

ANNUAL REPORT 2023–2024

Queensland State
Archives



Communication Objective

This Annual Report provides information about Queensland State Archives' non-financial performance for 2023-2024. It has been prepared in accordance with the *Public Records Act 2002*.



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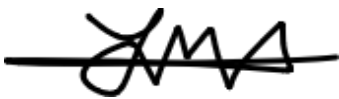
The Honourable Leeanne Enoch MP
Minister for Treaty
Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships
Minister for Communities and
Minister for the Arts
1 William Street Brisbane, QLD 4000

21 August 2024

Dear Minister

I am pleased to submit for presentation to Parliament the Annual Report 2023–2024 for Queensland State Archives. This document is the 22nd Annual Report submitted to Parliament in accordance with the *Public Records Act 2002*.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'L. Howard', written over a horizontal line.

Louise Howard
Queensland State Archivist
Queensland State Archives
Department of Treaty, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships,
Communities and the Arts

Acknowledgement

We respectfully acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Traditional Owners and Elders of the lands and seas on which we meet, live, learn and work.

As the Archives are a place for learning we also respectfully recognise the continuing role of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as knowledge keepers in relation to their Traditional Country.

We acknowledge those of the past, the ancestors whose strength has nurtured this land and its people, and who have passed on their wisdom. We acknowledge those of the present for their leadership and ongoing effort to protect and promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures. We acknowledge those of the future, the Elders not yet born, who will inherit the legacy of our efforts.

We recognise it is our collective efforts, and responsibility as individuals, communities, and governments, to ensure equality, recognition, and advancement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders across all aspects of society and everyday life.

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Message from the State Archivist

Each year the team within Queensland State Archives (QSA) deliver exceptional government and community initiatives and services. The last 12 months have demonstrated the cumulative impact of that work, with several significant milestones achieved. The year has also reflected a digital shift that marks a new era in recordkeeping for public authorities and for QSA. Notably, this will be the last annual report delivered under the *Public Records Act 2002*, as the next report will form part of the new recordkeeping regulatory framework under the *Public Records Act 2023*.

After the extensive work undertaken by the Independent Review Panel in 2022, new recordkeeping legislation was passed by Queensland Parliament in November 2023. Acknowledged as world-leading by the archival industry, the new *Public Records Act 2023* (the Act) introduces a contemporary framework better suited for our digital age. Much has changed since the original Public Records Act commenced in 2002 and the new Act recognises that preserving our historical records is more critical than ever in this digital age where information can be easily lost or become obsolete. The new Act includes a clarification of definitions to ensure their appropriateness in the digital world including the definition of a public record. It now provides for the role of State Archivist to issue mandatory standards, direct agencies to report on the status of their recordkeeping activities and to direct agencies to take steps to adequately preserve and manage records.

Sixty-six years after the archives began, and 21 years after the commencement of the first Public Records Act, the new Act introduces principles that recognise information and records as government and community assets that must be well managed and principles that acknowledge the importance of public records for Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people. A new First Nations Advisory Group will be established under the new Act to guide and inform QSA on decisions about records related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This Group will build and expand on the contribution Dr Rose Barrowcliffe has made to QSA over the last three years as our First Nations Archives Advisor.

Following the design and implementation last year, our Digital Archive is now fully operational and QSA is accepting transfers of digitally created records from public authorities. The operationalisation of QSA's first digital archive marks a momentous shift in how we preserve our digital heritage, ensuring the long-term accessibility and security of government's digitally created records.

With our new legislative environment and our focus on Queensland's digital heritage and future, QSA is well positioned to ensure the State's archival documentary heritage remains available and accessible for current and future generations.

Who we are

What we do

Queensland State Archives (QSA) opens a window to nearly 200 years of the state's history, recognising the enduring connection of our First Nations peoples to Queensland's lands and waters for over 60,000 years. Through granting access to a vast collection of archival records and engaging with the community in person and via online channels and events, we connect individuals to the rich and diverse past of the state.

For government, we are the custodian of public records, responsible for the management and preservation of the information we hold while providing expert recordkeeping advice to government agencies.

Our mission

Working together to proactively manage Queensland's public records for people to discover and use.

Our vision

Connecting Queenslanders with their past to create our shared future.

