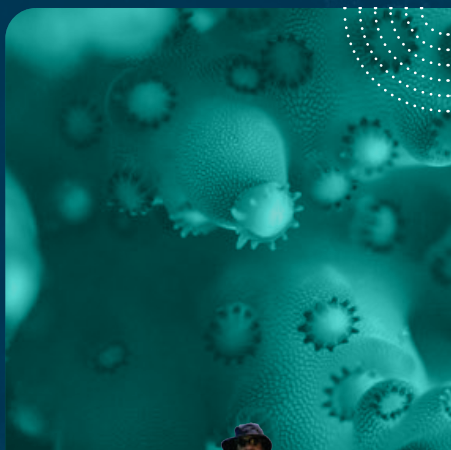
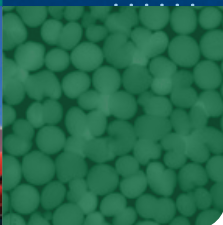


ANNUAL REPORT **2025-26**

AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF MARINE SCIENCE



Australian Government



AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE
OF MARINE SCIENCE

Disclaimer

The research reported herein is based on early analyses of complex datasets and should not be considered definitive in all cases. Institutions or individuals interested in all consequences or applications of the Australian Institute of Marine Science's research are invited to contact the Chief Executive Officer at the Townsville address below.

For additional copies of this report, please phone AIMS on (07) 4753 4444, write to us at the Townsville address or email media@aims.gov.au.

This report, along with a range of other information about AIMS, is available online at www.aims.gov.au.

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The Australian Institute of Marine Science (AIMS) acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land and sea Country on which AIMS operates. We recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as Australia's first scientists and acknowledge the deep and timeless connection with Country. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and acknowledge future leaders. AIMS especially honours Traditional Owners as Australia's first marine scientists and carers of Country, and we pay tribute to Traditional Ecological Knowledge, wisdom, and Indigenous perspectives passed from generation to generation, and successfully applied to sustainable environmental management over thousands of years.

AIMS acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land on where our main facilities are located: the Bindal and Wulgurukaba peoples in Townsville, the Larrakia people in Darwin, the Whadjuk Noongar Country in Perth and the Ngunnawal people in Canberra. We also recognise and pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders who are Traditional Owners of the areas of our marine science operations across tropical northern Australia.

Warning: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons should be aware that this document might contain images of people who have passed away since publication.



8 September 2026

Senator the Hon Murray Watt
Minister for the Environment and Water
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Minister

On behalf of the Council of the Institute of Marine Science (as the accountable authority of the Australian Institute of Marine Science — AIMS), we have pleasure in presenting our annual report for the year ended 30 June 2026. The report is forwarded to you in accordance with section 46 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.

This report provides information so that you, the Parliament of Australia, and users of AIMS' research outputs can make an informed judgement about AIMS' performance during the 2025–26 financial year.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Australian Institute of Marine Science Act 1972* and in accordance with section 46 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.

On behalf of the Council, the Chair approved the content of the *AIMS Annual Report 2025–26* on 8 September 2026.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Elizabeth Woods'.

Dr Elizabeth Woods OAM
Council Chair
Australian Institute of Marine Science

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Selina Stead'.

Professor Selina Stead
Chief Executive Officer
Australian Institute of Marine Science

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Part One: Overview

The Year in Review: Report from the Council Chair

On behalf of the Council of the Australian Institute of Marine Science, I am pleased to present AIMS' Annual Report for 2025–26. This report demonstrates AIMS' continuing economic resilience and international standing.

AIMS was established more than five decades ago to build the knowledge needed to understand and protect Australia's tropical marine estate. With climate change warming Australia's oceans at a speed never scientifically evidenced before, that purpose has never been more relevant. Australia's reefs, coasts and ocean industries are facing accelerating environmental change, including climate-driven marine heatwaves, coral bleaching, biodiversity pressures as well as increasing demands for sustainable marine development.

In this context, AIMS' role is to provide the long-term evidence, scientific leadership and national capability that governments, Traditional Owners, industry and communities need to make informed decisions.

Our commitment to delivering impact remains a key focus of our new strategy, which was launched in September 2025. It prioritises five research themes which set the strategic direction for our science and innovation.

The incoming Minister for the Environment and Water provided AIMS Council with a Statement of Expectations in December 2025. The Council's response earlier this year confirmed AIMS' commitment through Strategy 2040 to contributing directly to national priorities including the transition to a net zero future, the elevation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge systems, the protection and restoration of Australia's marine environment, and stronger regional partnerships across the Indo-Pacific.

Australia's marine industry is growing its contribution to the Australian economy. In collaboration with partners, AIMS is ensuring the sustainable growth of marine industries and the protection of the ecosystems that underpin the value of the marine economy by providing access to the best available data. Our biennial report, the *2025 AIMS Index of Marine Industry*, found that the Blue Economy grew by 19% in like-for-like terms compared with two years ago, supporting a 52% increase in full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs.

The AIMS Council maintains its focus on the long-term financial sustainability of the Institute, ensuring public resources are managed efficiently while maintaining investment in critical scientific capability, infrastructure and workforce development. An additional focus this year has been on ensuring that AIMS continues to apply its distinctive capabilities where they can deliver the greatest value. The annual Performance Statement shows the breadth of this contribution in terms of facility and vessel use, our collaborations, our impact and the 233 publications counting towards our performance targets. AIMS maintained its position as the third-ranked marine science organisation globally using the Field-Weighted Citation Impact benchmark and continued to make research data available in accordance with our data access policy. These results speak to the continuing quality, credibility and usefulness of AIMS' science.

AIMS also maintained a strong collaborative model, with 88.6 per cent of projects by value involving external collaborators. This is essential to AIMS' national role. No single institution can address the scale of the challenges facing Australia's marine estate. Through partnerships with Commonwealth, state and territory governments, Traditional Owner organisations, universities,

industry, philanthropic organisations and international bodies, AIMS extends the reach and impact of Australian marine science.

The year also highlighted the importance of AIMS' long-term stewardship of research infrastructure and data. AIMS' national-scale observing systems, long-term reef monitoring, research vessels, laboratories and the National Sea Simulator provide capabilities that are difficult to replicate and critical to Australia's ability to understand change over time. The Council notes that demand for AIMS' major research assets remains high, and that future infrastructure planning will be central to maintaining safe, reliable and strategically aligned capability over coming decades.

AIMS' work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partners continues to mature. Partnerships with Traditional Owners, Indigenous ranger groups and Indigenous corporations are strengthening research outcomes and supporting the environmental priorities of sea Country custodians. Council particularly recognises the consolidation of the Northern Australian Marine Monitoring Alliance and AIMS' commitment to Free, Prior and Informed Consent, two-way knowledge sharing and practical capability building.

During the year, Council reviewed AIMS' governance and enterprise risk management arrangements to ensure the Institute remains well positioned to manage strategic, operational, cyber and workforce risks in an increasingly complex operating environment. This included reviewing and updating AIMS' enterprise risk management framework to ensure it remains fit for purpose. This review considered strategic, operational, financial, cyber, workforce and environmental risks and reinforces Council's commitment to proactive risk management, organisational resilience and effective governance.

AIMS operates in an increasingly complex environment. The scientific, policy and community expectations placed on the Institute will continue to grow as Australia seeks to protect biodiversity, support sustainable ocean industries, respond to climate change and contribute to regional environmental resilience. I am confident that AIMS' strategic direction, scientific standing, partnerships and people provide a strong foundation for this work.

The Council also extended our strategic stakeholder connections through engagement activities across Perth, Townsville, Brisbane and Canberra to socialise and discuss the new 2040 AIMS strategy. These engagements brought us together with representatives from government, industry, research organisations, funding bodies and community stakeholders to strengthen relationships, promote dialogue on emerging challenges, share research priorities, and identify opportunities for collaboration and partnership.

Strong governance depends not only on celebrating achievement, but also on recognising where performance signals a need for sharper planning, deeper engagement or better systems. This annual report provides transparency and identifies areas where AIMS can continue to improve.

I thank my fellow Council members and congratulate CEO Professor Selina Stead, and all AIMS staff for their commitment to delivering public good science that is in the national interest. I also acknowledge AIMS' partners, project funders, stakeholders and Traditional Owners, whose collaboration is central to the Institute's impact. The Council looks forward to continuing to support AIMS to deliver independent, trusted science and innovation for thriving oceans which are essential to Australia's environmental future.

