



# Infrastructure WA

## Frequently Asked Questions

(Click here for FAQs on the State Infrastructure Strategy)

### Role and governance

#### What is Infrastructure WA?

Infrastructure WA (IWA) is a statutory body tasked with providing expert advice to the State Government on the State's infrastructure needs and priorities. IWA was established in July 2019 and is governed by the *Infrastructure Western Australia Act 2019* (IWA Act).

IWA's advice will support the State Government in its infrastructure decision-making; helping to grow the economy and create jobs by building the right projects, in the right place, at the right time. To achieve this, IWA is responsible for:

- delivery of a State Infrastructure Strategy (Strategy), addressing infrastructure needs and priorities over a 20-year horizon;
- assessing major infrastructure proposals;
- providing advice and assistance to State Government agencies in preparing infrastructure strategies, plans, policies, and proposals;
- coordinating the provision of information and submissions to Infrastructure Australia (IA);
- providing advice to the Premier on infrastructure priorities, and the funding and financing of infrastructure;
- reviewing and reporting to the Premier on completed infrastructure projects;
- promoting public awareness of matters relating to infrastructure; and
- any other infrastructure related functions requested by the Premier.

#### What is Infrastructure WA's vision?

IWA's vision is for Western Australia's infrastructure to lead in generating a prosperous, liveable and resilient community.

The vision is supported by three pillars:

- improve long-term public sector infrastructure planning to support the economy and grow jobs;
- be proactive and foster innovation to achieve better economic, social and environmental outcomes; and
- provide evidence-based, expert advice to government to inform infrastructure decisions.

Read IWA's values and strategic objectives [here](#).

#### Why is Infrastructure WA necessary?

IWA's key objective is to improve infrastructure planning and decision-making to maximise the value to Western Australia from every dollar spent on infrastructure. IWA will help to address a number of recent issues, including:

- lack of a long-term infrastructure strategy, leading to a piecemeal approach and short-term focus in some cases;
- siloed decision-making, resulting in a lack of strategic alignment and coordination in some cases;
- in some cases, fragile political consensus and short-term considerations causing uncertainty for investors;
- lack of transparency, consultation and engagement, hindering consensus;
- difficulties in considering innovative solutions and ideas; and
- issues with infrastructure delivery, from business case development to construction.

#### Who sits on Infrastructure WA's Board?

IWA's Board has ten members, comprising both government and non-government representatives.

Board membership is as follows:

- John Langoulant AO (Chairperson)

- Nicole Lockwood (Deputy Chairperson)
- Terry Agnew
- Kerryl Bradshaw
- Andrea Sutton
- Wayne Zekulich
- Richard Sellers (appointed government member, Acting Director General of the Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation)

There are three ex-officio members as follows:

- Director General Department of the Premier and Cabinet (Rebecca Brown - acting)
- Director General Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage (Gail McGowan)
- Under Treasurer (Michael Barnes)

The Board's constitution requires at least 50 per cent independent members, led by an independent Chairperson. This is essential to fostering a more bipartisan approach to infrastructure planning and decision-making. The IWA Act provides for the Chairperson or presiding member (who must always be non-government) to hold a casting vote in the event where there are equal votes.

### How does Infrastructure WA operate?

IWA operates at 'arms-length' from government in undertaking most of its functions. As outlined in the IWA Act, the Premier cannot give a direction to IWA about the particular performance of a function or the content of any strategy, advice, report, guideline or other document prepared by IWA. However, the Premier may provide directions on the performance of IWA's functions relating to accountability and financial matters; coordination of information and submissions to IA; or a Strategy being prepared in a time period of less than five years since the previous version.

### What is the State Government's role in relation to IWA?

The IWA Act sets out various roles and requirements of the State Government, including:

- tabling the Strategy in Parliament within a set timeframe;
- providing a response to the Strategy detailing the extent of support for each of the recommendations;
- preparing an annual State Infrastructure Program (Program) with advice from IWA;
- agencies are to align strategies, plans and policies with the Strategy recommendations (to the extent they are supported by the State Government) and Program; and
- agencies are to cooperate with IWA, including

by providing IWA with the information required to perform its functions.

The IWA Act applies to all State Government agencies, statutory authorities and government trading enterprises (collectively referred to as State Government agencies in this FAQ).

## The State Infrastructure Strategy

### What is the State Infrastructure Strategy?

Under the IWA Act, IWA is tasked with preparing a 20-year Strategy to provide a holistic analysis of the State's infrastructure needs and priorities over the next two decades. The Strategy will consider economic, social and environmental objectives to make recommendations relating to infrastructure planning, prioritisation and decision-making.

The Strategy's recommendations will focus on new infrastructure projects, programs and non-build solutions (for example, strategic planning, policy, regulatory, pricing, technology, procurement, skills and governance reforms). Where appropriate, the Strategy will also include recommendations relating to funding and financing infrastructure.

The Strategy is to be reviewed every five years, or earlier as directed by the Premier.

### What is the scope of the State Infrastructure Strategy?

It is intended that the Strategy will focus on infrastructure sectors with assets planned and owned by State Government agencies. It will also look at other significant infrastructure types that provide an important service to the Western Australian community, particularly those with financial or policy implications for the State Government.

