



QUARTERLY REPORTING Q2 2013–14

APPROVALS SUMMARY

REPORT

Produced and published by

Department of Environment Regulation
168 St Georges Terrace
Perth WA 6000

February 2014

As part of the changes to machinery of government the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) was separated on 1 July 2013 into two agencies: the Department of Environment Regulation (DER) and the Department of Parks and Wildlife (DPaW). Any information in this report for the period up to 30 June 2013 relates to activities under the former DEC.

Enquiries

Phone: +61 8 6467 5000
Fax: +61 8 6467 5562
Email: info@der.wa.gov.au
www.der.wa.gov.au

© State of Western Australia 2014

There is no objection to this publication being copied in whole or part, provided there is due acknowledgment of any material quoted or reproduced from the publication.

This approvals summary report and the full report from which this summary is produced are available on the Department of Environment Regulation website at www.der.wa.gov.au/performance

Accessibility

This document is available in alternative formats and languages on request to the Department of Environment Regulation.

Works approvals and licences

For major resource project approvals, the Department of Environment Regulation (DER) has set a target to decide (grant or refuse) 100 per cent of works approval and licence applications within 60 working days.

During the October to December 2013 quarter DER received a total of 32 new works approval and five new licence applications for major resource projects. This is the second lowest number of major resource new works approval applications since the third quarter 2011–12, with the number of licence applications the lowest received for the previous three quarters.

Twenty works approvals for major resource projects were decided, which is half of the number decided in the previous quarter.

Ninety five per cent of new works approval applications for major resource projects were decided within the target time frame. This is an increase in percentage from the last quarter (92 per cent) and is the second highest percentage since the second quarter of 2011–12.

Six major resource projects licence applications were decided, which is nearly half the number decided in the previous quarter.

DER decided 83 per cent of new licence applications for major resource projects within the target time frame this quarter; this is a decrease in percentage from the previous two quarters of licences decided within the target time frame.

The average processing time for major resource project works approvals and licences during the second quarter 2013–14 remained relatively

steady at 49 and 45 days respectively.

For non-major resource project (other projects) approvals, DER has set a target to decide 80 per cent of licence and works approval applications within 60 working days.

Twenty-two other project works approvals were decided by DER in the second quarter of 2013–14. DER decided 91 per cent of these new works approvals for other projects within the target time frame. This is an improvement on the rate of 74 per cent in the previous quarter.

Eleven other project licences were decided by DER in the second quarter of 2013–14. Sixty-four per cent of other project licence applications were decided within the target time frame in the second quarter of 2013–14. This is a decrease in percentage from the previous quarter.

The average processing time for other project works approval applications decreased this quarter to 37 days, compared to 49 days in the previous quarter. The average time of 56 days to process a licence application remains below the target time frame.

DER is well advanced in introducing further industry licensing reforms that should result in a more streamlined and timely approvals process, and certainty of outcome. Reform initiatives include the Re-Engineering for Industry Regulation and Environment (REFIRE) program and improvements to application processes.

Approvals summary

Works approvals and licences

Department of Environment Regulation	Jan–Mar 2013	Apr–June 2013	July–Sept 2013	Oct–Dec 2013
Works approvals (Major resource projects only)				
No. of applications carried over from previous periods	27	36	44	23
No of applications received	46	40	19	32
No. of applications granted/refused	35	29	40	20
No. of decisions that were subject to stop the clock	25	23	21	14
No. of applications withdrawn	2	3	0	0
Average time for decision (business days)	49	42	48	49
Percentage of applications that were finalised within benchmark timeframe of 60 business days	83%	100%	92%	95%
No. of open applications as of end of quarter	36	44	23	35
Licences (Major resource projects only)				
No. of applications carried over from previous periods	21	19	27	22
No. of applications received	7	13	7	5
No. of decisions that were subject to stop the clock	9	7	12	8
No. of applications granted/refused	9	5	11	6
No. of applications withdrawn	0	2	1	1
Average time for decision (business days)	48	48	50	45
Percentage of applications that were finalised within benchmark timeframe of 60 business days	89%	100%	100%	83%
No. of open applications as of end of quarter	19	27	22	20
Works approvals (Other projects)				
No. of applications carried over from previous periods	40	32	27	29
No of applications received	29	24	21	28
No. of applications granted/refused	35	28	19	22
No. of applications withdrawn	2	1	0	0
Average time for decision (business days)	61	53	49	37
Percentage of applications that were finalised within benchmark timeframe of 60 business days (target is 80%)	54%	68%	74%	91%
No. of open applications as of end of quarter	32	27	29	35
Licences (Other projects)				
No. of applications carried over from previous periods	21	21	19	17
No. of applications received	11	11	16	12
No. of applications granted/refused	10	11	17	11
No. of applications withdrawn	1	2	1	1
Average time for decision (business days)	53	56	39	56
Percentage of applications that were finalised within benchmark timeframe of 60 business days (target is 80%)	75%	64%	88%	64%
No. of open applications as of end of quarter	21	19	17	17

