



# FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 1992

July 2020

Information  
Statement

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Aqwest is a West Australian Government Trading Enterprise responsible for providing drinking water to the City of Bunbury and surrounding areas, which includes about 20,000 properties.

We are committed to providing sustainable, high-quality drinking water that consistently meets or exceeds our customers' expectations.

### 1.1 Purpose

Maximise value to the owner and customer by providing locally managed water services.

### 1.2 Vision

To work within a changing environment as an independent, viable and competitive water utility.

### 1.4 Values

- Integrity
- Accountability
- Transparency
- Respect

## 2. PRINCIPAL BUSINESS ACTIVITY

Aqwest plans and manages the provision of water services to the City of Bunbury and some surrounding areas. These services include flow, continuity, pressure, restrictions and quantity of water to each property within the City. Aqwest owns and operates a number of Water Treatment Plants and Reservoirs to enable this service provision, and these assets are rigorously maintained to ensure maximum water quality at all times.

Associated administration services are undertaken to complement the actual water provision, with an emphasis on customer focus.

Close cooperation with other State Government agencies within the region is maintained, to foster an environment of open communication and working together to achieve outcomes.

## 3. ENABLING LEGISLATION

Originally established under the Water Boards Act 1904 the Bunbury Water Board (trading as Aqwest) was corporatized in November 2013 and became the Bunbury Water Corporation (also trading as Aqwest).

Enabling legislation:

Water Corporations Act 1995

Water Services Act 2012

Water Services Regulations 2013

Aqwest's Operating Licence under this legislation expires in 2022.

#### 4. LEGISLATION ADMINISTERED

Aqwest is required to comply with a wide variety of State and Commonwealth legislation, however, the legislation listed below is considered as having a significant impact on the authority's operations:

- State Records Act 2000;
- State Records (Consequential Provisions) Act 2000;
- Criminal Code 1913;
- Electronic Transactions Act 2011;
- Evidence Act 1906 and Act Amendment (Evidence) Act 2000
- Freedom of Information Act 1992;
- Limitation Act 2005;
- Competition Policy Reform (Western Australia) Act 1996
- Dangerous Goods Safety Act 2004
- Fair Trading Act 2010
- Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984
- Statutory Corporations (Liability of Directors) Act 1996
- Water Corporations Act 1995
- Water Services Act 2012
- Legal Deposit Act 2012
- Fair Work Act 2009
- Environmental Protection Act 1986
- Equal Opportunity Act 1984
- Heritage of Western Australia Act 1990
- Land Administration Act 1997
- Workers Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 1981
- Labour Relations Legislation Amendment Act 2006
- Industrial Relations Act 1979
- Disabilities Discrimination Act 1992
- Trade Practices Act 1974

##### 4.1 Major Government Policy and / or Industry Standards

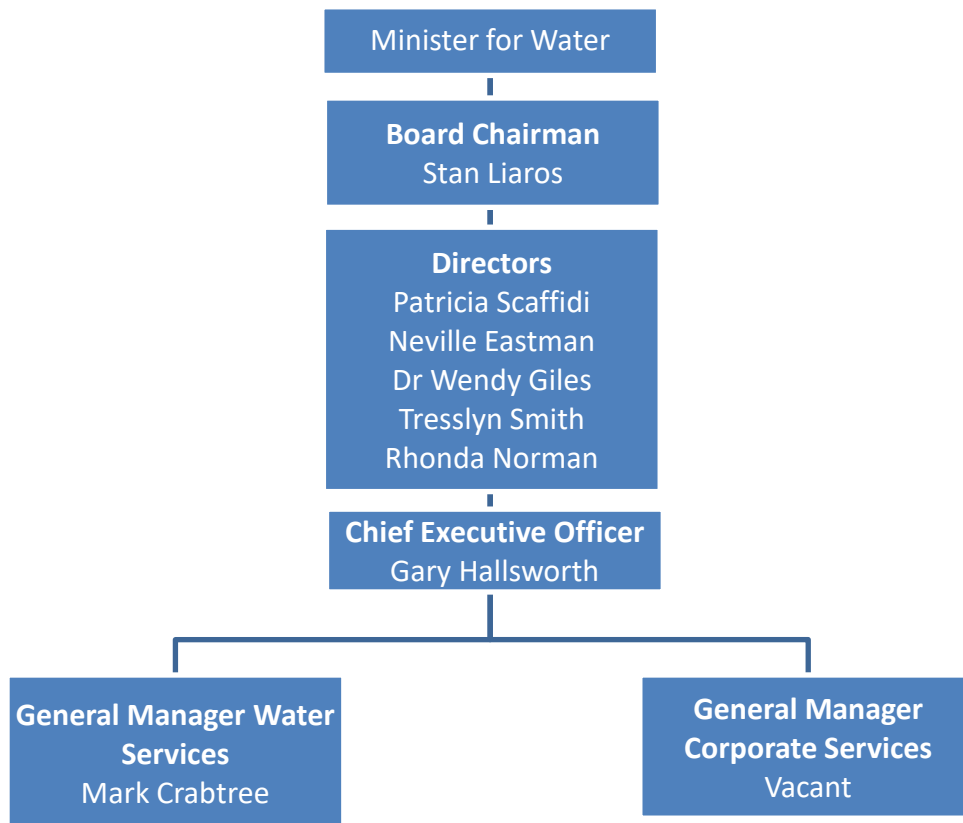
- Australian Records Management Standard ISO/AS 15489-1;2016 Parts 1 and 2;
- Australian Accounting standards;
- National Competition Policy;
- State Records Commission Principles and Standards 2002;
- WA Government Policy, Premier's Instructions and Public Sector Commissioner's Circulars; and
- Compliance Enforcement Policy – Electricity, Gas & Water Licences, 2011, ERA
- Audit Guidelines – Electricity, Gas & Water Licences, 2010, ERA

