

Department of the Registrar
**Western Australian Industrial
Relations Commission**

**Strategic Plan for
2020 – 2024**

Introduction and Purpose

The Department's primary purpose is to provide the Western Australian Industrial Relations Commission (WAIRC) and the Industrial Magistrates Court (IMC) with the physical and virtual infrastructure, human resource functions, administrative resources and financial resources, integral to supporting the dual jurisdictions, as detailed in the *Industrial Relations Act 1979* (WA) (the IR Act).

The WAIRC's other jurisdictions of the Occupational Safety and Health Tribunal, the Road Freight Transport Industry Tribunal and other constituent authorities are supported likewise.

The Department also provides the administrative support necessary for the lodgement of appeals to the Western Australian Industrial Appeal Court (IAC) and it provides Judicial Officers to support Industrial Magistrates and the functioning of the IMC.

The Department is responsible for the statutory obligations of the Registrar, including;

- the registration and monitoring of compliance by registered organisations with respect to the obligations under the IR Act and broader legislation within the jurisdiction;
- the provision of Judicial Officers in the IMC;
- supporting the Clerk of Court accountabilities with respect to pre-trial conferences on IMC matters; and
- supporting the Registrar's accountabilities in respect of WAIRC conferences.

In terms of the broader community, the Department provides the infrastructure, administration, procedural advice and support services that enable the general community, unions, employer associations and government agencies, to access the WAIRC, IMC and IAC to assist them to resolve industrial relations matters.

This plan outlines the values and guiding principles by which we operate. It also sets out our vision, mission and objectives, together with the strategies we will use to achieve our objectives.

Strategic Vision and Directions

Our Vision:

To provide the government, industrial relations practitioners and the community with 24/7 high-calibre, contemporary services and support for all interactions in the Western Australian industrial relations jurisdictions.

Our Values:

Excellence in Customer Service

We provide a professional, effective and timely service to internal and external customers.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

We actively explore opportunities to enhance service delivery.

Accountability and Integrity

We are honest, open and accountable for our decisions and actions.

Respect and Inclusiveness

We believe in the equality of all people and treat everyone accordingly.

We value diversity and respect others.

Cooperation and Team Spirit

We collaborate and work together to achieve organisational objectives.

Strategic Objectives

Key drivers in achieving the Department's Purpose and Vision.

1. We will deliver a service-oriented culture by:

1.1 Engaging all staff in reviewing our service to internal and external clients to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of our service.

1.2 Encouraging everyone to share positive and negative feedback in relation to service delivery and opportunities for improvement through the implementation of engagement strategies within team meetings and alternative feedback processes.

1.3 Strengthening a culture of mutual respect for the ideas and contributions of all colleagues and clients, by ensuring that all employees are trained and understand their accountabilities and entitlements arising from the Code of Conduct and related departmental policies.

1.4 Maintaining a consultative and supportive approach to managing change through comprehensive communications and an open-door policy to employee engagement.

2. We will enhance professionalism and engagement of the workforce by:

2.1 Conducting a comprehensive capability review, which will identify the required workforce, desired skills mix.

2.2 Undertaking a review of the structure of the Department, informed by the capability review, identifying opportunities to utilise the existing workforce in new ways.

2.3 Implementing proactive succession planning, through the establishment of a structure that enables mentoring and access additional external training.

2.4 Training and developing all staff to achieve professional and organisational development goals, through online training in the first instance and that provided by the Public Sector Commission and the Institute of Public Administration Australia.

3. Our service will be innovative and responsive by:

3.1 Progressively reviewing all services to enable the Department to more effectively deliver on core business. Such assessments will be conducted across all sections of the Department.

3.2 Diversifying the business model to incorporate new services complementary to core business.

3.3 Completing the implementation of the four GovNext platforms and the development of online portals that enable the community to be self-sufficient in their transactions.

4. Our operations will be underpinned by:

4.1 Promoting the importance of corporate governance, through the placement of good governance principles at the forefront of all management meetings and including governance responsibilities in the performance management processes and activities of managers, supervisors and all employees.

4.2 Reviewing policies and processes to ensure compliance with corporate governance principles, through audits of all policies and procedures.

4.3 Building a structure in the Department that encourages the rotation of staff to ensure knowledge is shared between the business sections. This enables continuity of service delivery in circumstances when a given area has an increased need for support.

4.4 Innovating within the Department and across the wider Government sector.

Departmental Priorities

Go Digital

- Migration to the GovNext, Network, Gateway Services, Cloud Services and Telephony;
- Progression of the Digital WA Strategy by providing; digital application lodgement; a modern and intuitive website; a portal to enable clients to easily interact with the Department and access decisions and records through a modern search function;
- Digitisation of the Western Australian Industrial Gazette and the Western Australian Arbitration Report from 1901 – 1920, through to the current day.

Access to Justice

- Access to justice initiatives which include enhanced pro-bono legal advice and guidance services;
- Enhancing diversity and inclusion outcomes within the Department.

Reducing Red tape

- Ensure the administrative requirements of the IR Act are contemporary and best serve the Western Australian community;
- Redesign of the regulations to reduce red tape and serve as the basis of a self-help platform for the community;
- Continue to develop alliances with other government agencies on service delivery and infrastructure;
- Lead, support and champion the public sector reform program and encourage a culture of learning, adaptation and improvement at all levels of the Department.

