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15 Oct 2024



Government
of South Australia

PASTORAL BOARD

2023-24 Annual Report

PASTORAL BOARD

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To:

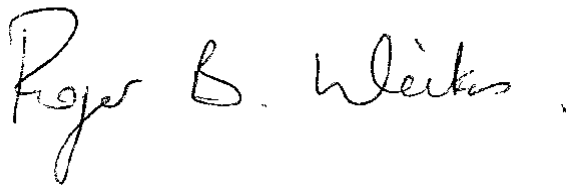
Hon Dr Susan Close MP

Minister for Climate, Environment and Water

This annual report will be presented to Parliament to meet the statutory reporting requirements of the *Public Sector Act 2009*, the *Public Sector Regulations 2010*, the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1987*, section 18A of the *Pastoral Land Management and Conservation Act 1989* and the requirements of Premier and Cabinet Circular *PC013 Annual Reporting*.

This report is verified to be accurate for the purposes of annual reporting to the Parliament of South Australia.

Submitted on behalf of the PASTORAL BOARD by:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Roger B. Wickes". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'R' and a trailing flourish.

Roger Wickes PSM

Presiding Member

Pastoral Board

Date: 11 September 2024

From the Presiding Member

I am pleased to present the Pastoral Board's annual report for the year ending 30 June 2024.

Since its appointment in December 2022, the Board has focused on defining its strategy, delivering its core business, building strong relationships with pastoralists and key stakeholders, improving communications and delivering improved outcomes for lessees.

Across its members and deputies, the Board has an excellent mix of skill, experience and perspectives, including different ages and gender, and is working well together.

In 2023-24, the Board has:

- Developed its Strategic Plan 2023-25, with input from major stakeholders, and shared the plan widely.
- Engaged face to face with pastoral lessees and stakeholders, at Mt Ive Station and Copley, to enable them to share their views on management of pastoral land and the Board's priorities.
- Engaged with key stakeholders to explore a range of issues of mutual interest, including goat and kangaroo management and outback road maintenance.
- Supported the Bill to update the *Pastoral Land Management and Conservation Act 1989* to allow the Pastoral Board to recognise conservation and carbon farming as legitimate uses of pastoral leases.
- Prioritised the assessment of pastoral leases to enable the timely renewal of pastoral leases, providing greater certainty to lessees.
- Developed a risk-based compliance framework and strategy to enable the Board to prioritise compliance effort to the most important matters.
- Streamlined the approval process for pastoral lessees to take advantage of good seasonal conditions, to enable temporary increases in stock maximums.
- Made stock returns easier for lessees, by developing a new online system for the 2023-24 stock returns.
- Provided lessees with greater clarity on fencing through updated Guidelines on Stock Proof Boundary Fencing, along with case studies providing examples of how pastoral lessees have worked together to upgrade or replace fencing to meet their different needs.
- Provided comments on the design and implementation of the Hydrogen and Renewable Energy Act and Regulations and met with regulators, pastoralists and industry representatives to understand the issues.

The Pastoral Board is committed to working closely with the SA Arid Lands Landscape Board and regularly communicating with outback communities and those with an interest in the pastoral lands, including First Nations peoples.

We are pleased to be supported by a committed staff and the senior leaders of the relevant Departments.

Roger B Wickes PSM

Presiding Member

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Overview: about the Pastoral Board