Dr Elizabeth Woods OAM
AIMS Council Chair

The Year in Review: Report from the Chief Executive Officer

With a big thank you to the Australian Institute of Marine Science (AIMS) Council, AIMS Leadership Team (ALT), colleagues and partners, I am delighted to share results from our efforts in 2025-26, herein this Annual Report. AIMS strives to serve the needs of current and future Australian communities and partners. We do this through Strategy 2040, which was successfully launched in September 2025 at Parliament House in Canberra.

Strategy 2040 adopts a co-design process for prioritising research that makes a positive impact on the health of Australia's tropical oceans. In designing Strategy 2040, we engaged AIMS colleagues and key partners to formalise our shared goals and values by co-creating an ambitious vision – thriving oceans through trusted science and innovation.

In 2025-26, we have focused on translating Strategy 2040 into action. At the heart of implementing Strategy 2040 is making visible differences for our oceans, prioritising investment in research and development according to the key tenets of good governance - cohesion, openness, participation, effectiveness and accountability – particularly in evidence-based decision-making. We are prioritising research that will have the greatest impact on Australia's oceans and communities, with a focus on longer and larger research projects. This work is ensuring our scientific capability, partnerships and infrastructure remain aligned to the areas where AIMS can deliver the greatest benefit for Australia. We remained focused on maximising the value of public investment through careful stewardship of resources, strong project delivery and strategic partnerships. This Annual Report highlights our progress in this regard.

AIMS published the 2025 Long-Term Monitoring Program Annual Summary Report, providing government, reef managers and the community with the latest assessment of condition of the Great Barrier Reef following the most spatially extensive bleaching event recorded on the Reef. The analysis of the data collected, showed that the GBR experienced the largest annual decline in coral cover in two of the three regions since AIMS began monitoring 40 years ago. In Western Australia, our scientists convened a special Marine Heatwave Symposium to discuss the status, causes and impacts of unprecedented marine heatwave conditions and bleaching at Ningaloo and WA's oceanic reefs.

During the annual coral spawning of the GBR, AIMS took our reef restoration and adaptation science from development under laboratory conditions to operational testing on coral reefs. Through the Pilot Deployments Program, AIMS and partners delivered the first year of large-scale field trials on the GBR, during the spawning season. This work brought together scientists, Traditional Owners, tourism operators, maritime businesses and local communities to test restoration approaches under real field conditions.

We also advanced the technologies that will determine whether restoration can be delivered responsibly at scale. This included coral aquaculture, slick collection and release, automated coral breeding systems, ecological modelling and AI-enabled deployment approaches. SeaSim capabilities supported spawning and aquaculture activity, including auto-spawner systems capable of producing more than seven million fertilised coral eggs in a single spawning event. Internationally, The AIMS-developed ReefSeed technology, derived from the processes deployed at home on the GBR, was tested in the Maldives. This self-contained coral aquaculture system can produce millions of coral larvae for large-scale reef restoration in remote regions. Local Maldivian researchers were trained to produce more than three million coral larvae and deployed more than 10,000 juvenile corals across reef sites.

AIMS delivered on most of its performance measures. We maintained our global standing in marine science, published 233 publications, and continued to support public access to research data subject to appropriate restrictions. Our open access performance was also strong, with 86 per cent of peer-reviewed journal articles made open access.

Our field operations were considerable. AIMS vessels steamed more than 37,000 nautical miles, across 1,900 science sea days. We completed nearly 13,500 researcher field days and 4,272 dives. These numbers reflect the scale and difficulty of the work our teams undertake across remote, complex and changing marine environments. They also highlight the importance of vessel availability, safe operations, careful project planning, and our coordination with charter operators when demand exceeds our own vessel capacity.

We continued to expand our digital and data capabilities, improving the way marine information is collected, analysed and translated into tools that support decision-making by governments, communities, industry and marine managers.

Our partnerships with Traditional Owners continued to deepen. AIMS worked with more than 50 Traditional Owner groups, Indigenous ranger organisations and Indigenous corporations. We advanced the Indigenous Futures Project, supporting Indigenous Rangers from six Traditional Owner groups to build reef restoration skills on Woppaburra Sea Country, in the Keppel Islands, Queensland.

Our collaborations and partnerships with universities provide learning and training opportunities for the next generation of marine scientists and strengthen Australia's marine science capability through collaborative research and capability development.

Last year AIMS supported 30 postdoctoral fellows, co-supervised 57 postgraduate students, including 48 PhD candidates, and supported 11 occupational trainees and interns. In the past five years alone, the AIMS@JCU partnership has supported nearly 50 higher degree research completions. Our Higher Degree Research and Early Career Researchers Committee delivered targeted training and support, including career planning and grant-writing programs.

Internationally AIMS staff have played a significant role in leading the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN), with us holding the staff position of Global Coordinator, and AIMS staff part of an editorial team producing *the Status of Coral Reefs of the World: 2025*. Compiled by hundreds of international scientists, this global report, which will be launched in 2026, details the health, major trends, and drivers of change affecting global coral reef ecosystems.

Operationally, we continued to strengthen the systems that underpin high-quality science. Five Research Integrity Advisors were appointed, and staff received training on responsible research practice, including authorship. The Project Management Office continued to support project delivery, while data access, intellectual property and external document control processes helped ensure outputs were reviewed, managed and released appropriately. AIMS' data repository retained CoreTrustSeal certification, reinforcing our commitment to trustworthy data stewardship.

In February 2026, we awarded the biennial AIMS Medal to two worthy recipients for their sustained contribution to AIMS over many years: Libby Evans-Illidge, a pioneer in partnering with Indigenous Australians, and Dr Katharina Fabricius, an international leader in coral reef ecology.

AIMS' achievements in 2025–26 were made possible by the expertise, commitment, passion and resilience of our staff, students, collaborators and partners. I thank everyone across AIMS and our partners for their contribution to a demanding year.

Our task now is to build on this momentum: maintaining science excellence through Strategy 2040, delivering innovation and impact, strengthening partnerships and ensuring AIMS remains a trusted, practical and relevant agency for Australia's tropical ocean environments locally, nationally and internationally.

Professor Selina Stead, BSc, MSc, PhD, GAICD
Chief Executive Officer

Overview of AIMS

The Australian Institute of Marine Science is a corporate Commonwealth entity established 53 years ago under the Australian Institute of Marine Science Act 1972 (AIMS Act). As Australia's national institute for tropical marine research and a trusted source of independent scientific advice, we deliver world leading science, long-term monitoring, and innovation to support the protection, resilience, and sustainable use of marine ecosystems.

AIMS' headquarters was established on Cape Ferguson near Townsville in recognition of the importance of the Great Barrier Reef to Australia. Today, we also operate from bases in Perth and Darwin, which allows us to conduct research across northern Australia, spanning two oceans and three regional seas. AIMS also has a presence in Canberra, recognising our role in providing the science and research needed to inform decision-makers (see Figure 1).