Our performance

Improve services for Queensland

Improve services for Queensland		
	Target /Est 2023-2024	Actual 2023-2024
Access and Engagement measures		
Percentage increase in online engagement with the archival collection	2%	19.55%
Collections and Discovery measures		
Cost per record to manage collection	\$5.00	\$3.06
Total collection size (linear metres)		67,241
Total number of items in the collection		3,704,640
Total number of items created this year		95,750
Total items available to the public (in ArchivesSearch and open)		2,362,380
Percentage of collection open to the public		63.77%
Increase in items available to the public		71,586
Items digitised		20,944
Post-production activities		11,182
Preservation work (treatment/activities)		8,911

Improve services for government

Improve services for government	Actual 2023-2024
Government Records and Information	
Individual engagements for advice	
Queries	363
Blog views	832
YouTube views	1,915
Retention and disposal schedule views	28,710
Recordkeeping Forgov webpage views	71,310
Disposal authorisations	
Disposal authorisation numbers issued	44
Lost records notifications	4
Early disposal applications	1
Regulations under the <i>Public Records Act 2002</i>	
Commissions of Inquiry <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine DNA Project 13 Concerns 	1

Year in review

The 2023-2024 year at Queensland State Archives (QSA) has been marked by the successful delivery of two of our key strategic priorities, the Digital Archive and a new Public Records Act, along with a continued focus on ensuring accessibility to our vast collection of historical records.

Through a range of collaborative efforts, we have strengthened relationships with key partners and continued to expand our engagement with diverse Queensland communities, both online and in person. These combined endeavours have empowered public discovery and contribute to a richer understanding of the state's unique history.

Our achievements

Access Services

Our Access Services team assists researchers, historians, government officials, and the public in accessing and understanding the records held at QSA. They respond to queries, provide guidance on research strategies, and help users locate relevant information.

In 2023–2024, our Access Services Team:

- provided strategic guidance and support for key initiatives across the organisation
- welcomed over **2,390 visitors** to the Reading Room
- delivered **approximately 17,400 records** to researchers and visitors in the Reading Room
- responded to **over 5,500** telephone and email queries
- delivered workshops, tours and presentations to **11** community groups.

Collections and Discovery

Our Collections and Discovery team is responsible for the arrangement and description of new records that are added to the archival collection. They ensure records are appropriately catalogued and stored for easy retrieval. The team also plays a critical role in receiving transfers into the archival collection and preserving the physical integrity of the archival records by implementing conservation measures to protect fragile or damaged materials, enhancing access, and safeguarding original documents.

In 2023–2024, our Collections and Discovery Team:

- performed **8,911** individual conservation treatment actions on **5,380** items
- hosted a six-week Masters student internship from Grimwade Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation (University of Melbourne)

- conducted conservation assessments across more than **250** series to assist the digitisation of First Nations related records
- conducted a review of QSA's Collections and Records Crisis Recovery Manual (CARCRM)
- provided advice and conducted site visits to agencies seeking to remediate or dispose of records damaged through floods, fires, and mould
- provided advice to community groups and individuals on the care of archival documents, including a visit to Cherbourg Ration Shed Museum
- processed **42** transfers, **nine** of which were digital, adding over **38,600** items and **372.2** linear metres of records to the archival collection. Transfers were received from 25 agencies, including six local councils
- processed transfers of significant interest, including:
 - freehold land title application packets – documents the transfer of land from the original system to the Torres system, 1859-1995
 - contract and photos of first computer to be installed at Queensland Treasury, 1964-1965
 - Auditor-General reports on public accounts dating from 1861
- created over **30,000** new digital representations and over **90,000** new items in the catalogue (new transfers and legacy item listing)
- created new items for over **20,000** legacy First Nations related records, improving their discoverability
- processed approximately **3,500** physical and digital records through File Issue
- applied function entities to all series in the catalogue to assist with Machinery of Government and resultant change with assigning responsible agencies for all records across the collection.

Digitisation and Collection Services

Our Digitisation and Collection Services team oversee the digitisation of physical archival materials to improve accessibility. The collection held at QSA is made up of over 3.7 million analogue items, of which less than 4.9% are digitised. Our digitisation program targets records that are popular, significant, fragile or at risk, with the aim of making more records available and accessible online to a wider number of people.

In 2023–2024, our Digitisation and Collection Services Team:

- digitised **577,431** pages, including **156,121** pages relating to First Nations peoples
- retrieved **approximately 17,400 records** for viewing in the reading room

- continued our partnership with Avantix, finalising the digitisation of over **2,250** microfilm rolls
- collaborated with our First Nations Metadata and Preservation teams to progress specialised digitisation of **14,421** pages of frail and at risk First Nations records
- re-engaged social enterprise Jigsaw to provide work experience for people with a disability. Jigsaw completed **856** hours of scanning and digitised over **157** regional land purchase registers.

