounding them. It is a significant feature of Perth's landscape, prized for its natural values, recreational opportunities, and cultural and social importance.

Throughout 2023-24 DBCA was responsible for planning and managing the waterways and conservation reserves of the Riverpark. DBCA has joint responsibility for the Riverpark's shoreline in conjunction with other foreshore land managers, including local government authorities and several State government agencies in which the land is vested.

Swan Canning development control area

The DCA includes the waterways of the Swan and Canning rivers and the adjoining parks and recreation reserves (extending upstream from the Fremantle Traffic Bridge to Moondyne Brook on the Avon River, to the lower diversion dam on the Helena River, along the Southern River to the Allen Road crossing and the Canning River to its confluence with Stinton Creek). In some cases, the DCA includes private property.

Swan Canning Catchment

The Swan Canning Catchment covers 2090km² of the total catchment area in the Swan Avon system. The Swan Avon Catchment is approximately 126,000km². Surface water and groundwater flow into the Riverpark from tributaries and drains across the Swan Canning Catchment.

Swan River Trust membership

The Trust members are appointed under the provisions of the SCRM Act, and are to be persons who, in the opinion of the Minister for Environment, have knowledge and experience which is relevant to the functions of the Trust.

The legislation provides for the appointment of eight members, with one member appointed on the nomination of the Western Australian Local Government Association and one member appointed on the nomination of the department assisting in the administration of the *Planning and Development Act 2005*.

The Minister directly appoints the remaining six members including one as the Chair and one as the Deputy Chair. Membership of the board comprises persons who between them have knowledge and experience in the fields of conservation, natural resource management, recreation, tourism, planning, development, matters of interest to the rural community and matters of interest to the Noongar community. The duties of the Chair, Deputy Chair and members are on a part-time basis. Members are appointed for terms not exceeding three years and are eligible for reappointment.

Appointed Members of the Swan River Trust Board

<p>MR DAVID MCFERRAN CHAIR</p> 	<p>Mr David McFerran is currently a Director of McFerran Advisory, an independent property, planning and projects consultancy providing project and development management services, planning and property advice to a range of government and private sector entities. He has previously held senior positions in several State Government agencies and departments and has significant experience in policy development along with providing advice to Ministers. As a former business manager at DevelopmentWA, he has extensive experience in land use planning, statutory and strategic planning, property development as well as stakeholder and community consultation. David is also Chair of the Exmouth Gulf Taskforce and was a previous Director of Western Dairy, he has completed a Bachelor of Science (Agriculture) degree with Honours from The University of Western Australia (1996) and is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors (GAICD) and Leadership WA's Signature Program (2013). David was appointed Chair of the Trust Board in May 2023.</p>
<p>MR PETER KING DEPUTY CHAIR</p> 	<p>Mr Peter King currently consults to the Western Australian resources industry on the development and approval of large State significant projects. He has held senior positions in several State Government agencies, including the former Department of Agriculture, the former Department of State Development, and the Pilbara Ports Authority; as well as local resource companies and consultancies. Peter has also had overseas postings in the Middle East and Subcontinent. His areas of interest include agriculture, natural resource management, land use planning, project facilitation, infrastructure planning and development. He is very experienced in State approvals processes and facilitating development of major resource projects and port infrastructure in the Pilbara. Peter has a Bachelor of Science (Hons) from The University of Western Australia. Peter was appointed to the Trust Board in October 2016, and appointed Deputy Chair in May 2023.</p>

<p>MS MARENÉE PROVOST</p> 	<p>Ms Marenée Provost has worked in a diverse range of positions, including 21 years with the former Department for Child Protection, 10 years in the disability sector in senior management and overseeing projects involving architectural design and extensive building development for people with severe disability. Marenée has significant expertise in managing community-based projects and working in partnership with others which has been fundamental to the successful outcomes achieved. These projects have been diverse in nature with many being based in rural and remote areas of Western Australia, ensuring particular emphasis has been placed on achieving positive outcomes for Indigenous people and their communities. Marenée was appointed to the Trust Board in September 2018.</p>
<p>MS SARA SABERI</p> 	<p>Ms Sara Saberi is an experienced board member with expertise in local government, as a former elected member and technical experience as a current officer. She is passionate about environmental matters and support for a number of local community and sporting groups. Sara has a range of qualifications including a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Management and a Graduate Diploma in Environmental Health. Sara was appointed to the Trust Board in July 2018.</p>
<p>MS TRACY SHEA</p> 	<p>Ms Tracy Shea has held a range of policy, advisory and leadership roles across State government in environment, conservation, recreation and nature-based tourism during a career spanning 38 years, with the last 10 spent as an assistant director in parks and visitor services at the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions. After retiring from the department in 2018, Tracy has focused on running her consultancy business and her short-term accommodation property in Bridgetown. In recent years Tracy has also worked in the not-for-profit sector and currently works part-time for the Forum Advocating Cultural and Eco-Tourism Inc. (FACET). She also volunteers as a Park Ambassador for the WA Parks Foundation, as Secretary of Geoparks WA and as a judge in the annual WA Tourism Awards. Tracy was appointed to the Trust Board in May 2023.</p>

