

Objective:

Provide effective corporate capability and governance frameworks to support business delivery

Corporate Services initiatives

Effective corporate services, systems and frameworks are critical to helping the department deliver its products and services for the Queensland community.

For DERM this suite of services includes providing leadership, policies, advice, programs, processes and systems.

These services are delivered across Queensland with support from the Shared Service Agency (SSA) and CorpTech and are aligned to whole-of-government initiatives.

Corporate services merger

Corporate Services has been managing the significant challenge of maintaining its high standards of ongoing service delivery while introducing significant reforms through the machinery-of-government changes.

On 1 June 2009, the corporate activities of the two former agencies were amalgamated to create DERM Corporate Services. Governance arrangements have subsequently been drawn up to provide independent advice to the Director-General and the Executive Management Group on corporate service issues.

The corporate services and communication functions of the Queensland Water Commission (QWC) are also being consolidated into the department. DERM will now deliver these functions to the QWC under a service level agreement.

Through this period of change, Corporate Services has been working to ensure that any people-related issues are effectively managed and business areas receive the assistance they require to achieve integration and a smooth transition to the new organisation.

Major communication activities

Corporate Services continued to manage the growing importance of environmental and resource management issues to the community and media through its communication, media and marketing activities.

Corporate Services communication staff were responsible for the high-profile Queensland Sustainable Industries Awards which were announced at a gala dinner at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre on Friday, 12 June 2009.

They were also responsible for the successful launch of a new national climate change campaign which was staged at Parliament House in Brisbane on 18 June 2009.

The event, hosted by Premier Anna Bligh and Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability Kate Jones (both campaign ambassadors), launched the Queensland component of the national 1 Million Women campaign which aims to engage one million women to each reduce their carbon footprint by one tonne of CO₂.

Another communication campaign was developed for managing the implementation of the moratorium on clearing high-value regrowth vegetation. The Premier and the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy and Minister for Trade, jointly introduced the moratorium on 20 April 2009, which took effect on 8 April 2009. A series of web-based informational products were developed to help key stakeholders understand and comply with their obligations during the moratorium's six-month consultation period.

Strategic projects

Corporate Services released an interim intranet site during the reporting period. This provided all staff with a single point of access to the latest news on what was happening in the new department, and access to policies, procedures, delegations and other relevant information. Corporate Services also prepared the department's Right to Information policy, procedures and guidelines, which will take effect from 1 July 2009.

Indigenous employment opportunities have been a focus for the department. DERM participated in the Former Origin Greats inaugural regional Indigenous Careers Expos at Rockhampton and Townsville. The expos provided Indigenous job seekers with the opportunity to connect with Queensland's most prominent employers and education and training organisations for one day. The department will participate in the Cairns, Mackay and Mt Isa expos in coming months.

Initiatives for the future

Corporate Services has been working with other divisions and regions across the department to improve performance in major functional areas. Priorities for the future include:

1. Lead organisational development

Corporate Services has been implementing the Workforce Sustainability Strategy to meet current and future agency needs for a healthy, safe and capable workforce. It has also been proactive in leading organisational sustainability and minimising the impacts of climate change through internal initiatives aimed at energy minimisation, resource conservation and fuel efficiency.

At 26 March 2009, the former Environmental Protection Agency was on target to achieve carbon neutrality by the close of the financial year. 'Green' purchasing practices have been implemented in DERM which has partnered with Queensland Purchasing to ensure environmental considerations are incorporated into whole-of-government purchasing agreements.

2. Maintain a comprehensive governance framework

The department's comprehensive governance framework, including the Finance Committee and Information and Service Delivery Committee, is supported by Corporate Services. Regular monthly financial and quarterly human resource, risk management and performance reporting is provided to executive management. This framework is underpinned by a range of financial, human resource and business-specific delegations approved by the Director-General and monitored for currency and completeness within Corporate Services.

The financial integrity of the department will continue to be safeguarded through the continuous improvement of statutory and internal reporting mechanisms, and the monitoring and maintenance of financial systems and financial master data.

The department's financial, human resource, administration and information management policies, procedures and standards will undergo a major review to align the practices of both former agencies into a comprehensive suite for the new department. These will be continually reviewed over time to ensure currency and relevance. More detailed information is available in the 'corporate governance' section of this report.

3. Support efficiencies

A strategy for the consolidation of DERM's Brisbane CBD locations was developed, which included plans for part of the department to relocate to a new five-green-star building at 400 George Street, Brisbane.

Once completed, the relocation strategy will result in DERM being one of the Queensland Government's most integrated new departments.

Forward investment portfolios from the two previous agencies are being merged and assessed to identify any duplication or potential to consolidate particular projects or programs.

The department has decided to proceed with the combined SAP 4.6C version for Finance and Human Resource systems. This decision was made in consultation with CorpTech and the SSA, with implementation expected to be completed in the second half of the next financial year.

Amalgamation of the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) facilities is on schedule. Data networks are being consolidated and Corporate Services is leading the development of technology templates and standards to facilitate system amalgamation. ICT support and services are being rationalised for efficiencies.