Our strategic focus

<p>Our Purpose</p>	<p>The Pastoral Board is established under section 12 of the <i>Pastoral Land Management and Conservation Act 1989</i> (the ‘Pastoral Act’). A primary role of the Pastoral Board is to ensure that the pastoral lands, which covers over 40% of the State, are sustainably managed for current and future generations.</p>
<p>Our Vision</p>	<p>The world’s best managed pastoral country.</p> <p>We will achieve this through adopting and promoting practices that sustain South Australia’s pastoral lands for current and future generations.</p>
<p>Our Values</p>	<p>Legitimacy - the Board will act in a manner which engenders amongst the pastoral community, an understanding, acceptance and acknowledgement of its legal role and responsibilities.</p> <p>Integrity - the Board will be committed to the highest standard and ethical conduct in its operations, and deal honestly, fairly and equitably with all stakeholders.</p> <p>Accountability - the Board acknowledges the responsibility it has for the decisions it makes in administering the Pastoral Act and being answerable to the Minister and the public.</p> <p>Transparency - the Board will ensure that information on its operation, policies and decision-making processes will be as far as practicable accessible to all stakeholders.</p> <p>Procedural fairness - the Board will act without bias and ensure procedural fairness when making a decision affecting an individual's rights, interests or legitimate expectations.</p> <p>Consistency - the Board will strive to act consistently in making decisions to administer the Pastoral Act.</p>
<p>Our functions, objectives and deliverables</p>	<p>The Board’s statutory functions are in line with section 17 of the Pastoral Act:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectively discharging its responsibility to the Minister for the administration of the Act. • Effectively advising the Minister on the policies that should govern the administration of pastoral land, and on other matters referred to the Pastoral Board by the Minister. • Effectively performing any other function assigned to the Board under the Act or by the Minister. <p>The Board’s Strategic Outcomes are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Productivity and conservation of pastoral lands improved B. Viable communities on pastoral lands

	<p>C. High community confidence in Pastoral Board D. Clarity of process underpins policies E. Monitoring, research, and science informs decision making F. Tools and opportunities provided to landholders</p> <p>In delivering these Strategic Outcomes, the Board’s Goals are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Effective and ecologically sustainable long term management of pastoral lands 2. Exemplary governance, regulation, and practices 3. Active interface with non-pastoral activities
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Our organisational structure

The Pastoral Board is established in accordance with section 12 of the Pastoral Act and consists of six members and six deputy members appointed by the responsible Minister, for a term of up to three years.

The current Pastoral Board has a wide range of experience in pastoral management and leadership, including administration of pastoral leases, pastoral production, land and soil conservation and pastoral ecology.

As of 30 June 2024, Pastoral Board members and deputies were:

Name	Position	Term dates
WICKES, Roger Barrington	Presiding Member	21/11/2022 – 30/10/2025
COLLINS, Anne	Board Member	29/03/2023 – 30/10/2025
EDWARDS, Lisa	Board Member	21/11/2022 – 30/10/2025
JENKE, Emily Claire	Board Member	21/11/2022 – 30/10/2025
READ, John Llewellyn	Board Member	21/11/2022 – 30/10/2025

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SMART, Andrew Heaslip	Board Member	21/11/2022 – 30/10/2025
LINTON, Vicki Michelle	Deputy to Roger Wickes	29/03/2023 – 30/10/2025
WARWICK, Fiona	Deputy to Anne Collins	21/11/2022 – 30/10/2025
BOOTH, Joyleen Maud	Deputy to Lisa Edwards	29/03/2023 – 30/10/2025
COPLEY, Peter Bruce	Deputy to Emily Jenke	05/06/2024 – 30/10/2025
TUFT, Katherine	Deputy to John Read	21/11/2022 – 30/10/2025
MORRIS, Ian	Deputy to Andrew Smart	21/11/2022 – 30/10/2025

As shown, all members and deputies are appointed until 30 October 2025.

Additional information about the Pastoral Board is available at:

[Department for Environment and Water - Pastoral Board](#)

The Pastoral Board is supported by the Pastoral Unit in the Native Vegetation, Pastoral Land Management and Landscape Services Branch of Environment, Heritage and Sustainability, a division of the Department for Environment and Water (DEW).

Further information on the organisational structure of DEW is available at:

[Department for Environment and Water - About us](#)

Changes to the Board

Fraser Vickery (Deputy to Emily Jenke) resigned on 31 July 2023. Peter Copley was appointed as a deputy member on 5 June 2024.

Our Minister

The Hon Dr Susan Close MP is the Minister for Climate, Environment and Water and has overall administrative responsibility of the Pastoral Act. Further information on the roles and responsibilities of the Minister is available at:

<https://www.premier.sa.gov.au/the-team/susan-close-mp>

Legislation administered by the agency

Pastoral Land Management and Conservation Act 1989 and associated regulations.