It is intended that the Strategy will focus on the needs of infrastructure sectors including: transport; energy; water; waste; digital connectivity and telecommunications; education and training; social and affordable housing; health; justice and public safety; and arts, culture, sport and recreation.

IWA has not set a minimum dollar threshold for projects and programs to be included in the Strategy. It will primarily focus on strategic or state-significant proposals and issues.

IWA recognises the critical role the regions play in the State's economy, and there will be a particular focus on the challenges and opportunities in regional areas and how the regions interact. The Strategy will consider the infrastructure needed to leverage regional strengths and to maximise opportunities for the entire State.

## Will government be required to follow the advice in the State Infrastructure Strategy?

IWA's advice is not binding on government. IWA will provide the Strategy to the Premier, who is then required to table the report in Parliament. Within six months of being tabled, the State Government must respond in Parliament to the Strategy's recommendations including the extent to which each recommendation is supported in full, in part or not supported.

Under the IWA Act, State Government agencies are required to align their strategies, plans and policies with the Strategy's recommendations to the extent that they are supported in the State Government's response to the Strategy.

## What is the purpose of the annual report on implementation?

IWA is required to report annually on government's implementation of the Strategy's recommendations. The report is intended to provide an update of the State Government's progress in implementing the Strategy and improve accountability. In preparing the report, IWA is to take into account the current State Government response to the Strategy and the State Infrastructure Program.

## State Infrastructure Program

### What is the State Infrastructure Program?

The IWA Act requires the State Government to prepare a Program on an annual basis, which must be made publicly available within three months of the State Budget being handed down. This requirement will not commence until the first Strategy is completed.

The Program is a short to medium-term (ten-year) plan which will provide an overview of the State Government's infrastructure investment, consistent with the State Budget and forward estimates (one to four years). It will also look beyond the forward estimates (five to ten years) and identify emerging issues and challenges over this period, and potential options through which they can be addressed. It is expected that the Program will align with the recommendations of the Strategy (to the extent that they are supported by the State Government). The State Government must seek the advice of IWA in preparing the Program.

## Major project assessment

Under the IWA Act, IWA's function to assess major infrastructure proposals is subject to a delayed commencement. Once effective, IWA's assessment role will be limited to any major infrastructure proposal (a single project or program of multiple projects) which has an estimated capital cost of \$100 million or more, and any other specific proposals referred to IWA for assessment by the Premier. IWA also has the discretion to exempt infrastructure proposals from the assessment process. Regulations may be made to provide further detail on the circumstances where an exemption may apply, impose conditions or alter the value threshold of proposals.

### How will Infrastructure WA assess major infrastructure proposals?

IWA will adopt guidelines outlining how it will assess major infrastructure proposals, which will be made publicly available. IWA must provide a report on its assessment of each proposal to the Premier, prior to an investment decision being made by government. A summary of this advice will be made public within six months. The purpose of IWA's assessment is to ensure that government's investment decisions are informed by IWA's expert advice, and to improve the quality of proposals over time.

### Does IWA make decisions on investing in infrastructure?

No, IWA is an advisory body and does not have decision-making authority on infrastructure investment. Government is, and will continue to be, responsible for making investment decisions for public infrastructure. IWA will provide advice prior to government making investment decisions on major infrastructure proposals.

### Does IWA have a role in delivering infrastructure projects?

While it is not intended that project delivery will be a core function of IWA, the IWA Act provides an intentionally broad power to account for instances where the Premier may task IWA with performing additional functions. Existing State Government agencies are already established to deliver infrastructure projects in Western Australia so it is reasonable to expect that IWA will rarely, if at all, perform a project delivery function.

## How does Infrastructure WA's role relate to the work of Infrastructure Australia?

One of IWA's objectives is to improve the consistency and quality of business cases submitted to IA, to assist in strengthening the State's position in seeking federal funding.

To support this, IWA is to review and report to the Premier on proposals prior to their submission to IA, including advice relating to project business cases. IWA also coordinates the State Government's input to IA on various matters, such as IA's annual Infrastructure Priority List.

In doing this, IWA works in close collaboration with the departments of the Premier and Cabinet and Treasury and other relevant State Government agencies.

### Available information

## Will IWA publish all of its advice and reports?

IWA, with the approval of the Premier, has the ability to make advice that it has prepared through the performance of its functions publicly available. In addition, IWA must make the following documents publicly available:

- Draft Strategy (and any amendment to the Strategy);
- Guidelines for assessment of major infrastructure proposals;
- Annual reports on the State Government's progress in implementing the accepted Strategy recommendations;
- Summary of assessment of a major infrastructure proposal (if not published by the Premier); and
- Annual Work Program.

In addition, the State Government is required to make the following documents publicly available:

- Final Strategy;
- State Government's response to the Strategy (and any amended response to the Strategy);
- Annual Program;
- Any direction from the Premier to IWA; and
- Statement of grounds for suspending or removing a board member or the CEO from office.

Any information or advice made publicly available must be in accord with the restrictions on the disclosure of information, including sensitive information, as outlined in the IWA Act.

## How can I keep informed?

For the latest news on IWA and to subscribe for updates, please visit [www.infrastructure.wa.gov.au](http://www.infrastructure.wa.gov.au).