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**Government
of South Australia**

PASTORAL BOARD

2024-25 Annual Report

PASTORAL BOARD

Level 8, 81-95 Waymouth Street, Adelaide SA 5000
GPO Box 1047, Adelaide SA 5001

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

Contact phone number: 8429 0333

Contact email: Pastoral.Board@sa.gov.au

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To:

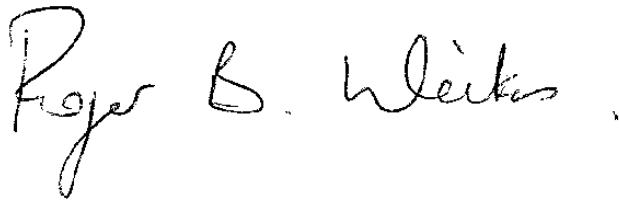
Hon Dr Susan Close MP

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 period at the end.

Roger Wickes PSM

Presiding Member

Pastoral Board

Date: 6 August 2025

From the Presiding Member

I am pleased to present the Pastoral Board's annual report for the year ending 30 June 2025.

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 2024-25, the Board has:

- Continued to deliver its Strategic Plan 2023-25, in partnership with its major stakeholders.
- Engaged face to face with pastoral lessees and other stakeholders at public forums in Yunta and Adelaide, to enable them to share their views on management of pastoral land and the Board's priorities.
- Attended and contributed to expert panels and presentations at the Port Augusta Pastoral Field Day, and the XII International Rangelands Congress held in Adelaide.
- Collaborated with the SA Arid Lands Landscape Board and SA Drought Hub to support 20 people living and working in South Australia's Outback to attend the XII International Rangelands Congress and share the learning from the event with others in the region
- Engaged with key stakeholders to explore a range of issues of mutual interest, including goat and kangaroo management, public access to pastoral leases, and protection of Aboriginal heritage on pastoral land.
- Developed new policies and procedures for assessing applications to amend pastoral lease stock maximums.
- Developed guidelines, in consultation with key stakeholders, to implement the amended *Pastoral Land Management and Conservation Act 1989* which clarified the Board's ability to approve a range of uses of pastoral leases, including conservation and carbon farming, reflecting the amendments made by Parliament in 2024 to the *Pastoral Land Management and Conservation Act 1989*.
- Visited Boolcoomatta Station Reserve, and met with Bush Heritage to better understand the perspectives of lessees whose properties are used for conservation purposes.
- Prioritised the assessment of pastoral leases to enable the timely renewal of pastoral leases, providing greater certainty to lessees. This included 40 on-ground land condition assessments to enable renewal of leases, and extended the tenure of 53 leases by 42 years following the Board's adoption of lease assessment reports.
- Provided lessees with greater clarity on how their Pastoral Act responsibilities interact with other legislation on the development of waterpoints, by publishing a joint information sheet in collaboration with SA Arid Lands Landscape

Board, and the Department for Environment and Water's Native Vegetation Branch and Water and River Murray division.

- Published and distributed the Pastoral Lease Handbook, which sets out lessees' obligations under the Pastoral Act in addition to other relevant information, such as legislation that should be considered in the management of pastoral lands.
- Enabled online witnessing of electronic stock returns for 2024-25 returns.
- Supported the publication of *Land, Lease, Lens: Long Term Trends in South Australian Rangelands using Historic Photographs* by Brendan and Elizabeth Lay.
- Provided input to the development of the Biodiversity Act 2025, and input to the development and implementation of the Hydrogen and Renewable Energy Act 2024.

The Pastoral Board is committed to working closely with pastoral lessees and key partners, including Livestock SA, the SA Arid Lands Landscape Board, the Department for Environment and Water and the Department for Primary Industries and Regional Development, 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

Our Purpose	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.
Our Vision	The world's best managed pastoral country. We will achieve this through adopting and promoting practices that sustain South Australia's pastoral lands for current and future generations.
Our Values	<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>
Our functions, objectives and deliverables	<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 2025, 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

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
VACANT	Deputy to John Read	N/A
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 and Pastoral Management branch of Biodiversity and Nature Economy, 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

Deputy member Dr Katherine Tuft relocated to Tasmania and therefore resigned her position from the Board on 9 November 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.

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

Not Applicable

The Pastoral Board's performance

Agency specific objectives and performance

The Pastoral Board assists the responsible Minister in administering 321 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 2024-25 the Pastoral Board held six in-person meetings in total. The Pastoral Board held one of its meetings in Yunta, to connect with the pastoral community in the eastern pastoral area, and another community session was held in Adelaide with good representation from stakeholders outside the livestock industry.

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.

Pastoral Board Functions (Pastoral Act)	Decisions/Actions 2024-25	Outcomes
Compliance with lease conditions - sect 22.	The Pastoral Board (or DEW under delegation) issued 12 notices to leaseholders regarding compliance with lease conditions – 4 caution letters for exceeding stock maximums, 7 caution letters regarding late stock return submissions, and 1 for an incomplete stock return.	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 9 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 one change of land use application. The Pastoral Board also determined that applications for carbon farming projects on one lease was 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 2023 to 31 October 2024.	Administration of lease rent.
Pastoral lease rents (hardship) - sect 23(10)	The Pastoral Board received one application to waive or defer lease rent due to hardship, which was not granted as the circumstances were not deemed to be exceptional.	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 40 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), approved to extend the term of 53 leases by 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. One lease was excised from the pastoral estate, and added to the National Parks network.	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.

<p>Gazettal and closure of Public Access Routes on pastoral land - sect 45</p>	<p>No new routes were dedicated, and one route was degazetted to protect a fossil site. Thirteen routes were temporarily closed, by DEW under delegation, for public safety reasons.</p>	<p>Effective management of access through pastoral land to ensure public safety and maintenance of route condition.</p>
<p>SA Civil and Administrative Tribunal - sect 50</p>	<p>No matters were referred to the Tribunal.</p>	<p>Provide independent review of Board decisions or decisions made under delegation.</p>
<p>Stakeholder engagement</p>	<p>The Pastoral Board distributed six electronic newsletters to the pastoral community and other stakeholders. One board meeting was held in the region, and another public forum with pastoralists and other community members was held in Adelaide. Board members represented the Board at the Port Augusta Pastoral Field Day and the XII International Rangelands Congress in Adelaide.</p>	<p>Community engagement to facilitate lease compliance, and sustainable management of pastoral lands.</p>

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 2024-25. 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 2024-25. 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 2024-25
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

Complaint categories	Sub-categories	Example	Number of Complaints 2024-25
Policy	Policy application	Incorrect policy interpretation; incorrect policy applied; conflicting policy advice given	1
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	1

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	100%

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