- Water Compliance Reporting Manual, 2018 , ERA
- National Performance Framework: Urban water reporting indicators & definitions handbook, National Water Commission (reissued annually).
- Urban National Performance Framework – urban auditing requirements, National Water Commission (reissued annually).

This Information Statement is published in accordance with S. 94 of the Freedom of Information Act 1992, which enables members of the public the legal right to access information held by Government agencies (Federal, State and Local); and Statutory Authorities.

This Information Statement details the processes and practices by which Aqwest deals with applications for documents and/or amendment to personal information.

## 5. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE



The Governor via the Minister for Water appoints six Directors to the Board. Directors are appointed for a three-year term with two directors going out of office by rotation each year.

Any adult customer serviced by Aqwest may apply for a position on the Board. Selection of directors is made on the basis of the diverse range of experience, skills, knowledge and perspective required to manage Aqwest's business.

The Organisational Structure reflects core business functions and activities – the provision of potable drinking water services is under the General Manager Water Services control; and the necessary supporting administration role under the General Manager Corporate Service's control.

## 6. DETAILS OF DECISION-MAKING FUNCTIONS

The Board of Aqwest aspires to the highest level of effective corporate governance appropriate to an enterprise of Aqwest's nature and standing. The directors take ultimate responsibility for corporate governance and act in accordance with the Water Corporations Act 1995, the Statutory Corporations (Liability of Directors) Act 1996 and other relevant legislation. Aqwest directors have adopted a Code of Conduct that sets out the principles and standards with which members are expected to comply.

The key roles of the Board are:

- to provide the leadership and direction necessary to ensure the organisation achieves excellence in the provision of services to its customers;
- complete regulatory and statutory compliance; and
- operate in a responsible and ethical manner, both within the spirit of any relevant legislation and within the community it serves.

## 7. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN THE FORMULATION OF POLICY AND PERFORMANCE OF AGENCY FUNCTIONS

Board Meetings are conducted in a manner that ensures open communication, meaningful participation and timely resolution of issues. The Board receives timely and accurate minutes, advance written agendas and clear and concise background material to prepare in advance of meetings to enable informed decision making. Directors are diligent in attending Board Meetings and making themselves knowledgeable about the issues that require Board action.

## 8. DOCUMENTS HELD BY THE AGENCY

### 8.1 Documents Available Outside the FOI process

- Aqwest Annual Report
- Aqwest Policies
- Aqwest Quarterly Report
- Aqwest Code of Conduct
- Aqwest Statement of Corporate Intent
- Aqwest FOI Information Statement

This information is held in both physical and electronic format and can be reproduced in accordance with the applicant's preference.

Requests for this information may be lodged either:

- by post, addressed to Chief Executive Officer, Aqwest, PO Box 400, Bunbury WA 6231;
- by email to [aqwest@aqwest.com.au](mailto:aqwest@aqwest.com.au) or
- in person at 5 MacKinnon Way, Bunbury WA 6230.

***NB. Although charges for access to this information do not apply, photocopying or reproduction charges may apply – at the discretion of the General Manager Corporate Services.***

## 8.2 Details of other Agency documents

- Correspondence (including e-mail)
- Files
- Drawings
- Maps
- Reports to External Bodies
- Reports from External Bodies
- Internal Procedures Manuals
- Internal Operational Manuals
- Internal Maintenance Manuals
- Licences
- Legal Agreements
- Contracts

## 8.3 Document Format and Storage

All records are registered within the HPRM database with appropriate security designations as necessary. Where possible this information is held electronically (in native application source files) to aid document control processes such as revision and approval; and 'fingertip' information retrieval. Currently, our HPRM database manages many file formats including .doc, .docx, .dot, .xls, .jpeg, .pdf, .mdb, .ppt, .mpp, .cocx, .xlt, .docm, .dotx, .dotm, .xlsx, .xlsm and .msg file extensions; together with zip files and urls. Physical copies of these records may be taken and stored for ease of employee access (i.e. Operational and Procedural Manuals).

Sensitive information is stored securely and access restricted. Physical information, dependent upon the Record Type, may be stored in the Corporate Reference Library, the Strong Room, or the Archives Storage area.