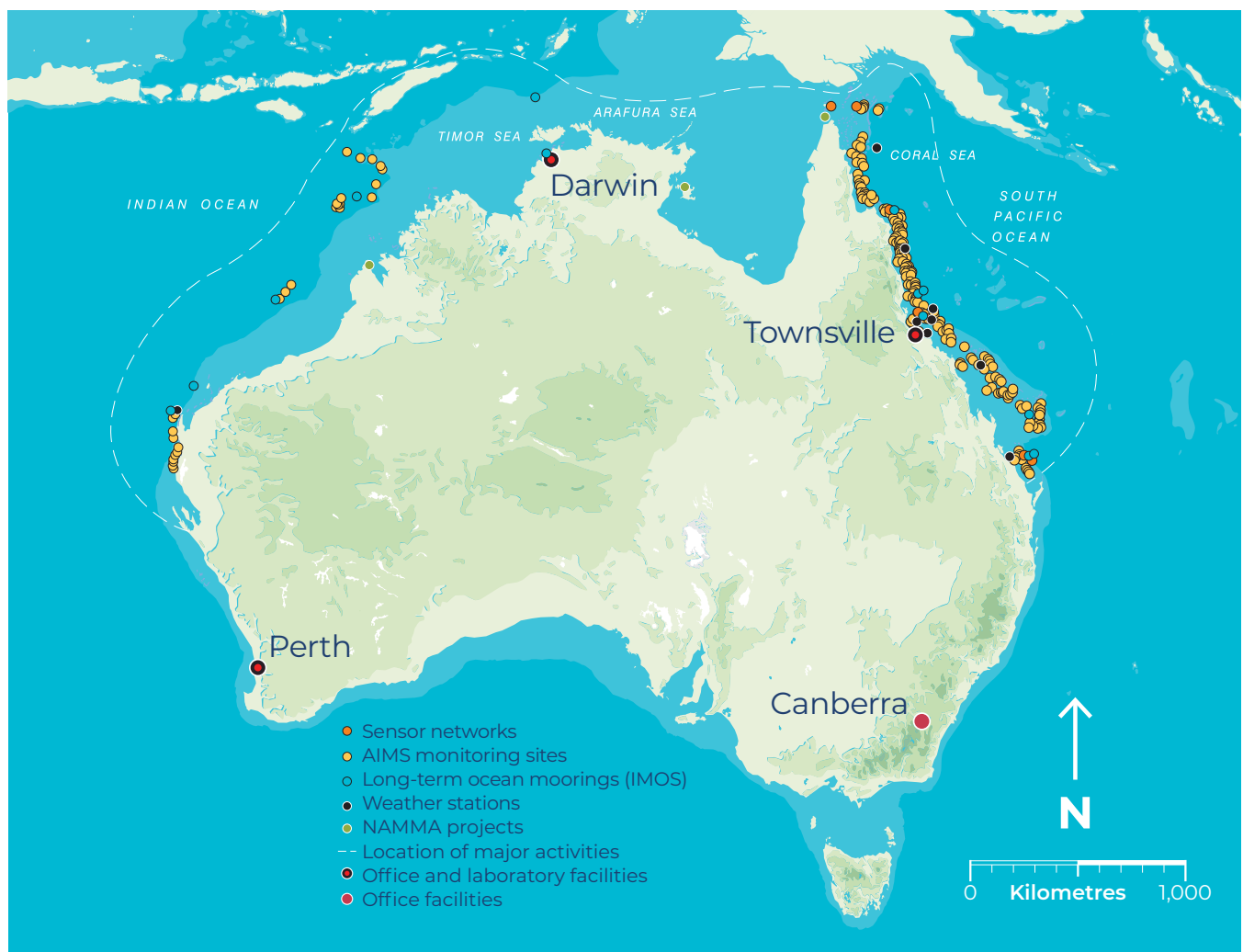


Figure 1: Location of AIMS' facilities and major activities (credit AIMS)

Australia's tropical marine ecosystems provide economic value, contribute to national prosperity, and hold intrinsic social and cultural value for all Australians, but they are under increasing stress from human and environmental disturbances. AIMS' research knowledge is applied where it can have the greatest impact to ensure Australia's tropical oceans will continue to provide sustainable growth and enjoyment for generations to come.

AIMS is uniquely placed to provide the expert advice and solutions for management agencies, marine industries, and coastal communities to preserve our marine estate and ensure its sustainable use. Our research is focused on the priorities of our partners, including Traditional Owners and research organisations, as well as our stakeholders, including Commonwealth, state and territory governments, and industry.

AIMS recognises that Australia's First Nations peoples are the Traditional Owners of the sea Country within which AIMS works. Traditional Owners have a knowledge system that is based on tens of thousands of years of observations and environmental information that is passed down through the generations. AIMS seeks to build meaningful partnerships with Traditional Owners of sea Country in northern Australia to deliver impactful research for all Australians.

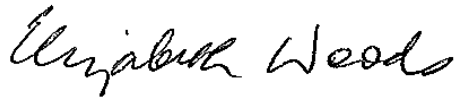
Our Traditional Owner collaborations are growing, and we are deepening partnerships based on trust, respect and two-way knowledge sharing that brings traditional knowledge and perspectives together with western science to create new insights into local marine ecosystems.

Part Two: Performance Statements

Statement of Preparation

On behalf of the accountable authority of the Australian Institute of Marine Science, I present the 2025-26 annual performance statements of the Australian Institute of Marine Science, as required under paragraph 39(1)(a) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act) and other applicable legislation. In my opinion, these annual performance statements are based on properly maintained records, accurately reflect the performance of the entity, and comply with subsection 39(2) of the PGPA Act.

The content of the performance statements was endorsed on 25 August 2026.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elizabeth Woods". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr Elizabeth Woods OAM
Council Chair
Australian Institute of Marine Science

Entity Purpose

Our purpose is to deliver trusted marine science, knowledge and innovation to support the protection, resilience and sustainable development of Australia's tropical marine estate.

In fulfilling this purpose, AIMS delivers targeted and long-term research to understand how Australia's tropical marine ecosystems are responding to climate change and other pressures. AIMS' science provides scientific evidence to inform decision-making by governments, industry, communities and Traditional Owners, and contributes to national environmental, economic, cultural and social priorities.

AIMS' purpose is guided by [AIMS Strategy 2040](#), which sets a long-term vision of thriving oceans supported by trusted science and innovation, and is delivered consistently with AIMS' legislative functions and the Australian Government's outcomes for marine science and environmental stewardship. Strategy 2040 is delivered through five integrated research themes, enabling capabilities and partnerships that guide AIMS' activities and investments.

Intended Outcomes

AIMS' Annual Performance Statement reports on the performance results against the forecasts made in the 2025-26 Corporate Plan and Portfolio Budget Statement (PBS). The information provided in this Annual Report provides an analysis of the factors that contributed to AIMS' performance results against our PBS Outcome: Growth of knowledge to support protection and sustainable development of Australia's marine resources through innovative marine science and technology.

AIMS contributed to Program 2.1 of the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) PBS - conserve, protect and sustainably manage Australia's natural environment through a nature positive approach, through partnering with DCCEEW and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority in implementing the Reef 2050 Plan.

In 2025-26, AIMS focused on delivering high impact research in areas that included:

- Delivery of robust and trusted information on the health and forecast state of marine ecosystems as the basis for policy and management decisions;
- Supporting the identification and adoption of offshore oil and gas decommissioning practices that maximise environmental social and economic returns;
- Restoration and adaptation science and development of scalable technologies that help coastal and ocean systems adapt to, and recover from climate change impacts;
- Solutions to challenges and opportunities faced by coastal industries, communities and Traditional Owners across Northern Australia; and
- Science that underpins the conservation and management of threatened and endangered marine species.

Results

A summary of our performance results against our performance targets and Key Performance Indicators is outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: Overall performance summary

Table legend: All expectations met = Y Expectations not met = N

Portfolio Budget Statement (PBS) Performance Measure	Portfolio Budget Statement (PBS) Performance Target	Key Performance Indicator (Corporate Plan 2025/26)	Result	Expectations Met
AIMS research creates a positive triple bottom line contribution (impact value) to Australia	Minimum two case studies	≥ 2 new triple bottom line case studies published per year (pa)	<p>AIMS has produced 2 impact case studies which align with international assessment of research impact contributions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case Study 1: Transforming Marine Conservation: Policy and Management Outcomes from AIMS Threatened Species Research Case Study 2: Impact of AIMS Adaptive Management Research on the Great Barrier Reef. <p>Refer Appendix C to this report</p>	Y
		Demonstrate ≥ \$200 million pa total impact value	<p>AIMS is transitioning its approach to measuring research impact. During 2025-26, the Institute moved from reliance on external economic impact modelling to a research impact framework supported by Impact Case Studies that demonstrate the value and application of AIMS research outcomes. This approach builds on the previous work undertaken by the Centre for International Economics while providing a more comprehensive evidence base for demonstrating research impact. As a result of this transition, the previous methodology used to estimate total annual impact value was not applied in 2025-26</p>	Y
Deliver strategic and applied research and monitoring that addresses national research priorities and stakeholder needs	Achieve revenue budget from stakeholder commissioned research	Achieve revenue budget from stakeholder commissioned research	Net external revenue for 2025-26 was \$33.54 million compared to \$26.41 million in 2024-25, an increase of \$7.13 million (27%)	Y
Maintain or increase current standings for scientific excellence, innovation and impact	Maintain acknowledged domestic and global high standing in relevant fields of research, and confidence of key stakeholders in research outputs	Maintain Top 3 ranking in marine science in Australia and top 10 globally	When utilising the Field-Weighted Citation Impact (FWCI) metric for Marine Science organisations globally for the period of 2021 – 2025 (calendar year), AIMS is ranked #3 across all outputs	Y
		Maintain high stakeholder confidence in AIMS' scientific outputs gauged using a net promoter score NPS >55	In 2025-26, AIMS achieved a Net Promoter Score (NPS) of 33 against a target of 55. A NPS of 33 reflects positive stakeholder advocacy	N
Deliver research advice and scientific products that are critical for stakeholders to assess the impacts of	Maintain or increase the number of peer reviewed publications and other knowledge	Maintain annual journal publication rates ≥ 210 journal articles and technical reports	AIMS published 175 journal articles ¹ and 33 technical reports in the 2025-2026. Additionally, AIMS published 12 other peer reviewed publications (book	Y