Engagement Services

Our Engagement Services Team is responsible for developing innovative, informative, and inspiring experiences to provide broader access to our collection and services. Through our online and digital engagement, we are providing Queenslanders all over the state with the opportunity to explore and research the archival collection, peruse images and video galleries, read blogs, and engage directly via our social media platforms and forums. These forms of online engagement enhance our service model to allow access at any time and in any area, with benefits for rural and remote areas of the state.

In addition, our on-site programs and events engage the community in-person, providing insight into Queensland history and socially connecting community members with the archival collection.

Online engagement

In 2023–2024, our Engagement Services Team:

- facilitated online engagement with the QSA collection over **3 million times**, surpassing our Service Delivery Statement access measure by over **442,000**
- shared over **1,185** social media posts, reaching over **3,486,035 million people** across our main social media channels – Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and Instagram.

Memory Lounge

The Memory Lounge program is a social inclusion program for older people and people living with dementia. QSA works with aged care providers to connect older Queenslanders with images from the archival collection, stimulating storytelling and the sharing of memories. This year QSA delivered **25** Memory Lounge sessions to **253** participants.

QSA Talks

Our QSA Talks program presents a range of engaging speakers who share their research into some of the most interesting aspects of Queensland's history.

In 2023-2024, the Engagement Team delivered **five** QSA Talk events, attended by over **180** participants. Notably, for one event QSA partnered with Japanese Consul-General Gomakubo to deliver a talk on Japanese war brides in Queensland. QSA has had a long partnership with Griffith University's Harry Gentle Research Centre which led to three QSA Talks given by Visiting Fellows specialising in the State's early colonial history.

In addition to community engagement, the Engagement Team also provided critical strategic communication advice and support on QSA's strategic priorities, including the Public Records Act, the Digital Archive Program, and support for the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry.

Volunteer Program

Queensland State Archive's dedicated volunteers work across the organisation and play a crucial role in making the collection more accessible by creating indexes, improving the description of records, and supporting their conservation and preservation. They add names and other useful information to record metadata, which is then imported into the ArchivesSpace catalogue, making records easier to search.

In 2023–2024, our 12 volunteers:

- listed **8,439** items in Series 14050 Dead Farm Files
- completed over **3,800** conservation treatments
- continued listing Series 1215 Real Property Dealings and Series 36 Coronial Inquests (1904 and 1905) and adding names into the catalogue
- transcribed **625** pages via online transcription platform *From the Page*.

Our strategic priorities

Our strategic plan maps out our future direction and the steps we intend to take over the next five years to deliver outcomes for Queenslanders. The plan also guides us on how we will work together with our customers and key stakeholders.

The objectives identified in our *Strategic Plan 2022–2026* are to:

- Partner with our information community to realise effective services through recordkeeping.
- Be an archive that supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander self-determination and embraces First Nations' worldviews, knowledge and culture.
- Secure important digital records created by government for current and future generations to use.
- Support our people so they feel valued and empowered and we have a culture of collaboration, trust and respect.

Improving recordkeeping through partnership

Queensland State Archives (QSA) is engaging with public authorities about the implementation of the new *Public Records Act 2023*. This continues our goals of supporting public authorities with their recordkeeping requirements and helping to improve understanding and confidence in recordkeeping across the Queensland Government.

The review and implementation of the Public Records Act 2023

Following the independent panel's *Report of Review of the Public Records Act 2002* and the Queensland Government response to recommendations in the report, the Public Records Bill 2023 was drafted. Extensive consultation and analysis led to the release of a Decision Regulatory Impact Statement in October 2023.

The *Public Records Act 2023* (the Act) received assent on 4 December 2023. The Act addresses 20 of the 25 legislative recommendations from the independent panel. Remaining recommendations will be addressed in a report back to Government by the State Archivist in late 2025. These recommendations include:

- Three legislative recommendations relating to the inclusion of local government councillors as public authorities and their records as public records (recommendations 21, 22 and 23). QSA is actively collaborating with the Local Government Association of Queensland and local governments to consult on these recommendations.

- One legislative recommendation to consider and evaluate the concepts of Indigenous Data Sovereignty, Indigenous Data Governance and Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (recommendation 2b).
- Two operational recommendations relating to developing a cohesive approach to the management of data, information and records (recommendation 24), and preparing a plan to address legacy physical records and other digitisation opportunities (recommendation 25).

The legislative recommendation for an independent appeal process regarding access to ministerial records (recommendation 19) was not progressed as access to these records will continue through the *Right to Information Act 2009*.

The new Act will commence on 5 December 2024 replacing the *Public Records Act 2002*. It will provide a contemporary legislative framework for the making and managing of public records including:

- a pro-disclosure stance for accessing public records
- establishing a First Nations Advisory Group to advise the State Archivist on public records relating to Aboriginal persons and Torres Strait Island persons
- enabling the State Archivist to issue mandatory standards
- allowing the State Archivist to audit, monitor, investigate and report on compliance including the ability to direct a public authority to report on matters related to making and managing public records.