MS JACQUIE STONE



Ms Jacquie Stone is an urban planner with 30 years' experience, having worked in both the State and local government sectors. She is currently the Executive Director of Policy at the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage, where responsibilities include overseeing policies on water, wetlands, native vegetation, coastal, bushfire, climate change, public open, tourism and Crown land management. Jacquie was appointed to the Trust Board in July 2018.

MR MICHAEL VOROS



Mr Michael Voros is a Partner of Ashurst law firm. He is a leading lawyer for environment, climate change, planning and related issues. This includes that he acted for the WA State Government for all environment, planning and water matters for the construction of the new Perth Stadium. He enjoys experiencing Perth's beautiful rivers with his family. In particular he is a keen cyclist and loves the opportunity to cycle around our rivers. Michael is an Independent Director of WestCycle, the not-for-profit peak body for bike riding in Western Australia. Michael was appointed to the Trust Board in March 2024.

MS ROSEMARY WALLEY



Ms Rosemary Walley is a Whadjuk Noongar woman with connections to other clans throughout the south-west of WA. She holds a Bachelor of Applied Science in Aboriginal Community Management and Development, and a Masters of Philosophy (Health Sciences). As well as her research and studies, Ms Walley, as a part of Kambarang Services, works as a cultural awareness trainer and assists organisations in developing Reconciliation Action Plans. Ms Walley also worked as a Researcher at the Telethon Kids Research Institute. She also lectures in social work courses and delivers workshops and keynote addresses to various health conferences throughout Australia. Rosemary was appointed to the Trust Board in March 2024.

Outgoing Members of the Swan River Trust Board

<p>DR PENNY O'CONNOR</p> 	<p>Dr Penny O'Connor has 35 years of deep and diverse management experience across the public, private and not-for-profit sectors in England and Australia. At present Penny is a Researcher with the Stolen Generations Immersive Hub at Curtin University, and is Principal of heritage advisory service Arc Insights. Previously Penny supported the work of the Heritage Council of Western Australia in a variety of government positions, most recently as Director of Historic Heritage Assessment and Registration for eight years. Her knowledge of and work relating to heritage places within and adjoining the Swan and Canning rivers has given her a keen appreciation of the diversity of interests the community has for these waterways. Penny has an Advanced Diploma of Management (2013) and a Doctor of Philosophy from Curtin University (2012) amongst other achievements. Penny was appointed to the Trust Board in May 2023. Her term concluded in October 2023, when she was elected to the City of Subiaco Council.</p>
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Swan River Trust Meetings

Member attendance at the ten Swan River Trust meetings held in 2023-24 is outlined below:

Meeting notices and attendance

Please see below attendance for Trust Board members this financial year

Table 2. Swan River Trust meetings for the 2023-24 financial year

Board Member Attendance 2023-2024	
David McFerran	10 of 10
Peter King	10 of 10
Penny O'Connor	4 of 4
Marenée Provost	10 of 10
Sara Saberi	9 of 10
Tracy Shea	10 of 10
Jacquie Stone	10 of 10
Michael Voros	2 of 3
Rosemary Walley	2 of 3

Table 3. Swan River Trust members conflict of interest declarations

Month	Member's name	Item
Jul-23	None declared	-
Aug-23	Jacquie Stone	DPLH responsibilities for State Planning Policy 3.7 Planning in bushfire prone areas
Sep-23	Penny O'Connor	Elected as Councillor for City of Subiaco
	David McFerran	Attended City of Swan Leadership Symposium dinner
Oct-23	David McFerran	The State Government engaged Mr McFerran to undertake an independent review of environmental impact assessment and approvals in WA
	Penny O'Connor	Once sworn in as member of the City of Subiaco Council on 24 October 2023, Dr O'Connor will no longer continue as a member of the Trust
Nov-23	Jacquie Stone	DPLH responsibilities for the <i>Planning and Development Amendment Bill 2023</i>
	David McFerran	Attending FACET facilitated breakfast 1 December 2023
	Peter King	Advised that he and his son attended Wesley College
Feb-24	David McFerran	No longer contracts to Turner & Townsend for Westport Project
Mar-24	David McFerran	Formally appointed as Chair of Exmouth Gulf Taskforce
Apr-24	Peter King	Mr King reminded the Board that he and his son are former students at Wesley College
	Michael Voros	Mr Voros advised of standing declarations that he is an Independent Director of WestCycle, and works with Ashurst law firm