¹ Data from SciVal dated 14.07.2026

Portfolio Budget Statement (PBS) Performance Measure	Portfolio Budget Statement (PBS) Performance Target	Key Performance Indicator (Corporate Plan 2025/26)	Result	Expectations Met
natural and human pressures on sensitive marine ecosystems	products, and make datasets or data products publicly available		chapters, data papers, notes and short surveys), totalling 220 publications. AIMS recognises that publication metrics serve as a lagging indicator, and the effects of any actions or events are often realised over a multi-year period	
		Datasets held by AIMS are accessible to the public, subject to any confidentiality restrictions	The outputs of research funded by specific government programs are available within one year of collection In accordance with the AIMS Data Access policy, an embargo period of up to one year may be applied from the time of data creation, during which designated staff, collaborators, and approved parties retain exclusive access	Y
Increase research capability, capacity, impact and science diplomacy through participation in formal national and international collaborations, joint ventures, partnerships and strategic alliances	Maintain or increase the number and scale of domestic and international research partnerships, collaborations, joint ventures, and strategic alliances.	Maintain proportion of published papers and reports that include collaborators (≥ 80%)	During 2025-26 AIMS maintained its strong record of collaboration, with the proportion of projects involving external collaborators being 88.6% by total value.	Y
	Specialist advice and expertise provided by AIMS is used by relevant advisory panels and committees	≥ 2 new case studies that demonstrate the value of AIMS' contributions for advisory panels and committees	Examples are included in the <i>Science Leadership</i> section of this Report (page 20) highlighting AIMS' contributions to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Marine Science Committee (NMSC) Integrated Marine Observing System (IMOS) Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN) - Australian Region Report Mercury Research Symposium 	Y
Improve research outcomes and impact through increased Traditional Owner engagement in the planning and delivery of coastal research and development	Year on year increase in % by value of projects with Indigenous partnership in the planning and delivery phases	≥ 1 new case study published per year that demonstrates how partnership with Traditional Owner communities improves outcomes for the community and delivers value for AIMS' science	70% by value of projects with Indigenous partnership in the planning and delivery phases, representing an 8.5% decrease on 2024-25. The following case studies produced in 2025-26 are featured in the AIMS In Focus publication: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Woppaburra Coral Project Pilot Deployments Program 	N Y
Reduce AIMS' environmental footprint	30% reduction in AIMS' carbon emissions compared with 2017-18	Carbon emission reduction ≥ 30% compared with 2017-18	The overall per cent reduction in Scope 1 and 2 CO ₂ emissions across our operations was 26% compared with 2017-18 ² . Rolling three-year average emissions reduction is 27.5%.	N
Optimal utilisation of research infrastructure assets	Maintain or increase usage of research infrastructure	≥ 90% use of major research assets	The overall utilisation of major assets was 81.3%.	N

² 2025-26 emission calculations based on the same methodology as used to define the 2017-2018 baseline

Commentary on Performance

Ministerial Statement of Expectations

On 14 December 2025, the Minister for the Environment and Water, Senator the Hon. Murray Watt, provided the AIMS Council with a [Statement of Expectations](#) outlining the Minister's expectations for AIMS in advancing the Government's policy positions, managing national research infrastructure and research vessel fleet and driving the agency's performance³. The AIMS Council Chair responded to the Minister on 27 February 2026 with a [Statement of Intent](#) confirming AIMS' commitment to the Australian Government's policy agenda and the strong connections between this and AIMS' Strategy 2040.

AIMS' delivery against the National Science and Research Priorities and the Ministerial Statement of Expectations in 2025-26 is described below.

Priority 1 – Transitioning to a Net Zero Future

- Applying artificial intelligence, automation and advanced marine technologies to improve the efficiency and scalability of coral restoration, supporting nature-based adaptation to climate change.
- Supporting decommissioning activities and offshore renewable energy in Western Australia and the Bass Strait.
- Enhanced the understanding of how blue carbon is sourced and stored to help guide restoration and management efforts that increase sequestration.

Priority 3 – Elevating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Knowledge Systems

- Bringing together Indigenous knowledge and marine science through the Indigenous Futures Project, which trained Indigenous Rangers from six Traditional Owner groups in advanced reef restoration techniques on Woppaburra Sea Country over the 2025-26 summer.
- Empowering Traditional Owners to lead reef restoration activities on their sea Country through participation in the Pilot Deployments Program.
- Building pathways for Indigenous participation in marine science, reef restoration and stewardship through training, qualifications and practical restoration activities.

Priority 4 – Protecting and Restoring Australia's Environment

- Released the 2025 Long-Term Monitoring Program Annual Summary Report, providing government, reef managers and the community with the latest assessment of Great Barrier Reef condition following the largest spatially extensive bleaching event recorded on the Reef.
- Delivering the first year of large-scale reef restoration field trials under the Pilot Deployments Program on the Great Barrier Reef, deploying millions of young corals across reef sites near Cairns, Port Douglas and the Keppel Islands.
- Advancing innovative reef restoration interventions, including Conservation Aquaculture and Slick Collection and Release, combined with coral breeding plans

³ The Statement of Expectations and Statement of Intent are available at: <http://www.aims.gov.au/about/corporate-profile>

and assisted evolution principles to accelerate reef recovery following bleaching events.

- Scaling innovative coral aquaculture technologies, including automated coral breeding systems capable of producing millions of coral larvae to support reef resilience.
- Developing AI-enabled deployment technologies that combine robotics, ecological modelling and automated decision-making to improve reef restoration outcomes at scale.

Supporting a stronger Pacific family

- Supporting Pacific Island nations to improve coral reef monitoring through ReefCloud, AIMS' AI-powered reef monitoring platform.
- Delivering regional workshops and train-the-trainer programs for emerging reef monitoring leaders from Micronesia, Melanesia and Polynesia.
- Translating and deploying restoration and adaptation infrastructure, methods, training and capacity building to regional hubs with local Pacific partners
- Working with Pacific partners and DFAT to strengthen reef monitoring capability and regional environmental decision-making.
- Supporting standardised collection and reporting of reef health information across Pacific nations to improve understanding of reef condition and trends.

Managing national research infrastructure and research vessel fleet

- Utilising the expanded National Sea Simulator to support reef restoration, climate resilience, coral aquaculture and blue carbon research.
- Deploying new coral propagation technologies through SeaSim to national and international partners, including AutoSpawner systems capable of producing more than seven million fertilised coral eggs in a single spawning event.
- Scaling coral aquaculture production to support large-scale restoration activities on the Great Barrier Reef.

Promoting and sharing the AIMS' science and research

- Supporting the transfer of AIMS-developed ReefSeed coral restoration technology to the Maldives, enabling local researchers to independently rear more than three million coral larvae and deploy more than 10,000 juvenile corals to reefs.
- Extending Australian reef restoration expertise globally through a partnership with SECORE International to apply Great Barrier Reef restoration approaches in the Caribbean.
- Showcasing Australian leadership in coral reef monitoring in the Indo-Pacific through international uptake of the ReefCloud platform and associated capability-building activities.
- Promoting innovative Australian reef restoration technologies and coral aquaculture methods through international collaborations and technology transfer partnerships.

- Responding to AIMS' Net Promotor Score (NPS) broader survey results, building on key stakeholder confidence in AIMS' scientific excellence and credibility, and addressing stakeholder concerns around AIMS' value for money and agility.

Driving the agency's performance

- Building reef restoration capability beyond the science sector by partnering with tourism operators, fishing businesses, Indigenous Rangers and local communities to undertake restoration activities on the Great Barrier Reef at scale.
- Training Indigenous Rangers and industry participants to implement emerging reef restoration techniques and support future deployment programs.
- Deploying innovative automated technologies to improve the efficiency, scale and cost-effectiveness of coral aquaculture and reef restoration operations.
- Strengthening AIMS' position as a trusted scientific partner through collaboration with Traditional Owners, industry, research organisations and international partners.