The new Act is expected to enhance recordkeeping practices by providing clearer guidelines for public authorities. It emphasises the importance of recognising First Nations perspectives and supports a more contemporary digital records management.

Stakeholder engagement has highlighted strong interest in the new legislation from over 400 attendees, including public authorities and industry representatives.

Complaints

The State Archivist received three complaints about potential breaches of the *Public Records Act 2002* in 2023-2024. The State Archivist reviewed the complaints and each of the matters have been closed. There were no open complaints as of 30 June 2024.

Our achievements

In 2023–2024, we:

- Partnered with divisions of the former Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy to develop a cost-effective offsite record storage solution for public authorities.
- Supported ministerial offices impacted by Machinery-of-Government changes transfer permanent records to QSA.
- Provided disposal guidance to North Queensland public authorities impacted by Tropical Cyclones' Jasper and Kirrily and offered strategic advice for managing at risk public records in the future.
- Issued advice to support public authorities on the use of generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) systems.
- In response to recent cyber security and data breaches, we consulted with public authorities and released five new disposal authorisations in the General Retention and Disposal Schedule to assist public authorities in managing data risks related to personal information.
- Released an updated Queensland Building and Construction Commission retention and disposal schedule.
- Revitalised existing communication channels, developed new online advice and tools, and established a practitioner's forum to coincide with the implementation of the *Public Records Act 2023*.

Looking forward

In 2024–2025, we will continue to support this objective by:

- Continuing work on the Public Records Act Implementation Program including:
 - establishing and holding the inaugural meeting of the First Nations Advisory Group
 - developing a new recordkeeping policy framework and consulting with public authorities on the new mandatory standards and guidelines
 - developing advice for stakeholders about changes in the new Act including reviewing advice relating to restricted access periods, notices, and decisions and QSA's Appraisal Statement

- developing the regulation for the State Archivist to restrict access to records in QSA's custody in certain circumstances.
- Continuing to implement our renewed engagement strategy with public authorities through publishing a regular blog, improving the user experience of our online advice, and embedding the practitioner's forum to encourage inter-agency collaboration.

First Nations First Program

QSA's First Nations First Program aims to uphold the commitments we made in our Statement of Intent:

We commit to embracing First Nations worldviews and methods of creating, sharing, and preserving valued knowledge. We commit to building relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, recognising that the needs, priorities, and holders of knowledge vary from group to group. We commit to listen, learn, and persevere in this reciprocal respectful engagement in order to become a more comprehensive and inclusive record of the people of Queensland.

The First Nations First Program aims to:

- embrace Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives
- raise awareness of Queensland's shared history
- support agencies and community members prepare for the upcoming Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry, and later treaty negotiations
- make QSA a more welcoming place
- raise the cultural capability of QSA staff.

First Nations Metadata Team

Our First Nations Metadata Team is dedicated to enhancing the descriptions and discovery of First Nations records and preparing government agencies for the upcoming Truth Telling and Healing Inquiry (the Inquiry). The team assists agencies and community members in uncovering and accessing historical records that document laws, policies, and practices affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. By working collaboratively with agencies, the team is increasing awareness of the First Nations related records held at QSA and improving archival description practices. These efforts support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in finding and using archival records to connect with their history and heritage.

Our achievements

In 2023-2024, we:

- Met with **21** government agencies to network and collaborate on strategic priorities for the Inquiry, and to provide advice, resources, and templates to support departments in preparing their administrative histories.
- Delivered two agency history workshops for **47** participants across **21** agencies in preparation for Path to Treaty and the Inquiry.
- Developed a suite of agency support resources including agency histories, comprehensive mapping of all major machinery of government changes from 1862, and guidance on accessing departmental publications.
- Established QSA as Secretariat for the Administrative Histories Working Group, bringing together **21** members from **20** agencies to collaborate on Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry preparedness across agencies.
- Responded to **254** agency queries on various topics including administrative history research, Colonial Secretary records, collection analysis, networking and collaboration, strategic feedback on inquiry processes, and resourcing for inquiry preparation.
- Implemented a range of metadata improvements to enhance the discoverability and accessibility of records relating to First Nations peoples, including:
 - applying over 140,950 First Nations related subject headers
 - progressing 160 series containing First Nations content to digitisation
 - created items for numerous series to improve discoverability including:
 - S321 Doomadgee Employment Cards – 562 items created
 - S4835 Record of Marriage Card Index – 894 items created
 - S4924 Exemption Card Index – 1,104 created
 - S4925 Record of Death Card Index – 4,141 items created.
 - enhanced the discovery of First Nations records through system upgrades incorporating over 2,500 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific subjects, 1,200 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language and group subjects and detailed place information.