		He also lives nearby, and has family connections, to Wesley College
May-24	None declared	-
Jun-24	Jacquie Stone	Ms Stone confirmed she had not been involved in DPLH's advice to the Trust regarding the River Protection Strategy

Standing declaration from Chair, David McFerran, who on occasion works for Hesperia, a Western Australian property development company.

Standing declaration from Deputy Chair, Peter King, as a member of Royal Perth Yacht Club.

Standing declaration from Dr Penny O'Connor, who is the Secretary of Trails WA and is also a member of the Fremantle Museum Advisory Committee.

Standing declaration from Ms Tracy Shea, who works for the Forum Advocating Cultural and Eco-tourism (FACET) as its Executive Officer, and volunteers with the WA Parks Foundation.

Standing declaration from Jacquie Stone, regarding State Planning Policy 2.9.

Standing declaration from Michael Voros, as an Independent Director of WestCycle, and working with Ashurst law firm.

During the year, Trust members also attended events such as the Swan Alcoa Landcare Program 2024 funding ceremony event and numerous River Protection Strategy workshops with key partners and stakeholders.

The Director General of DBCA, or their representative, is entitled to attend any meeting of the Trust and take part in the consideration and discussion of any matter before a meeting but cannot vote on any matter (section 22A of the SCRM Act).

Under section 22 of the SCRM Act, the Trust's Chair is required to invite a representative of DevelopmentWA or the relevant local government to attend a meeting of the Trust if a matter to be considered at that meeting is relevant to DevelopmentWA or the local government. When a representative of DevelopmentWA or local government attends a meeting for this purpose, they have all the functions of a Trust member in considering the particular matter. This year, several local governments attended Trust meetings.

Where it is considered appropriate, the Trust also invites persons with an interest in matters to attend meetings including proponents of development applications and representatives of peak bodies with an interest in the Riverpark and resource management.

This year, the Trust invited numerous stakeholders to meet to discuss river management matters, understand different perspectives and seek input into the development of our draft River Protection Strategy 2024.

Governance matters

The Trust operates in accordance with Schedule 6 of the SCRM Act, *Public Sector Management Act 1994*, DBCA's Code of Conduct and its own Board Charter. The Charter outlines the role, composition and processes relating to the key governance activities of the Trust in accordance with the SCRM Act.

Delegations

The Trust reviewed and updated its delegations to DBCA in September and October 2023, and also endorsed a minor change to improve processing timeframes for simple development proposals.

Performance monitoring and reporting

DBCA officers provide written monthly reports on key activities to the Trust. Annual performance is reported in the Trust's Annual Report and DBCA's Annual Report to Parliament and the Minister for Environment.

Science updates and advice

Monthly updates on routine monitoring and scientific investigations undertaken within the Swan Canning river system by DBCA's Rivers and Estuaries Science Program help inform management of the Riverpark and River reserve. Rivers and Estuaries Science Program staff also attended meetings regularly to provide updates to the Trust on key issues, such as the 2023 Swan Canning Estuary condition assessment based on fish communities.

Scientific advice to inform appropriate monitoring and mitigation measures for development approvals and commercial activities within the DCA was also provided, including major infrastructure projects.

Strategic Documents

River Protection Strategy

Part 4 of the SCRM Act outlines the responsibilities of the Trust and DBCA to prepare strategic documents for approval by the Minister for Environment. The first River Protection Strategy (RPS) was released in 2015 and, following a review process, the Trust and DBCA, with the endorsement of the Minister for Environment, are developing a new RPS.

The RPS provides a coordinated multi-stakeholder strategy to protect and enhance the ecological and community benefit and amenity of the DCA and the Riverpark. To do this, it is understood that action in the wider catchment is needed.

A key aim of the RPS is to improve collaboration between stakeholders with responsibilities for the Swan Canning river system, by providing strategic direction for the next 10 years.