Research Impact – publications

AIMS continues to publish our research findings in top journals on topics including:

- managing Australia's marine estate at multiple scales and how this may be applied globally;
- the biophysical processes that drive marine ecosystems and their subsequent effects on society;
- the current, and likely future status of our marine estate; and
- detailed understanding of key drivers of change in our oceans including climate change, ocean acidification and declining water quality.

AIMS' research involves sophisticated modelling and analysis, extensive observations across Northern Australia and experimentation including unparalleled, long-term aquarium-based experiments in the National Sea Simulator. The findings of our research are critical for stakeholders to assess the impacts of natural and human pressures on sensitive marine ecosystems and the values they deliver to society.

AIMS captures and reports on both peer-reviewed publications and technical reports by financial year, however reporting on Field Weighted Citation Impact (FWCI) data is based on calendar years to allow comparison with our industry peers.

In 2025-26, AIMS published 175 journal articles and 33 Technical Reports. Additionally, AIMS published 12 other peer reviewed publications (book chapters, data papers, notes, and short surveys), totalling 220 publications that are counted towards our performance targets as shown in Figure 2.

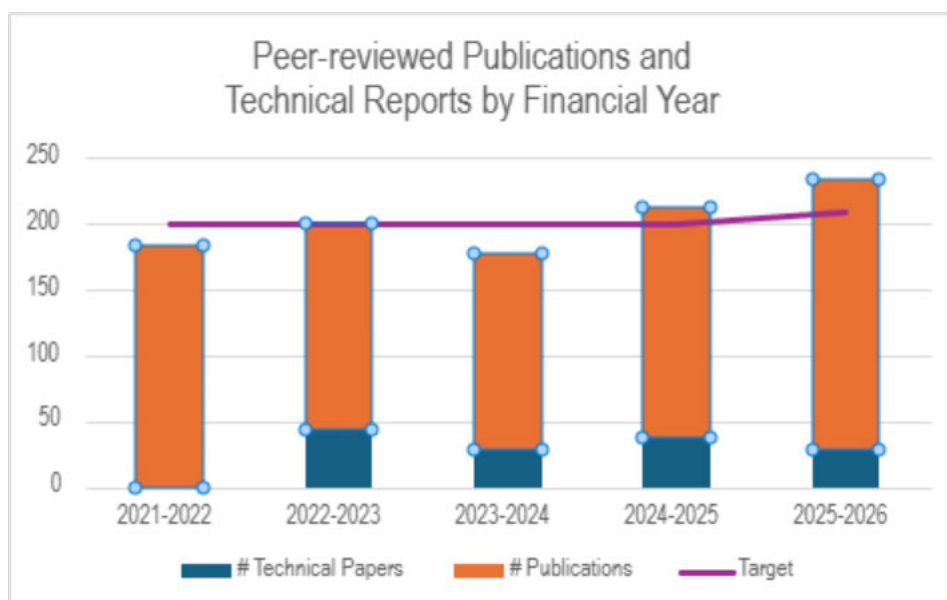


Figure 2: Total number of AIMS peer reviewed journal articles and technical reports for the last five financial years. Blue line is performance target (journal articles and technical reports only). Data sources are Scival dated 21.07.26 and AIMS. Note technical papers have only been tracked and included in reporting from 2022-2023 onwards.

AIMS recognises that publication metrics serve as a lagging indicator as a result of the time taken for their appearance in the scientific literature, and the impacts of any actions or events are often realised over a multi-year period. In the 2023-24 annual report, we noted a decrease in AIMS' publications rate. That was attributed to a shift into larger, more integrated and longer-term research programs with a greater number of collaborating scientists. Over the last two financial years we are pleased to see our publication figures increase (year-on-year) in line with our expectations that these programs will deliver greater numbers of research outputs as they mature.

AIMS is increasingly supporting Open Access and providing publications freely accessible to the public, enhancing the potential impact of AIMS' work.

In 2025-26, 86% of AIMS peer-reviewed journal articles were made available through Open Access. Of these, 33 journal articles were published as Open Access, enabled through AIMS' internal funding program for Open Access publishing.

The quality of AIMS' research outputs is demonstrated by our consistently high position in the benchmarking of Field Weighted Citation Impact (FWCI) data compared to other marine research organisations. FWCI is both an industry standard and useful metric to benchmark entities regardless of differences in their size, disciplinary profile, age, and publication-type composition. However, FWCI calculates an average value which can be strongly influenced by outlying publications in a small data set. Therefore, we use a five-year rolling average FWCI to benchmark AIMS' performance. Using this approach, AIMS is ranked third against comparison organisations against a backdrop of both AIMS and key peer organisations exhibiting a general increase in their FWCI values (Figure 3).

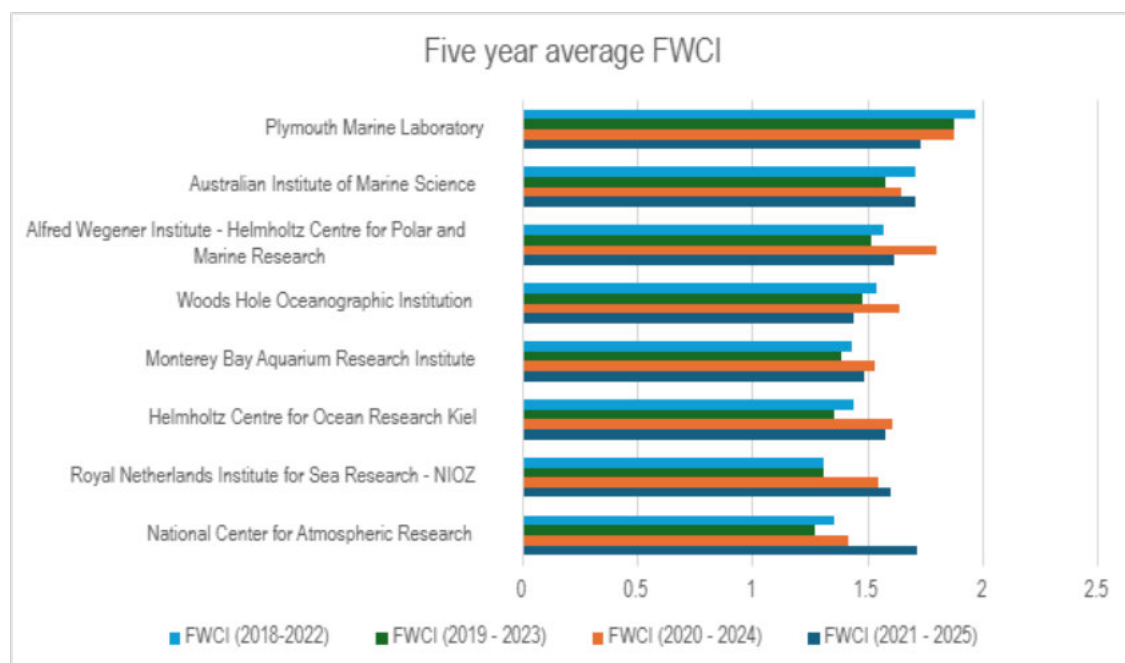


Figure 3: Comparison of rolling 5-year average field-weighted citation impact (FWCI) of similar marine research organisations (Scival data extracted July 2026 and reported on calendar year to enable comparison)

AIMS' externally published peer-reviewed publication lists for 2025-26, as well as for the six-month period between January and June 2026, are available at Appendix A to this report. This list includes the peer-reviewed journal articles as reported above, and additionally includes data papers, notes, book chapters, and short surveys

Science Leadership

AIMS is a recognised leader in marine science, both nationally and internationally. Our work is highly cited, influential, and relevant to a broad range of stakeholders including researchers, policymakers, industry, government, and communities. Our research findings, long-term datasets and scientific advice are published in leading journals and data platforms and shared through industry reports, conferences, workshops and other fora. Through our science, monitoring programs and trusted advice, AIMS continues to inform policy, management and decision-making to support the sustainable use and protection of Australia's marine estate.