- Developed a touring exhibition of *skeletons* featuring artworks by Judy Watson, in partnership with Blaklash and Milani Gallery. This exhibition toured to Noosa Regional Gallery as part of the Floating Land festival from 24 June – 30 July 2023.
- Delivered QSA's Outdoor Design Project featuring a series of artworks by First Nations artists Nathaniel Chapman (Goenpul and Yuggera) and Tamika Grant-Iramu (Torres Strait Island), in partnership with Blaklash. Artworks include a painted mural, etched seating designs and bronze sculptures placed at the entranceway to QSA.
- Visited the Ration Shed at Cherbourg to provide advice for exhibition development and conduct community consultation in partnership with Dr Timothy O'Rourke from the UQ School of Architecture, presenting the Girls Dormitory Virtual Reality re-creation.
- Worked in partnership with Contemporary Australian Indigenous Art students from the Queensland College of Art and Design at Griffith University, to collaboratively curate an exhibition of six emerging First Nations artworks.
- Delivered **two** First Nations language research workshops, assisting **21** language workers to revitalise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages throughout the state.
- Provided *Go Fish*, a QSA designed and developed program that displays records from the collection that feature First Nations language, for inclusion in the 2023 Royal Queensland Show (EKKA) government displays.
- Hosted two secondary school groups to research Frontier violence in the archives.

Looking forward

In 2024–2025, we will continue to support this objective by:

- Recruiting a Director of First Nations Strategy to lead QSA's support of agencies and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in preparation for and engagement with the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry.

Digital preservation

Digital Archive Program

In May 2024 QSA launched the State's inaugural Digital Archive, establishing a permanent platform for preserving and providing public access to Queensland Government born-digital records of enduring value.

Digitisation Project

The second year of a four-year digitisation project was completed in 2023-2024. This initiative has prioritised the preservation of audio-visual records (AV) at risk of deterioration or loss due to technological obsolescence, as well as significant records relating to First Nations peoples.

In years one and two of this project, **6,183** at-risk audio-visual records were digitised, generating **138 Terabytes** of data.

Work has commenced to ingest the digitised records into our new Digital Archive, ensuring their valuable content remains accessible into the future.

Additionally, **463** fragile glass plate negatives and approximately **6,000** paper records relating to First Nations people were digitised in 2023-2024.

Our achievements

In 2023-2024, we:

- Launched the Digital Archive
- Commenced ingest of born-digital records on obsolete media already held in the QSA collection
- Accepted the first transfers of born-digital records directly from public authorities through our agency portal, ArchivesGateway
- Added 5,534 records to the Digital Archive comprising over 305GB of data
- Commenced ingest of digitised copies of at-risk AV records into the Digital Archive
- Completed a comprehensive survey of public authorities to assess digital holdings, transfer readiness and identify potential challenges.

Looking forward:

In 2024-2025, we will continue to support this objective by:

- engaging with agencies to identify and prepare born digital records for transfer
- liaising with digital preservation specialists and other archival institutions to build capability.

Our people

Queensland State Archives aspires to be a workplace of choice, attracting and retaining high performing staff and establishing a positive and engaged workforce. Our staff have a diverse range

of specialist skills, comprising archival research, preservation, collection management, recordkeeping, policy, communication, community engagement and facility management. Our people show an unwavering dedication to the preservation, sharing, and celebration of Queensland's heritage.

Corporate breakdown

As of 30 June 2024, QSA employed 81.44 full-time equivalent (FTE) employees.

Gender

Female = 60.71 FTE | Male = 20.73 FTE.

Workforce profile

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) targets and results

EEO target group	Status
People with disability	9.3%
Women in leadership (SO and SES)	100%

Classification breakdown

Active Classification Level	Total FTE
AO2	6.8
AO3	6.55
AO4	12
AO5	15.31
AO6	17.7
AO7	9.13
AO8	5.9
PO3	2.8
PO4	0.75
SO	2.5
SES3	2*
Grand Total	81.44

* QSA only has one allocated SES role, as of 30 June 2024 reporting data showed two FTE at SES level due to the result of an employee taking leave.