The Act was amended in 2024 to confirm that pastoral land can be used for conservation and carbon farming, with approval of the Board.

Other related agencies (within the Minister's area/s of responsibility)

Not Applicable

The Pastoral Board's performance

Performance at a glance

The Pastoral Board assists the responsible Minister in administering 322 pastoral leases in South Australia. The Pastoral Board has various powers and functions under the Pastoral Act. Section 18 of the Pastoral Act enables the Pastoral Board to delegate many of the powers or functions to the responsible Department which is the Department for Environment and Water (DEW). The act of delegating powers does not derogate from the power of the Pastoral Board to act in any matter.

In 2023-24 the Pastoral Board held six in-person meetings in total. The Pastoral Board held one of its meetings at Mt Ive Station, and one in Copley, to connect with the pastoral community in those areas.

Key activities for the Pastoral Board in 2023-24 were:

- Finalised its Strategic Plan 2023-25, with input from stakeholders
- Undertook twenty-five on-ground land condition assessments to enable renewal of leases
- Pursued compliance against two lease holders for breach of lease conditions for failing to maintain stock-proof fences
- Approved applications for use of seven pastoral leases for carbon farming projects
- Supported the development of the Government's legislation to amend the Pastoral Act which confirmed the Pastoral Board's power to approve use of pastoral land for carbon farming and conservation, and drafted guidelines to implement these changes
- Provided comments on the design and implementation of the *Hydrogen and Renewable Energy Act 2023* and Regulations and met with regulators, pastoralists and industry representatives to understand the issues
- Provided input into the development of the Government's proposed Biodiversity Act
- Published updated *Guidelines on Stock Proof Boundary Fencing*, along with case studies providing examples of how pastoral lessees have worked together to upgrade or replace fencing to meet their different needs
- Developed a new process to enable more streamlined approvals of temporary (seasonal) increases to stock maximums to allow pastoralists to take advantage of exceptional seasonal conditions, and approved two applications
- Developed a new online stock return tool to be trialled with 2023-24 stock returns, to enable pastoralists to complete their returns more easily
- Developed a risk-based compliance framework and strategy to enable the Board to prioritise compliance effort to the most important matters
- Provided all leaseholders with a free copy of the second edition of *Plants of Outback South Australia*
- Enhanced its communications through the bi-monthly *Pastoral Board News*, providing regular updates on the Board's initiatives and other important news
- Shared guidelines to enable pastoral lessees to access their station maps more easily through mobile-based technology (Avenza maps)

- Engaged with First Nations representatives on its strategic plan, policies and guidelines, and is working with First Nations and pastoral leaseholders to build awareness and understanding of Aboriginal rights and interests on pastoral leases.

Decisions made and actions undertaken by the Pastoral Board, and by DEW as the responsible agency under delegation, pursuant to each section of the Pastoral Act are summarised in the table below.

Agency specific objectives and performance

Pastoral Board Functions (Pastoral Act)	Decisions/Actions 2023-24	Outcomes
Compliance with lease conditions - sect 22.	The Pastoral Board (or DEW under delegation) issued 11 notices to leaseholders regarding compliance with lease conditions – 2 regarding non stock-proof boundary fencing and 9 regarding late stock return submission.	Ensuring compliance with lease conditions.
Approving pasturing of other species - sect 22(6)(a)	The Pastoral Board did not receive any applications for the stocking of species other than sheep or cattle.	To allow for the diversification of grazing species on pastoral land.
Change of stocking level in excess of maximum specified on lease - sect 22(6)(b)	The Pastoral Board approved temporary (12 months) increases to stock maximums on 2 leases in response to lessee applications and did not approve any permanent increases to stock maximums.	To support increases in pastoral production during favourable seasonal conditions.
Change of land use purpose - sect 22(6)(c-d)	The Pastoral Board (or DEW under delegation) approved 14 change of land use applications. The Pastoral Board also determined that applications for carbon farming projects on 7 leases were ancillary to pastoral purposes.	Administering land use diversification on pastoral leases.
Pastoral lease rents (issuing invoices) - sect 23(7)	Lease rent invoices issued for all pastoral leases for the period 1 November 2022 to 31 October 2023.	Administration of lease rent.
Pastoral lease rents (hardship) - sect 23(10)	The Pastoral Board did not receive any applications to waive or defer lease rent due to hardship.	Consideration of lease rent relief under exceptional circumstances.