AIMS staff and students contribute to a wide variety of national and international scientific organisations, advisory groups and collaborative initiatives that align with the AIMS mission. Our people work closely with partners across government, Traditional Owner organisations, research institutions, industry, not-for-profit organisations and international agencies to strengthen marine science capability and ensure research is translated into practical outcomes

AIMS also continued to strengthen regional partnerships through the Australian Government's Marine Resources Initiative, working with partners across the Indo-Pacific to build capability in coral reef monitoring and management using innovative technologies

AIMS coordinates the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN), a network of the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) dedicated to conserving coral reefs and associated ecosystems worldwide. During the year, AIMS contributed to development of the new ICRI Plan of Action and strengthened relationships with the new ICRI Chair, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia through the General Organization for the Conservation of Coral Reefs and Turtles in the Red Sea (SHAMS). AIMS also advanced international reef

restoration through successful deployment of its portable ReefSeed coral aquaculture system with the Maldives Marine Research Institute. Following training by AIMS scientists, local teams independently operated the system to produce more than three million coral larvae and deploy over 10,000 juvenile corals across nine reef sites. AIMS also continued collaborative coral reef monitoring and capacity-building programs with Pacific Island nations.

Nationally, AIMS continued to play a leadership role through the National Marine Science Committee, contributing to the development of Australia's National Marine Science Strategy 2026–2036, including co-leading the strategy development process. AIMS also continued to provide scientific leadership through the Reef 2050 Long-term Sustainability Plan, the Reef Restoration and Adaptation Program (RRAP), Australia's Integrated Marine Observing System (IMOS), and nationally significant long-term marine monitoring programs. Together, these initiatives provide the evidence base that underpins marine management, restoration and policy across Australia.

Locally, AIMS strengthened collaborations with government agencies, universities, Traditional Owner organisations, research institutions and industry partners across Queensland, Western Australia and the Northern Territory. Through these partnerships and our industry-funded work, we continue to build scientific capability, support knowledge sharing, and provide trusted, independent scientific advice and data to help protect and sustainably manage Australia's marine estate.

Together, these partnerships and contributions demonstrate AIMS' role as a trusted scientific leader, connecting world-class research with practical outcomes for the marine environment. By working across local, national and international scales, AIMS continues to generate the knowledge, evidence and collaborations needed to support healthy and resilient marine ecosystems for the benefit of Australia and the global community.

AIMS' contributions to advisory panels and committees

AIMS continues to play a leading role in national and international scientific advisory bodies, contributing expertise that helps shape research priorities, inform policy, strengthen environmental stewardship, and advance marine science collaboration. During 2025–26, AIMS staff provided leadership and scientific input to a range of influential committees, networks and initiatives across Australia and globally. A complete list of external committees and national and international fora that we advise on is provided in Appendix B to this report. Examples of these include:

National Marine Science Committee (NMSC)

In 2025-26 Australia's National Marine Science Committee - which involves every major marine research provider in the country - produced a new National Marine Science Strategy for the period 2026-2036. The Strategy was informed by 21 topical white papers of which six (6) were co-led by AIMS authors. The overall coordination of the strategy process was co-led by an AIMS staff member.

Integrated Marine Observing System (IMOS)

AIMS continues to be fundamental to the success of Australia's Integrated Marine Observing System (IMOS), contributing to the development of the IMOS Five-Year Plan (2026-31) during 2025-26.

Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN) - Australian Region Report

AIMS staff have played a significant role in leading the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN), with a senior AIMS staff member as the Global Coordinator. Two AIMS staff are members of an Editorial Team producing a flagship report: the Status of Coral Reefs of the World: 2025 (to be launched in 2026). Four AIMS staff recently completed a draft chapter for the report that describes the status and trends of coral reefs in the Australian region. The chapter includes a dedicated section on the unprecedented coral

bleaching event in Western Australia in 2025, prepared with colleagues from the West Australian Government Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA).

Mercury Research Symposium and Positioning Paper

Mercury Australia (a network of mercury researchers across Australia) hosted their biennial Symposium (26-27 November) and a follow-on Workshop (28 November) which brought together the mercury research community in Australia and key Australian Government and state and territory partners (DCCEEW, DISR, FSANZ, NOPSEMA, EPA agencies). A senior AIMS staff member was a member of the organising committee. The resulting White Paper from the workshop is aimed at identifying gaps and opportunities for the research community to help the Australian Government meet its commitments under the Minamata Convention on Mercury and inform updates of the National Implementation Plan in Australia.

International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES)

AIMS staff member co-chairs the Working Group on Offshore Wind Development and Fisheries for the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) - an intergovernmental marine science organisation, with a network of more than 700 marine institutes in 19 member countries and beyond who share marine science knowledge to support the conservation and sustainable use of our seas and oceans.

Fostering Research Capability

AIMS continues to increase its commitment towards the development of emerging research capacity. This is evident in support and the professional development of the postdoctoral researchers and the supervision of students. AIMS also engages with Indigenous high school students to inspire them to pursue careers in marine science through the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in Marine Science initiative.

During 2025-26, AIMS co-funded or fully supported Postdoctoral Fellows (see Table 2) under agreements with:

- James Cook University (4)
- Queensland University of Technology (1)
- Santos (2)
- Woodside (2)
- BHP (1)
- Charles Darwin University (1)
- AIMS@UWA Alliance (4)
- Marie Curie Research Fellowship (1)
- University of Melbourne (2)

During 2025-26, AIMS staff co-supervised 57 postgraduate students, 48 were PhD candidates, from 12 Australian universities. AIMS' involvement in research training is reflected in individual staff members holding adjunct academic appointments at Australian or international institutions, including:

- James Cook University, through AIMS@JCU
- University of Western Australia, through the AIMS@UWA Alliance
- University of Queensland
- Macquarie University
- Charles Darwin University
- Queensland University of Technology
- University of Melbourne.

Table 2: Number of Postdoctoral Fellows, postgraduates and occupational trainees, 2019-20 to 2025-26

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Postdoctoral Fellows	25	29	31	30	27	31	30
Postgraduate students supervised by AIMS staff	62	68	82	76	75	50*	57
Occupational trainees and interns	21	14	15	15	13	15	11

*Note that in the 2024–25 financial year, reporting on postgraduate student supervision was refined with greater accuracy. Alignment with cross-institutional records with university partners, provided a clearer picture of active supervisory commitments.

A newly established AIMS Higher Degree Research (HDR) and Early Career Researchers (ECR) working group guides the development of initiatives supporting emerging researchers.

The program of training for HDRs and ECRs at AIMS included career planning, a 12-hour grants writing course focussed on fellowship applications was delivered by Dr Sarah Cutfield, and two panel sessions on the value of fellowships in advancing research careers from experienced AIMS mid-career researchers. The focus on fellowship applications and experiences reflects both the demand from AIMS emerging researchers and builds capacity in emerging researchers to sustain their careers in research. These formal training sessions are supported by regular communications and promotion of fellowship and other funding opportunities, as well as practical skills and individual strategic guidance not often provided through traditional academic pathways.

Science Quality Assurance

Principle eight of the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, requires the promotion of responsible research practices and that institutions provide ongoing training that promotes good conduct in research (R4). This year built on the previous years updated Research Quality and Integrity Policy and Procedures with the appointment of five Research Integrity Advisors. The promotion of responsible research practices was supported with two targeted training sessions focusing on the most common research conduct challenge, authorship. We apply robust quality assurance and quality control procedures to ensure we deliver high-quality and timely research and translate our findings into publications and other research outputs. Our research undergoes peer review at various stages throughout the research pipeline to ensure it is strategically aligned and compliant. All prospective projects are assessed by AIMS' leadership to ensure alignment with AIMS' strategic direction, appropriateness for public funding and resource allocation, and potential to deliver tangible benefits to stakeholders.

The subsequent release of project outputs, including reports and peer-reviewed publications, follow rigorous internal review and complies with several policies and procedures, including Intellectual Property, Data Access, and External Document Control policies and FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable) data principles.

Data Management and Dissemination

AIMS is a trusted leader in marine data management, curating vast datasets that span observational records, sensor outputs, laboratory analyses, and modelled projections. It

upholds data integrity and accessibility through robust governance employing standardised metadata, quality assurance protocols, and data management principles. These datasets underpin AIMS internal research operations, as well as collaborations with Traditional Owners, all levels of government, academia, and industry. Notably, the AIMS Data Repository is certified by the CoreTrustSeal, affirming AIMS commitment to trustworthy data stewardship.