To develop the new RPS, the Trust and DBCA have undertaken significant external consultation, and held workshops in 2023-24 with the Whadjuk Aboriginal Corporation, State government agencies, natural resource management groups and the 24 local governments that intersect the Riverpark or have a significant portion of the wider catchment in their boundaries.

An independent review of the previous RPS was completed in 2023-24 and involved 21 interviews across 17 organisations. The findings from the review are informing the development of the new RPS.

A community survey was conducted to better understand what the community most values about the Swan Canning river system and their expectations for its management. The survey received 1289 responses and has been used to develop the values framework in the draft RPS.

In late 2023-24, guided by stakeholder feedback and the independent review recommendations, the Trust and DBCA finalised the draft RPS.

In 2024-25, the Trust and DBCA look forward to undertaking further consultation, and finalising the new RPS.

Swan Canning Riverpark Mooring Management Program

Consistent with section 64 of the SCRM Act, the Trust undertook its five-year review of the Swan Canning Riverpark Mooring Management Program (MMP). The Trust (through DBCA) prepares management programmes under section 53 of the SCRM Act and ensures that such programmes align with the objectives of the SCRM Act.

The MMP was established to formalise the coordinated authorisation and management of swing moorings within the Riverpark between the Department of Transport (DoT), the Trust and DBCA. The MMP provides a regulatory framework and stakeholder guidelines to ensure that swing moorings meet approved specifications, are well maintained, safe and consistent with the relevant River reserve and Mooring Control Area's assigned purpose.

During 2023-24 DBCA and the Trust, in partnership with DoT Maritime, have revised the MMP to reflect the following:

- recent updates to the *Mooring Regulations 1998* including the introduction of mooring classes, which now includes grandfathered moorings, rental moorings, courtesy moorings, recreational moorings, general commercial moorings and emergency moorings;
- transition of ownership and management of courtesy moorings within the Riverpark from DBCA to DoT;
- improved and updated plans to reflect minor amendments to River reserve lease boundaries;
- improved and updated plans to clearly identify Mooring Zones and Mooring Licence Areas;
- annual reporting on actual mooring numbers in Mooring Zones and Mooring Licence Areas while recording any change of mooring numbers and the status of moorings outside dedicated mooring zones; and
- streamlined mooring works permit process.

The draft Swan Canning Riverpark Mooring Management Programme 2025 when finalised will be advertised for public comment.

Ashfield Flats Master Plan

The Ashfield Flats Master Plan (Master Plan) was endorsed by the Trust on 19 March 2024, and the Town of Bassendean on 30 April 2024. The Master Plan outlines strategies and initiatives to be implemented over the next 20 years, to provide a foundation for the longer term management of ecological systems; community, recreation and cultural uses; infrastructure requirements; and other issues, constraints and opportunities including management responses to climate change.



The Ashfield Flats Master Plan

Statutory Assessments and Projects

In its statutory assessment role under the SCRM Act, DBCA assesses and determines, or provides advice to the Minister for Environment on, development proposals within the Swan Canning DCA. In performing its assessment function under Part 5 of the SCRM Act, DBCA must seek advice from the Trust and include that advice in its report to the Minister.

During 2023-24, the Trust provided advice to the Director General of DBCA on eight development applications lodged in accordance with Part 5 of the *Swan and Canning Rivers Management Act 2006*, including one request for variation of a development approval made pursuant to Section 84.

Significant developments were proposed within the public foreshore reserves and river this year. Highlights included the expansion of the South of Perth Yacht Club, renovation of Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club and development of the Sail Training Centre at Nedlands Yacht Club. Further, responding to the need for long term planning around the river has resulted in substantial master planning exercises including finalisation of the Ashfield Flats Master Plan and ongoing master planning for the Nedlands Foreshore, Kings Meadow in Swan Valley and Perth Polo Club at Guildford.

DBCA is continuing its engagement with Riverpark yacht clubs regarding long term planning for their facilities. Key considerations will include tenure, ensuring improved public access to foreshores within and around yacht club facilities, environmental compliance and improved amenity outcomes for the community.

DBCA also provided advice under delegated authority of the Trust to the Western Australian Planning Commission and local governments in accordance with the Metropolitan Region Scheme (MRS), regarding planning proposals that abut, are partly contained within or affect, the DCA. During 2023-24, DBCA's Rivers and Estuaries Branch assessed, and provided advice, on 106 development applications on behalf of the Trust in accordance with the MRS.