Statutory lease assessments to monitor the condition of pastoral land - sect 25	Field assessments were conducted on 25 pastoral leases.	Monitoring of pastoral land condition to ensure compliance with lease conditions and to meet the objects of the Act.
Pool of persons' assistance to leaseholders - sect 25B	No matters were referred to the 'Pool of Persons' for assistance.	Provide independent review of Board decisions relating to lease assessments.
Extension of term of pastoral leases - sect 26	The Pastoral Board (or DEW, under delegation), extended the term of 28 leases to a 42-year period.	Lease term extensions and security of tenure for pastoral leaseholders.
Alteration of boundaries - sect 31	There were no recommendations to the Minister for the alteration of pastoral lease boundaries.	Pastoral lease boundaries realigned at the request of lessees.
Cancellation of lease or imposition of fines - sect 37	The Pastoral Board did not impose any fines on leaseholders. No leases were cancelled.	Penalties for non-compliance with lease conditions.
Verification of stock levels - sect 42	The Pastoral Board issued statutory declaration forms (stock returns) to all lessees for annual reporting on stock levels.	Monitoring of stock levels on leases.
Gazettal and closure of Public Access Routes on pastoral land - sect 45	No new routes were dedicated, and one existing route was approved for degazetting (from 8 August 2024). 13 routes were temporarily closed, by DEW under delegation, for public safety reasons.	Effective management of access through pastoral land to ensure public safety and maintenance of route condition.
SA Civil and Administrative Tribunal - sect 50	No matters were referred to the Tribunal.	Provide independent review of Board decisions or decisions made under delegation.
Stakeholder engagement	<p>The Pastoral Board distributed seven electronic newsletters to the pastoral community and other stakeholders.</p> <p>Two board meetings were held in regional areas, and two public forums with pastoralists and other community members were conducted.</p> <p>Board members represented the Board at six public events, including participation in the Outback Roads Consultative Forum.</p>	Community engagement to facilitate lease compliance, and sustainable management of pastoral lands.

Corporate performance summary

The Pastoral Board operates in accordance with its Governance Charter which the Board updated in April 2024. The Pastoral Board is supported by the Pastoral Unit, DEW, which provides corporate, governance and administrative support.

Employment opportunity programs

The Pastoral Board does not employ staff. Those staff who undertake the delegated work of the Pastoral Board are employed through DEW.

Agency performance management and development systems

Information on DEW performance management and development systems is presented in DEW annual reports, available at:

<https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/about-us/our-reports/annual-reports>

Work health, safety and return to work programs

The Pastoral Board operates in accordance with the relevant safety policies and procedures that have been adopted by DEW to meet whole of Government and legislative requirements.

The Pastoral Board does not employ staff. Workplace injuries, health and safety regulations and return to work costs are presented in DEW's annual reports:

<https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/about-us/our-reports/annual-reports>

Executive employment in the agency

The Pastoral Board does not employ staff. Those staff who undertake the work of the Pastoral Board are employed through DEW. Information on DEW Executive employment is presented in DEW's annual reports, available at:

<https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/about-us/our-reports/annual-reports>

The [Office of the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment](#) has a [workforce information](#) page that provides further information on the breakdown of executive gender, salary and tenure by agency.

Financial performance

Financial performance at a glance

The Pastoral Board does not manage an operational budget. The Pastoral Board is supported by the Pastoral Unit, DEW. Information on DEW's financial performance is presented in DEW's annual reports, available at:

<https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/about-us/our-reports/annual-reports>

Consultants disclosure

The Pastoral Board did not engage consultants in 2023-24. Information on DEW's use of consultants is presented in DEW's annual reports, available at:

<https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/about-us/our-reports/annual-reports>

See also the [Consolidated Financial Report of the Department of Treasury and Finance](#) for total value of consultancy contracts across the South Australian Public Sector.