AIMS partners with national data initiatives like the Australian Ocean Data Network (AODN) and Research Data Australia (RDA) to further enhance data-sharing efforts and the dissemination of research data as national datasets. Furthermore, AIMS provides architectural and data engineering expertise acting as custodians of platform infrastructure to support national and global research programs helping translate marine science data into actionable insights.

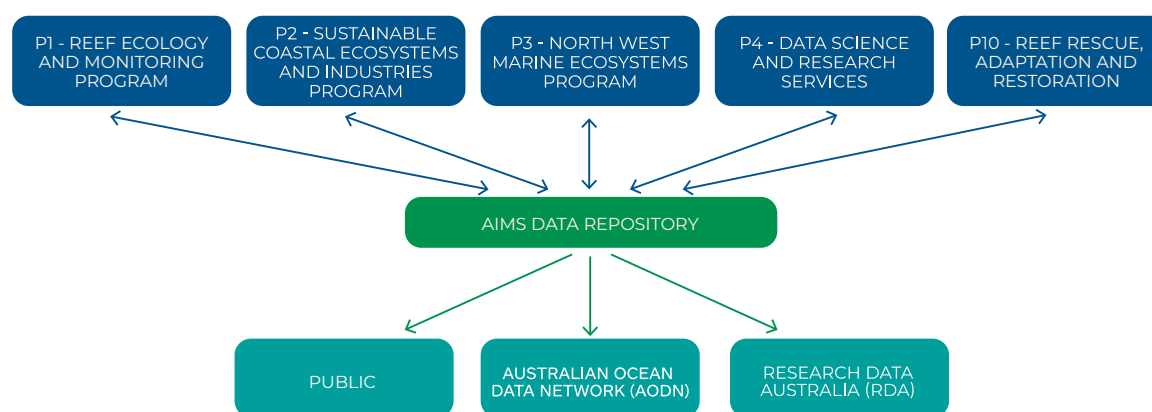


Figure 2: AIMS' research programs deliver data into the AIMS Data Repository allowing centralised management and facilitating reuse

Extensive technology is deployed to provide data on environmental variations in Australia's coastal seas and landmark datasets critical to national and international stakeholders in marine science. Data is collected using oceanographic moorings, research vessels, weather stations, wireless sensor networks, remote sensing, multi-copters, gliders, autonomous surface vehicles (ASVs), autonomous underwater vehicles (AUVs) and remotely operated underwater vehicles (ROVs).

AIMS data collections, along with some of their key data metrics, are listed below:

- Coral reef condition: over 35 years monitoring the Great Barrier Reef and **30** years of monitoring at Scott Reef, Western Australia
- Fish recruitment, coral reef condition: **17** years monitoring at Ningaloo Reef
- GBR water quality: **123** water quality monitoring sites across 1000km of the inshore reef, with **1,310** samples analysed
- Weather: **15** operating weather stations, including National Reference Stations (Yongala and Darwin)
- Water temperature loggers: **347** loggers collecting data during the 2025-26 year.

Integrated Marine Observing System (IMOS):

- **2** National reference stations (Yongala and Darwin) with real-time mooring observations with biogeochemical and microplastic sampling
- **13** instrumental moorings (6 North-West shelf and 7 Great Barrier Reef)
- **2** research vessels collecting underway measurements
- Acoustic listening station arrays tracking important fish species.

Stakeholder Engagement & Partnerships

AIMS leverages strategic partnerships to amplify the impact, reach and effectiveness of our science. Through our collaborations with research organisations, governments, Traditional Owners, industry, communities and international partners, we bring together complementary expertise, infrastructure and resources to address the most pressing challenges facing Australia's marine environment.

We work with stakeholders and end users to co-design and co-deliver research that is relevant, trusted and actionable. This approach strengthens the uptake of scientific knowledge in policy, management and industry decision-making, ensuring our research delivers tangible environmental, social, cultural, and economic benefits.

AIMS maintains a strong network of national and international collaborations that enhance research capability, capacity and science diplomacy. These include partnerships and alliances such as the Western Australian Marine Science Institution (WAMSI), National Environmental Science Program (NESP), Integrated Marine Observing System (IMOS), Indian Ocean Marine Research Centre (IOMRC), as well as global initiatives supporting coral reef conservation and sustainable ocean management such as the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN) and the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI).

Our partnerships with universities, including via our AIMS@JCU, AIMS@UWA and AIMS@CDU arrangements, strengthen Australia's marine science capability by supporting collaborative research, capability development, and training opportunities for the next generation of marine scientists.

Through these relationships, AIMS extends its scientific influence, accesses emerging opportunities, and contributes to national and international efforts to conserve marine biodiversity, support sustainable ocean industries, and improve the resilience of marine ecosystems and coastal communities. We are also growing our relationships in areas that align with our Digital Oceans and First Nations Innovation research themes.

AIMS also provides strategic foresighting and horizon-scanning capabilities that help partners anticipate emerging challenges and opportunities, enabling evidence-based planning, informed investment decisions, and proactive management responses.

Table 3 provides a summary of key AIMS' stakeholders and how AIMS has delivered value for them in 2025-26.

Table 3: Stakeholders partnering with AIMS in 2025-26

Stakeholder category	Sector/ Organisation	Examples of AIMS delivering value for stakeholders
Industry	Offshore Energy industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Enabling industry to plan and manage their risks and environmental compliance by developing practical and meaningful baselines, monitoring key ecosystems to understand natural levels of variability against which to assess the effects of industrial activitiesUnderstanding the ecotoxicology of complex mixtures of contaminants that occur in real world situationsContributing expertise into multiple fora to minimise environmental impacts of dredging, drilling and other excavation activitiesInforming strategies and plans of regulators and companies for decommissioning offshore operations

Stakeholder category	Sector/ Organisation	Examples of AIMS delivering value for stakeholders
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigating the influence of offshore infrastructure on marine communities on Australia's north-west shelf, and in Australia's south-east, to inform decision-making Informing industry on the risks associated with interactions between offshore infrastructure and Threatened Species Informing regulators and companies on the development and employment of improved toxicity thresholds for uncontrolled oil discharges in tropical ecosystems Undertaking a review of potential impacts of offshore wind farms on sharks and rays in Australian waters in partnership with CSIRO
Industry (cont'd)	Commodity ports: Port of Townsville Gladstone Healthy Harbour Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessing the impacts of dredging to improve risk-based dredging protocols and identifying better parameters to measure these impacts Improving understanding of how priority commodities (e.g. metals) behave in the marine environment so port authorities and their stakeholders can ensure their operations have minimal environmental impact operations Informing stakeholders on likely targets, and their sensitivities, in the event of accidental release of contaminants from point sources Developing historical baselines for environmental performance by analysing coral skeletons for evidence of local environmental events such as floods and potential contaminations
	Coastal industries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advising on practical, relevant and meaningful monitoring for regulatory compliance (Australia and New Zealand Environment and Conservation Council guidelines and regulated industry) Proving new technologies for improved in situ monitoring of dredging operations and environmental regulatory compliance Informing implementation of appropriate preventions, mitigations and responses by determining likely routes that might be taken by industrial effluent Developing tropically relevant ecotoxicological assays to inform improvements to assessments, standards and guidelines Improving understanding of fine-scale oceanographic processes of rapidly evolving ocean currents and their extremes using ocean models and observations to develop predictive models for use by offshore industries Building knowledge of coastal ecosystems to strengthen environmental management in data limited regions
Government and public	Australian Government and public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enabling assessment of cumulative impacts from natural and anthropogenic stressors on the Great Barrier Reef, Ningaloo and in Northern Territory Active participation in the review and delivery of the Reef 2050 Long-term Sustainability Plan Partnering with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) to build reef monitoring and reporting capability within Pacific and Southeast Asian nations, and sharing knowledge to improve coastal community resilience to the impacts of climate change and marine litter in the oceans around Australia, India and across the wider Indo-Pacific region