Our achievements

In 2023-2024, we:

- Completed a high-level review of our organisational design, further building on our framework to enable the structure, processes and people to deliver on strategic priorities.
- Delivered leadership training to current and emerging leaders, providing managers with practical tools and skills to better manage people and teams.
- Continued to implement and review Performance Development Agreements, providing the opportunity to discuss and establish goals, commitments, flexible work practices and career progression.
- Implemented cultural activities and initiatives to create a positive workplace culture, respecting different cultural backgrounds and valuing workplace diversity.
- Delivered a range of work health and safety activities and training initiatives to ensure overall workplace compliance, reduce incidents and injuries and improve productivity.
- Continued the implementation of QSA's Vicarious Trauma strategy and delivery of training and support to staff.
- Delivered a NAIDOC Week cultural awareness and development activity hosting a weaving circle with First Nations artists.
- Achieved higher than average results in the annual *Working for Queensland Survey*, which measures Queensland Public Sector employee perceptions of their work, manager, team, and organisation, including:
 - *I am proud to tell others I work for my organisation: 94%*
 - *I understand how my work contributes to my organisation's strategic objective: 91%*
 - *I would recommend my organisation as a great place to work: 98%*
 - *I feel that my organisation considers the wellbeing of employees to be important: 91%*
- Increased the capacity to deliver Memory Lounge sessions through growing the internal team of facilitators to **five** people through training and development.

Looking forward

In 2024–2025, we will continue to support this objective by:

- continue to support and develop a resilient workforce creating a positive workplace culture
- continue to deliver a training program which aligns to key strategic priorities.

Recordkeeping across government

Successful open government relies on sound recordkeeping practices to support public accountability and transparency. Under the *Public Records Act 2002*, public authorities are required to manage public records responsibly to ensure that information is complete, reliable, accessible, and usable for as long as they are needed.

Monitoring

Queensland State Archives (QSA) undertakes regular monitoring activities with the aim of providing support, education and assistance to public authorities to meet responsibilities under the *Public Records Act 2002*. The State Archivist wrote to three public authorities to seek further explanation of recordkeeping practices that were raised by a third party or reported within the media.

Digital archive survey

In preparation for the commencement of QSA's digital archive, 93 public authorities were surveyed between November 2023 and April 2024. The aims of the surveys were:

- to build QSA's understanding on the volume of digital public records held by public authorities
- for public authorities to self-identify the volume of digital public records held, and
- to identify pilot public authorities for the first digital transfers into the QSA digital archive.

Results from the surveys helped inform QSA of key obstacles being faced by public authorities in relation to the management of digital records. Information provided will help guide the development of advice to support public authorities with the management of these records.

Lost and damaged applications

Public authorities are responsible for the safe custody and preservation of public records in their possession. In unusual circumstances, for example, records impacted by natural disasters such as floods, may require authorisation for the disposal of damaged public records or notification of lost records. Queensland State Archives worked with 11 public authorities to assess and approve applications for lost and damaged records.

Damaged records

Queensland State Archives worked with seven public authorities to assess and approve applications for damaged records. The majority of these applications were related to damage

caused as a result of flood damage, including following Cyclone Jasper and the significant weather events in December 2023 and January 2024.

In particular, the State Archivist worked closely with a Far North Queensland Council and the Local Government Association of Queensland following Cyclone Jasper. The State Archivist worked with the impacted Council to provide advice about flood impacted public records and provided authorisation for the disposal of flood affected public records due to the large-scale devastation and significant impacts on health and safety.

Lost records

Public authorities may contact QSA when there are situations where records are no longer in the public authority's custody and cannot be found. For example, this may be caused through the accidental deletion of public records or where records become corrupted during a system migration. The State Archivist worked with four public authorities to assess and approve applications for lost records.

Status of recordkeeping across government

As the records management authority for Queensland, QSA has undertaken analysis of reports published by Queensland integrity agencies, noting references to recordkeeping practices within public authorities.

In 2023-2024, QSA analysed 20 reports tabled by the following Queensland integrity agencies:

- Office of the Information Commissioner
- Queensland Audit Office
- Queensland Ombudsman.

Public authorities

Fifty public authorities were identified as having recordkeeping issues in the reports including:

- ten departments and agencies
- twenty-five statutory bodies and government-owned corporations
- five local governments
- three unnamed entities*
- seven universities.

**Entities unnamed to avoid publicly identifying security vulnerabilities.*

Recordkeeping

Recordkeeping issues of varying degrees were identified in seven (or 35%) of the 20 reviewed reports. Ineffective recordkeeping practices (e.g. procedures, policies, workplace culture) and systems and technology limitations (e.g. decentralised records managements systems) continue to be the most common recordkeeping issues identified.

Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry

The State Archivist wrote to all Queensland Government Departments regarding the passing of the *Path to Treaty Act 2023* and the establishment of the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry (the Inquiry). The assistance of QSA was offered to all departments to create an administrative history framework detailing historical predecessor agencies and their functional and legislative responsibilities over time. The State Archivist also encouraged Queensland Government Departments to review public records that may be relevant to the Inquiry and temporarily cease the disposal of these records for the term of the Inquiry, even if they are due for destruction.

Our governance

Public Records Review Committee

The Public Records Review Committee (the Committee) was established in March 2003 under the *Public Records Act 2002* (the Act). Its purpose is to advise the Minister responsible for the Act and the State Archivist on the administration and enforcement of the Act. In addition to its advisory role, the Committee has several dispute resolution functions. If requested by a public authority, the Committee can review decisions of the State Archivist not to authorise the disposal of particular records. The Committee can also be asked to resolve disputes between the State Archivist and a public authority about restricted access periods for records.

Our Public Records Review Committee as of 30 June 2024

Chairperson: Ms Kate Slack

Kate Slack brings a wealth of experience in Administrative and Public law to her position on the Committee. Kate's practice as a Barrister at the private Bar in Queensland focuses on this area of the law in both Commonwealth and State jurisdictions. Kate maintains chambers in Brisbane though is often briefed to appear in matters in the Federal Court and Administrative Appeals Tribunal in all Australian States and Territories.

Prior to being called to the Bar, Kate was employed as a Senior Solicitor at Sparke Helmore Lawyers. She holds a Bachelor of Laws (Hons) and a Bachelor of Arts in Politics and Government from Griffith University.

Member Ms Julie Steel

Executive Director, Supreme, District and Land Courts' Service, Justice Services

Julie Steel was admitted to practice as a solicitor of the Supreme Court of Queensland in 1989. She has extensive experience in legal practice and procedure, courts management, and justice policy and administration.

From 1999–2005, she held a variety of positions with the Department of Corrective Services. In November 2005 she started working in the courts and she has been the Executive Director of the Supreme, District and Land Courts' Service since February 2010.

Member: Ms Sandie Angus

Sandie Angus is an experienced strategic leader and non-executive director with significant legal, governance, and risk management expertise. She is admitted as a solicitor and has over thirty

years' experience working in law firms and in the government finance and electricity sectors. She sits on the boards of various not-for-profit companies in the health, sports, education, and disability sectors.

Member: Ms Monica Bradley

Monica Bradley is a non-executive director with technology, innovation, and global impact investment expertise. Monica is a director of Enova Renewable Energy, Coex Services, Queensland University of Technology and QBDF Venture Fund managed by QIC. She is a strong advocate for women, diversity, inclusion, and First Nations recognition. She has held advisory board roles with Queensland Government's Innovation Advisory Council, Beyond Zero Emissions and the SheEO capital fund for women-led businesses.

She held leadership, sales, operations, and strategy roles in New York, Abu Dhabi, Sydney, Perth, Canberra, and Brisbane. Her expertise, accumulated over decades and across continents, has its foundations in the industrial sectors of global trade, transportation, and logistics, followed by a decade in professional services predominantly in government reform and most recently in sustainability, technology, start-ups, education and venture capital.

Member: Mr Leighton Craig

Leighton Craig has more than 20 years' experience in the public sector.

Leighton has worked in a diverse range of policy and project areas within government, including law and justice policy, disaster relief, community engagement on significant infrastructure and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage.

Member: Ms Louisa Lynch

Louisa Lynch is the Director, Governance and Capability within the Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning.

From 2010 until June 2022, Louisa was at the Office of the Information Commissioner and for the last few years has been Right to Information Commissioner.

Louisa has over 15 years' experience working as a lawyer in various government agencies, including with the Department of Transport and Main Roads, and the Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning. Her work has focused on statutory interpretation, litigation management, contract drafting and negotiation, Crime and Corruption Commission liaison, recruitment, selection and supervision of junior staff.

She has substantial experience in information access rights, and also holds knowledge of public sector recordkeeping obligations and their centrality to the success of formal and informal information access schemes.

Member: Professor Bronwyn Fredericks

Bronwyn Fredericks is a Professor and the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous Engagement) at the University of Queensland. In 2016, Bronwyn was appointed as the Presiding Commissioner with the Queensland Productivity Commission to lead the Inquiry into service delivery in Queensland's remote and discrete Indigenous communities. She additionally worked on the Inquiry into manufacturing, the Inquiry into Imprisonment and Recidivism in Queensland (2019), and the Queensland Recycling Review (2019).

Bronwyn has worked for both state and federal levels of government and has a long history of direct hands-on involvement in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-based organisations spanning over 30 years.

Bronwyn is noted for her community-based research and translating research outcomes along with her strong practice-based commitment to social justice and improving Indigenous health, education, and life outcomes.