***NB. Although charges for access to this information do not apply, photocopying or reproduction charges may apply – at the discretion of the General Manager Corporate Services.***

## 8.4 Information Classification

All Aqwest files are classified via the use of a customised Thesaurus containing Functional and Administrative Keywords, and associated Activity/Subject Descriptors. These files are uniquely identified by a single alpha character (to identify the Record Type), followed by a sequential number generated by the HPRM database.



All other records are created according to Record Type with associated unique alpha characters and sequential numbers (e.g. Procedures Manual = Mnnnnn). These records are titled via free text in order to reflect the specific or 'actual' title.

## 8.5 Personal Information

### 8.5.1 External Contacts

Minimal personal information relating to external contacts is held by Aqwest.

From a Correspondence perspective, names and addresses are retained within the HPRM database to enable record searching via contact. This information is not divulged to external commercial enterprises.

From an accounts perspective, names, addresses and pensioner/concession eligibility status is retained within the Authority financial database to enable appropriate billing processes. These details are updated as necessary upon receipt of authorised Change of Name/Address Notification forms. This information is not divulged to external commercial enterprises. Occasionally this information may be shared reciprocally with other Government Agencies (e.g. Water Corporation), with similar core business activities.

Financial information is gathered from customers seeking Hardship Utility Grants Scheme (HUGS) and stored in HPRM, while this information is not shared with an external agency the latest account for the customer is sent to Department of Child Protection as evidence of the debt.

From an Accounts Payable perspective, names, addresses and financial institution details are retained within the Authority financial database to enable appropriate payment and/or funds transfer for debtors and creditors (including contractors). These details are updated as necessary upon receipt of authorised Change of Name/Address Notification forms. This information is not divulged to external commercial enterprises.

### 8.5.2 Internal Contacts

From a Human Resources perspective, considerable personal information is retained about employees. This includes name, address, financial institution details, superannuation details, next of kin, psychometric evaluations and medical information. These details are updated as necessary upon request from the employee. This information is not divulged externally unless associated with Insurance or staff profiling processes.

## 9. RIGHT TO ACCESS

Aqwest aims to make information available promptly, for the least possible cost. Therefore, wherever possible, documents will be provided outside the Freedom of Information (FOI) process.

Current Aqwest documents made publicly available; and therefore not required to be accessed via the FOI process are listed at 8.1.

## 10. APPLICATIONS

An application made under the FOI Act for access to documents, amendment of personal information or review of a decision has to:

- be in writing;
- give enough information so that the documents requested may be identified;
- give an Australian address to which notices can be sent; and
- be lodged at Aqwest with any application fee payable.

Applications may be lodged either:

- by post, addressed to Chief Executive Officer, Aqwest, PO Box 400, Bunbury WA 6231;
- by email to [aqwest@aqwest.com.au](mailto:aqwest@aqwest.com.au) or
- in person at 5 MacKinnon Way, Bunbury WA 6230.

Applications will be acknowledged in writing.

## 11. FEES AND CHARGES

A scale of Fees and Charges has been prescribed in the FOI Act Regulations. With the exception of the Application Fee for Non-Personal information, all charges are discretionary. Details of Fees and Charges from 1 July 2020 are listed below:

Application Fee (Non-personal information)	<b>\$30.00</b>
Charge for time taken by staff dealing with the application (per hour or pro rata for a part of an hour)	<b>\$30.00</b>
Charge for access time supervised staff (per hour, or pro rata for a part of an hour) + the actual additional cost to Aqwest of any special arrangements (e.g. hire of facilities or equipment)	<b>\$30.00</b>
Charges for photocopying (per hour or pro rata for a part of an hour of staff time); and Per copy	<b>\$30.00</b> <b>0.20c</b>
Charge for time taken by staff transcribing information from a tape or other device (per hour, or pro rata for a part of an hour)	<b>\$30.00</b>
Charge for duplicating a tape, film or computer information	<b>Actual Cost</b>
Charge for delivery, packaging and postage	<b>Actual Cost</b>

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## 12. NOTICE OF DECISION

You will be provided with a written Notice of Decision outlining our decision and reasons for that decision. Aqwest will endeavour to provide this decision as soon as practicable, but in any case, within the specified 45 calendar day deadline.

## 13. RIGHTS OF REVIEW

Applicants who are dissatisfied with a decision by Aqwest are entitled to ask for an Internal Review. Applications for Internal Review should be made in writing to Aqwest within 30 days of receiving the original Notice of Decision. You will be notified of the outcome of the Internal Review within 15 days.

If you disagree with the result of the Internal Review, you can then apply to the Information Commissioner for an External Review within 60 days after receiving the Notice of Decision for the Internal Review.

## 14. RESPONSIBLE OFFICERS

Aqwest's General Manager Corporate Services assumes the dual roles of FOI Coordinator and FOI Decision Maker and is authorised to perform those functions in accordance with the requirements of the Act.

Aqwest's Chief Executive Officer assumes the role of FOI Review Officer and is authorised to perform these functions in accordance with the requirements of the Act.