Contractors disclosure

The Pastoral Board did not engage contractors in 2023-24. Information on DEW's use of contractors is presented in DEW's annual reports, available at:

<https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/about-us/our-reports/annual-reports>

The details of South Australian Government-awarded contracts for goods, services, and works are displayed on the SA Tenders and Contracts website. [View the agency list of contracts](#).

The website also provides details of [across government contracts](#).

Other financial information

Not Applicable.

Other information

Not Applicable

Risk management

Risk and audit at a glance

Not applicable.

Fraud detected in the agency

Category/nature of fraud	Number of instances
	0

NB: Fraud reported includes actual and reasonably suspected incidents of fraud.

Strategies implemented to control and prevent fraud

Strategies to control and prevent fraud are specified in the DPC circular Honesty and Accountability for Members of Government Boards - March 2011.

Strategies to control and prevent fraud are also reported in DEW's annual reports, available at: <https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/about-us/our-reports/annual-reports>

Data for previous years is available at: <https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/about-us/boards-and-committees/pastoral-board>

Public interest disclosure

Number of occasions on which public interest information has been disclosed to a responsible officer of the agency under the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2018*:

0

Data for previous years is available at: <https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/about-us/boards-and-committees/pastoral-board>

Note: Disclosure of public interest information was previously reported under the *Whistleblowers Protection Act 1993* and repealed by the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2018* on 1/7/2019.

Reporting required under any other act or regulation

Not applicable

Reporting required under the *Carers' Recognition Act 2005*

Not applicable

Public complaints

Number of public complaints reported

Complaint categories	Sub-categories	Example	Number of Complaints 2023-24
Professional behaviour	Staff attitude	Failure to demonstrate values such as empathy, respect, fairness, courtesy, extra mile; cultural competency	Nil
Professional behaviour	Staff competency	Failure to action service request; poorly informed decisions; incorrect or incomplete service provided	Nil
Professional behaviour	Staff knowledge	Lack of service specific knowledge; incomplete or out-of-date knowledge	Nil
Communication	Communication quality	Inadequate, delayed or absent communication with customer	Nil
Communication	Confidentiality	Customer's confidentiality or privacy not respected; information shared incorrectly	Nil
Service delivery	Systems/technology	System offline; inaccessible to customer; incorrect result/information provided; poor system design	Nil
Service delivery	Access to services	Service difficult to find; location poor; facilities/environment poor standard; not accessible to customers with disabilities	Nil
Service delivery	Process	Processing error; incorrect process used; delay in processing application; process not customer responsive	Nil

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Complaint categories	Sub-categories	Example	Number of Complaints 2023-24
Policy	Policy application	Incorrect policy interpretation; incorrect policy applied; conflicting policy advice given	Nil
Policy	Policy content	Policy content difficult to understand; policy unreasonable or disadvantages customer	Nil
Service quality	Information	Incorrect, incomplete, outdated or inadequate information; not fit for purpose	Nil
Service quality	Access to information	Information difficult to understand, hard to find or difficult to use; not plain English	Nil
Service quality	Timeliness	Lack of staff punctuality; excessive waiting times (outside of service standard); timelines not met	Nil
Service quality	Safety	Maintenance; personal or family safety; duty of care not shown; poor security service/ premises; poor cleanliness	Nil
Service quality	Service responsiveness	Service design doesn't meet customer needs; poor service fit with customer expectations	Nil
No case to answer	No case to answer	Third party; customer misunderstanding; redirected to another agency; insufficient information to investigate	Nil
		Total	0

Additional Metrics	Total
Number of positive feedback comments	Nil
Number of negative feedback comments	Nil
Total number of feedback comments	Nil
% complaints resolved within policy timeframes	N/A

Data for previous years is available at <https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/about-us/boards-and-committees/pastoral-board>

Service Improvements

The Pastoral Board aims to continually improve stakeholder relationships and governance performance and effectively administer the Pastoral Act.

Compliance Statement

N/A

Appendix: Audited financial statements

N/A