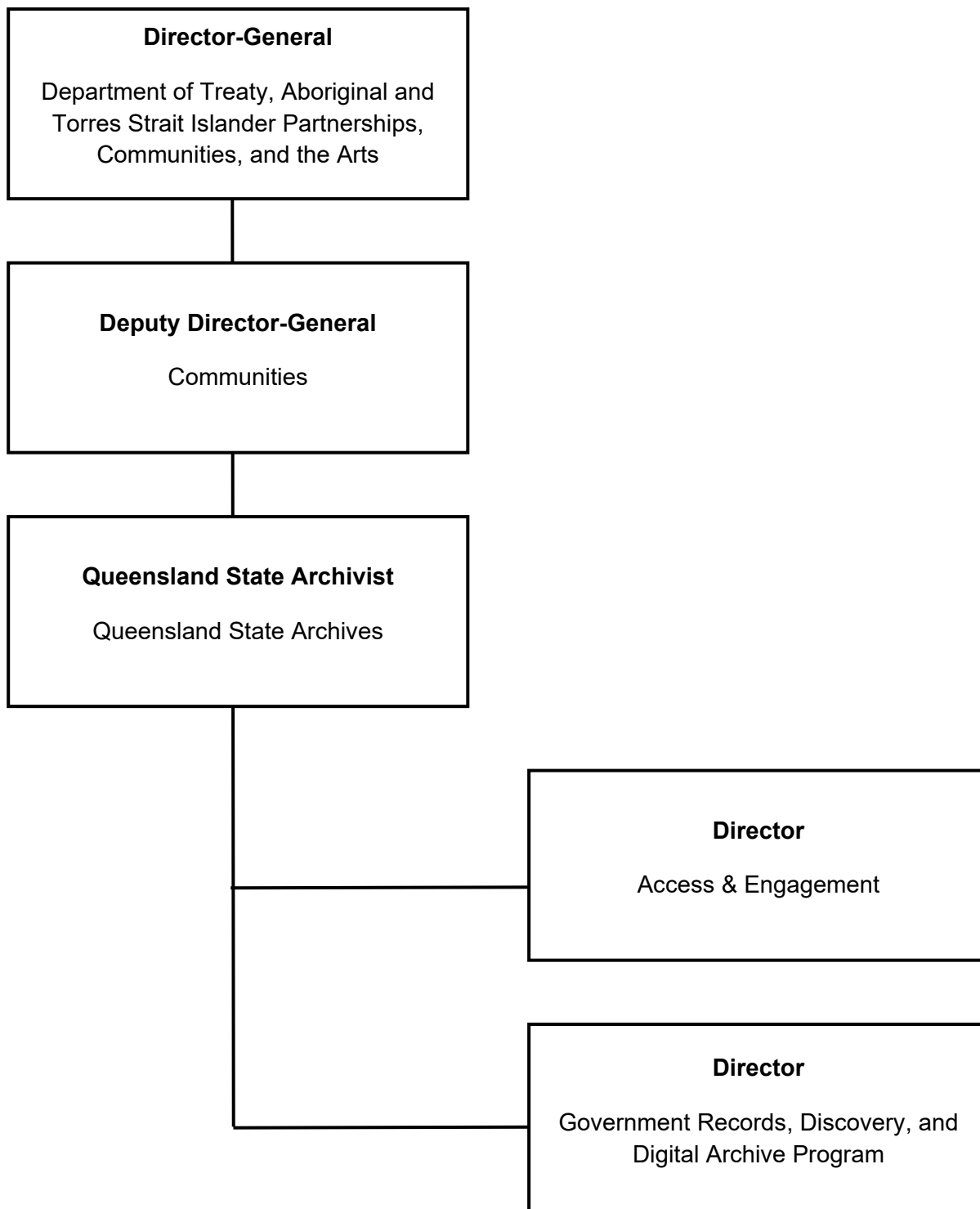
Member: Ms Maureen Sullivan

Maureen Sullivan has extensive experience across library sectors, incorporating significant expertise in the provision of transformational leadership, strategic and operational management, library and information systems, and innovative information service delivery. Her experience covers public libraries in NSW, the TAFE sector, and University libraries as well as Queensland State Archives.

As a knowledge and information leader in Library and Archives fields she brings traditional library strengths and expertise in privacy, copyright, applied research, information management, intellectual asset management, digital literacy, and critical thinking and analytical discernment.

Maureen has a history of successfully linking these knowledge skills to deliver business goals and strategic outcomes. These are a unique set of competencies needed to navigate the digital shift in our increasingly global and connected world.

Organisational structure



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Queensland State Archives

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