Table 4. Swan River Trust statutory assessment advice

Approval type	Number
Part 5 SCRM Act development applications	8
Section 84 SCRM Act requests for variation to development approvals	1
MRS development applications	106

Water Sensitive Cities Program

The Trust and DBCA continued to support the New WAter Ways (NWW) capacity building program that provides water sensitive urban design information and support to State and local governments and the urban development industry, in the form of funding provision and NWW Board membership, including review and approval of NWW publications. Support was continued for the implementation of a water sensitive Perth and Peel through membership of the Water Sensitive Transition Network and delivering actions from the Vision and Transition Strategy for a Water Sensitive Greater Perth - Implementation Plan (2022-2024).

The Trust and DBCA continued the partnership with DWER in the national Water Sensitive Cities Australia (WSCA) research-to-practice mainstreaming program to support cities and towns to adopt evidence-based integrated urban water management solutions. This included establishing and progressing two national and three WA WSCA projects, such as a WA local government Councillor engagement program and a community water literacy project.

The Trust and DBCA continued to deliver seven actions as a partner in the State Government's Kep Katitjin-Gabi Kaadadjan (Waterwise Perth Action Plan 2). Developed and led by the Minister for Water and DWER, the plan seeks to establish leading waterwise communities for Boorloo (Perth) and Bindjareb (Peel) by 2030. The department also collaborated with DWER and other partner agencies to draft Kep Katitjin – Gabi Kaadadjan – Waterwise Perth Action Plan 3.

Swan Canning Riverpark River Journeys Interpretation Node Program

Construction for the tenth and eleventh River Journeys Interpretation Nodes commenced in the latter half of 2023-24, with ongoing support from the Trust for DBCA's River Journeys Interpretation Node Program. The Interpretation Nodes at Banks Reserve in Mount Lawley and at Burswood Park are expected to be completed by Kambarang (Spring) 2024 and will provide recreational benefits for visitors to the Riverpark and share meaningful Aboriginal cultural stories and artwork provided by Whadjuk elders and artists, as well as showcase the ecological and socio-historic values of the bilya (river).

DBCA continues to engage with river foreshore land managers in planning for future instalments of the River Journeys Interpretation Node Program around the Riverpark.

Swan and Canning Rivers Management Legislation

Under the Streamline WA regulatory reforms, the third tranche of amendments to the Swan and Canning Rivers Management Regulations 2007 were finalised on 21 March 2024. The key amendment in this tranche was the increase of the financial thresholds that determine whether a permit or development approval is required for leaseholders or Schedule 5 authorities undertaking works within the DCA. This change will significantly improve the timeframes for processing these types of applications.

Major Proposals Considered

Tonkin Gap – Redcliffe Bridge duplication

The construction of the Redcliffe Bridge duplication, including the hard landscaping works for the activation area underneath the bridge (e.g. pathways, interpretation nodes and BMX/mountain bike tracks) was completed during the year. The additional lanes on the new bridge were open to vehicle traffic in late 2023 whilst the underbridge activation area was open to the public in early 2024. The remaining soft landscaping works (e.g. foreshore planting) will be completed this winter period.

Fremantle Traffic Bridge replacement

The new bridge will replace the existing bridge at its current alignment and consists of an extradosed design that incorporates cantilevers and cable support. This design is intended to allow the bridge to be constructed in a staged manner and to minimise the closure time of the bridge. A development application was lodged in late 2023 and the Trust considered the proposal in early 2024. The development application was subsequently approved by the Western Australian Planning Commission in May 2024. On behalf of the Trust, DBCA has undertaken ongoing consultation with Fremantle Bridge Alliance (FBA) during the development application and early design phase of the project, which is continuing during the detailed design and construction phase. FBA has commenced the relocation of utility services from the existing bridge, and it is anticipated that the bridge construction works will commence soon. Works on the bridge are anticipated to be completed by the end of 2026.

Causeway Pedestrian and Cyclist bridges

The construction of the Causeway Pedestrian and Cyclist bridges, that consists of building two cable stayed bridges with landings at McCallum Park, Heirisson Island and Point Fraser continued in 2023-24. The installation of the bridge deck segments over the river (including the installation of the bridge pylons) are near completion, with the next phase of the works to consist of installing the bridge cables and wider landscaping works within the foreshore. On behalf of the Trust, DBCA has provided advice during the design, development and construction phases of the project on an on-going basis. In addition, the Trust board members attended the project site in April 2024 to inspect the construction progress. Works are expected to continue into late 2024.



Swan River Trust members at the Causeway Pedestrian and Cyclist bridges project site on 19 April 2024



Swan River Trust

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Front cover photo Egrets on the Swan River foreshore
Back cover Dolphins in the Swan river