Roadmap for Reform

- Drive contemporary business planning and performance development framework;
- Drive a coordinated, collaborative and aligned approach to addressing shared government and community priorities.

These Objectives and Priorities will be achieved by activities at the operational level over the period of the Strategic Plan 2020 – 2024.

(Refer Strategic Implementation Plan 2020-2024 and Workforce and Diversity Plan 2019-2022).

Key Performance Indicators

The Department is established under the *Public Sector Management Act 1994 (WA)* and is responsible to the Minister for Industrial Relations in terms of finances and people management. However, the Department's primary purposes are to facilitate:

- the administration of the IR Act;
- the operations of the WAIRC; and
- the operations of the IMC.

The operational outputs in the latter two dot points are non-accountable to government, given the independent statutory nature of their operations.

Nonetheless, as the Department is still required to manage government desired outcomes, we have adopted sector-wide priorities which are supported by agency-level outcomes and delivery of services to achieve those outcomes. These are represented by Key Effectiveness / Efficiency Indicators and reported on in the Annual Report.

The Registrar and officers of the Department have an integral role in defined statutory obligations in the industrial relations jurisdiction including, the administration and monitoring of statutory accountabilities of employer and employee organisations, and registration of industrial agents, all of which are measured and reported upon.

The Registrar is also the Clerk of the Court for the IMC and delegated officers of the Department perform judicial support roles within the IMC.

Although the WAIRC relies on the Department to provide the physical and virtual infrastructure, human resource functions, administrative resources and financial resources, integral to support its functions, it is not subject to any form of operational control or reporting requirements by either the Department or Government.

Challenges & Opportunities

Many challenges will impact the operations of the Department over the next few years, including:

Government policy and legislative amendment

The Department has a good reputation for being responsive and innovative when implementing government policy. The next four years are anticipated to expand our jurisdiction in line with the government legislative reform agenda. Such changes will necessarily impact upon infrastructure, technology and human resource allocations.

As legislative amendments are introduced, the Department will establish appropriate processes and mechanisms to give effect to any changes to legislation and ensure the continued effective support of the WAIRC. The current “capability review” and implementation of the Digital WA Strategy are focussed on providing the foundation for effective, efficient implementation of such changes.

Meeting the needs of the community, reducing red tape and expenditure

The Department strives to be professional and responsive in its dealings with all members of the community, informing them of their rights and their options to use the services it provides. The Department has focussed on improving the options for people with disability and those from non-English speaking and culturally diverse backgrounds to access its services.

The implementation of the Governments Digital WA Strategy commenced in June 2018, in the first instance establishing connectivity to GovNext via the GovNet Core network and subsequently establishing internet services via NEC Gateway Services.

These first steps were the precursor to leveraging government procurement, a recommendation of the Service Priority Review and reducing costs associated with delivering services to the community and enhancing the efficiency of the Department.

The next phase of the migration will include Telephony Services and migration to the GovNext Private Cloud.

Online Service delivery is a key focus for the Department. A significant project was undertaken to enhance the quality of our engagement with the community through the creation of a contemporary website-based application lodgement system, which included intuitive guidance sheets that enable community access and knowledge transfer 24 hours a day.

This objective was implemented in March 2019 and will be finessed over the coming years and will be expandable to other jurisdictional areas if legislative change is introduced.

Diversification of the Business Model

Over the past few years, the Department has offered infrastructure and services to other departments and tribunals on a fee for service arrangement. Conference and hearing rooms are available to be used more widely by the private and public sectors.

Amongst other recommendations, the Service Priority Review recommended government agencies develop coordinated, collaborative and aligned approaches to addressing shared government and community priorities. The Department has embraced this recommendation and has collaborations with other similar sized agencies to deliver cost effective and efficient finance and payroll solutions.

Collaborations also exist with the Department of Justice in terms of enabling hearings in remote and rural areas of Western Australia and by way of providing services for the Industrial Magistrates Court.

Effective succession planning and knowledge transfer

Workforce capability and a shared public sector workforce identity underpin the Department's Strategic Plan, in accordance with the recommendations 10 and 11 of the Government's Roadmap for Reform.

The Department's business planning and performance measurement is derived from the key performance requirements of the CEO and nine recommendations of the Service Priority Review applicable to the Department.

The Department has undergone a staged capability review across each business unit which identified efficiencies, that will be implemented progressively.

The Department has completed a review of the Workforce and Diversity Plan 2016 – 2018 and introduced an amended plan for the period 2019 – 2022.

As part of our commitment to succession planning, we have implemented formal mentoring and training for senior managers which has included succession development and attendance at senior women in leadership forums.

The Chief Commissioner, Registrar and Clerk of the Court have provided information sessions to members of the public sector who have responsibilities for advocacy on behalf of the government and the Department is engaged in an ongoing rotation of graduates throughout the Department.

Managing Risk

The Department has an active risk management framework and process which proactively identifies and manages risk as it arises. The Registrar and Executive maintain and monitor a risk register and have implemented robust business continuity plans.

Managing change

We are committed to a modern and diverse workplace, which is able to meet the changing needs and expectations of the community and government. Changes will be implemented through targeted strategies utilising contemporary process and procedures.