Native vegetation clearing permits

For native vegetation clearing permits, DER has set a target time frame of 80 per cent of applications decided¹ within 60 calendar days of receipt, and 100 per cent within 90 calendar days.

DER received 104 native vegetation clearing permit applications this quarter, significantly less than the 146 received the previous quarter.

DER made 140 decisions on applications, which is slightly higher than the previous quarter's figure of 138 decisions.

DER did not meet its target time frames this quarter, with 60 per cent of decisions made within 60 days, 37 per cent within 90 days, and three per cent taking longer than 90 days.

Of the four applications that did not meet the 90-day target time frame, two applications were finalised within 93 and two within 99 days. These applications required modifications and further information during the assessment process.

The average time taken to make a decision was 54 days, which is consistent with previous quarters.

Of the 140 decisions made on applications, 107 clearing permit applications were granted within an average timeframe of 56 days.

Three applications for a clearing permit were refused. Of the remaining applications, 29 were withdrawn and one declined as the application was not valid.

The number of open clearing permit applications at the end of this quarter decreased to 135, compared to 170 at the end of the previous quarter and 149 at the same time last year.

DER continues to work to improve its performance in deciding clearing permit applications

DER's clearing permit system database records details of clearing permit applications and decisions made for both DER and the Department of Mines and Petroleum (DMP)², and forms the basis of the published records available on DER's website.

The quantitative information presented in the tables in this report is provided for both DER and DMP.

The qualitative information in the text provides information on DER only.

¹ A 'clearing permit decision made' means an application to clear has been granted, given an undertaking to grant, refused, declined, withdrawn, amended, revoked or suspended.

² Under section 20 of the Environmental Protection Act 1986, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of DER has delegated decision-making on clearing applications to DMP for the following activities:

- An activity under an authority granted, or a requirement imposed, under the Mining Act 1978, the Petroleum and Geothermal Energy Resources Act 1967, the Petroleum Pipelines Act 1969 or the Petroleum (Submerged Lands) Act 1982.
- An activity under a government agreement administered by the Department of State Development.

Approvals summary

Clearing permits

Department of Environment Regulation	Jan–Mar 2013	Apr–Jun 2013	Jul–Sept 2013	Oct–Dec 2013
No. of applications carried over from previous periods	148	157	162	171*
No. of applications received	125	135	146	104
No. of decisions that were subject to 'stop the clock'	60	62	64	61
Average time in 'stop the clock' for decisions in days	108	75	149	111
Average time for decision in days (excluding time in 'stop the clock')	52	49	53	54
No. decisions on applications	116	126	138	140
No. of outstanding applications at end of quarter	157	166	170	135
Percentage of applications that were finalised within benchmark timeframe				
60 days (80% of applications finalised)	61%	60%	53%	60%
90 days (20% of applications finalised)	35%	36%	43%	37%
>90 days	4%	4%	4%	3%

Department of Mines and Petroleum	Jan–Mar 2013	Apr–Jun 2013	Jul–Sept 2013	Oct–Dec 2013
No. of applications carried over from previous periods	43	53	48	30*
No. of applications received	56	51	48	44
No. of decisions that were subject to 'stop the clock'	2	6	33	26
Average time in 'stop the clock' for decisions in days	16	139	37	34
Average time for decision in days (excluding time in 'stop the clock')	64	68	57	48
No. decisions on applications	43	57	65	43
No. of outstanding applications at end of quarter	56	47	31	31
Percentage of applications that were finalised within benchmark timeframe				
60 days (80% of applications finalised)	51%	49%	75%	86%
90 days (20% of applications finalised)	37%	33%	15%	12%
>90 days	12%	18%	10%	2%

Note * These figures are not the same as the previous reporting period due to data correction occurring for the July-September 2013 period