Stakeholder category	Sector/ Organisation	Examples of AIMS delivering value for stakeholders
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnering with DCCEEW to deliver the next generation of Water Quality guidelines for Australia, New Zealand and Canada Partnering with Parks Australia to better understand the habitats, biodiversity and resilience of marine communities in Australian Marine Parks Developing a publicly accessible mapping system for visualising complex environmental research data Investing in early graduates, postgraduate students and postdoctoral fellows to ensure Australia has the required tropical marine science workforce Engaging regularly with NOPSEMA to discuss aligned priority areas of science research and regulation particularly with respect to offshore energy, biosecurity and threatened species Advising the National Marine Pest Sectoral Committee, to better understand Australia's marine biosecurity risk Advising Australia's Marine Pest Surveillance Strategy Implementation Task group Advising Australian Government ministers and agencies on major marine science developments, risks and long-term effects of disturbances affecting the marine environment Fostering education and employment potential of northern Australia's Indigenous youth through participation in the Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders in Marine Science (ATSIMS) and Aboriginal Summer School for Excellence in Technology and Science (ASSETS) programs Informing parliamentary inquiries through submissions and testimony at hearings Analysing performance of Australia's marine and maritime industries with information made available via the biennial AIMS Index of Marine Industry
	Higher education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting post-doctoral fellowships and higher degree research students by providing supervision, funding and a research environment focused on quality and impact Making research infrastructure like our research vessels and National Sea Simulator available for postgraduate student projects to train them in cutting edge capabilities not available in universities Freely publishing our data for use by university and other researchers
	Philanthropic Foundations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leading implementation of the Reef Restoration and Adaptation Program (RRAP) with the Great Barrier Reef Foundation (GBRF), including understanding coral health, their resilience to acute and chronic pressures, potential interventions and management options Working with the GBRF to improve our ability to forecast and respond to Crown-of-Thorns Starfish outbreaks by understanding outbreak triggers and developing potential management responses
	Queensland Government and public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding the impact and risks of changed land use practices on water quality in the Great Barrier Reef (GBR) Marine Park

Stakeholder category	Sector/ Organisation	Examples of AIMS delivering value for stakeholders
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deploying technologies under the Queensland Research Infrastructure Co-investment Fund to better understand risks to Queensland fisheries species and increase shipping safety Maintaining IMOS supported physical oceanographic monitoring sites and data streams along the Queensland coast to support the interpretation of ecological change and climate change impacts Advising the Department of Primary Industries, Queensland, on marine biosecurity science and modelling to inform management of Asian green mussels in the Weipa area
	Western Australian Government and public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determining patterns of seabed biodiversity in the Kimberley region and their causes to enable improved management Evaluating dredging impacts by surveying sensitive seabed organisms Developing robust guidelines for oil and gas production chemicals Partnering with the Departments of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA), and Department of Primary Industry and Regional Development (DPIRD) to deliver monitoring of key habitats and species in Western Australian coastal waters Collaborating with IMOS to maintain an oceanographic mooring for monitoring conditions at Ningaloo Reef, one of Australia's World Heritage sites Working with WAMSI to develop the WA Reef Regeneration Initiative and undertake pilot field trials during the 2025/26 coral spawning season
Government and public (cont'd)	Northern Territory (NT) Government and public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnering with Northern Territories Fisheries to provide the scientific evidence to underpin fish stock assessments Collaborating with Northern Territories stakeholders to assess suitability of monitoring tools for Darwin Harbour and Northern Territories coastal areas Maintaining physical oceanographic monitoring sites in partnership with Indigenous Ranger groups, supported by IMOS and Parks Australia Partnering with Northern Territory Water Resources to establish Estuarine Monitoring under the CoastRI program Building baseline knowledge of understudied ecosystems in partnership with a range of stakeholders
	NSW Government and public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advising on the development of a new research program to better understand groundwater composition and discharge into the marine park
First Nations Australians	>50 Traditional Owner groups, Indigenous ranger organisations and Indigenous corporations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnering with Traditional Owners through their organisations to support their inherited right and responsibility to directly manage marine resources and bio-cultural heritage within sea Country Supporting Traditional Owners' decision-making rights through our commitment to seeking free prior informed consent for all AIMS projects that intersect with sea Country

Stakeholder category	Sector/ Organisation	Examples of AIMS delivering value for stakeholders
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-designing and co-delivering partnership projects with Traditional Owner organisations that deliver tangible benefits to them particularly in sea Country management, including new knowledge, training and capacity building in new skills and methods, and new opportunities to apply and showcase culture • Establishing a framework for a Northern Australian Marine Monitoring Alliance of Traditional Owner-led monitoring partnerships, to inform sea Country managers and the self-management of their marine resources • Delivering training and capacity building to a cohort of Great Barrier Reef Indigenous Rangers in areas aligning to their priorities and future workforce needs • Facilitating opportunity for Great Barrier Reef Indigenous Ranger groups in the delivery of reef restoration interventions as part of the Pilot Deployment Program • Supporting cultural revival in Traditional Owner groups that had experienced past relocation away from Country, by bringing Traditional Owners back to Country in partnership projects. For example, the Woppaburra Coral Project created several impactful on-Country opportunities for the Woppaburra people of the Keppel Islands to partner with AIMS. This enabled two-way knowledge sharing, establishing baseline data for future sea Country management, delivering training and capacity building in reef restoration skills, and linking science with culture and new cultural practices • Delivering projects with Traditional Owners to understand the resilience of turtle populations in Northern Australia under climate change and invasive species pressures
Managers and regulators	Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority NOPSEMA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnering with the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority to monitor Reef health over summer, assess impacts of extreme weather events and brief stakeholders • Publishing the Reef Snapshot with Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and CSIRO, an annual report of how the Great Barrier Reef has fared over summer • Maintaining a multidecadal record of the state of the Great Barrier Reef and publishing annual updates • Contributing expertise about the impacts of development activities on the Great Barrier Reef • Partnering in developing the Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program (RIMReP) • Working with National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority (NOPSEMA) to align research to areas of high priority for the regulator • Advising on the implementation of the Reef 2050 Plan, a joint initiative of the Queensland and Commonwealth governments • Collaborating with the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority's Joint Field Management Program to expedite adoption of autonomous technologies and automated data analyses to magnify surveillance coverage • Continuing new microbial observatories in collaboration with Queensland universities and IMOS to provide another powerful tool to

Stakeholder category	Sector/ Organisation	Examples of AIMS delivering value for stakeholders
		<p>monitor the health of, and risks to, the GBR and explore opportunities to share learnings to monitor other coral reefs around the globe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of eDNA methods to monitor Crown of Thorns populations on the in partnership with the CoTs control program • Continuing to improve the identification and monitoring of microplastic nationally and globally
International stakeholders	<p>ICRI CORDAP SPREP NOAA MPI – Cawthorn (NZ) IPOI, NCCR, BRIN Earth Sciences NZ (formally NIWA) ICES UK (England) UK (Scotland) GCRM, IUCN, CORDIO SCOR POGO GOOS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively contributing to the delivery of the ICRI Plan of Action through AIMS' role as global coordinator of the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN) and provision of technical input to the ICRI Secretariat. This included relationship-building with the new ICRI Chair, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia through SHAMS (General Organization for the Conservation of Coral Reefs and Turtles in the Red Sea) • Co-designed coral conservation aquaculture and genetic management approaches under climate change and developed delivery pathways in partnerships with Palau International Coral Reef Centre as part of the Reef Seeding Initiative • Representation of the Australian Government on the G20 Coral Research and Development Accelerator Platform (CORDAP) Initiative Governing Committee and CORDAP's Scientific and Advisory Committee • Collaborating with the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Program (SPREP) to deliver projects that engage with Pacific nations to increase their capability in coral reef monitoring • Facilitating a 'climate resilience in fisheries' knowledge exchange workshop between the Kemer Kemer Meriam Nation in eastern Torres Strait and the Sama (Bajau) sea-nomad communities of Alas Strait, West Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia • Working with NZ (MPI, Cawthorn, local management) around marine biosecurity challenges to improve surveillance strategies, reprioritise management approaches • Through the IPOI, work with India (National Centre for Coastal Research, NCCR) and Indonesia (National Research and Innovation Agency, BRIN) to improve the management of marine litter and the impacts on biodiversity • Contribution and expert advice to Earth Sciences, NZ on the project 'De-risking New Zealand's offshore wind energy: next generation spatial planning and ecological assessment' (2025-2030) • Co-chairing the ICES working group for offshore wind development and fisheries • International advisor on the Value of Marine Artificial Structures (VALMAS) project, led by NOC, Southampton • International advisor on Predators and prey and renewable energy developments (PrePARED) – led by Scottish Govt • Provision of time series data from Seychelles for GCRM and Red List Ecosystem submission to IUCN • Contributions to Global Library of Underwater Biological Sounds (GLUBS) and (International Quiet Experiment (IQOE) working groups to assist in global uptake of passive acoustic monitoring and to implement Ocean Sound as an Essential Ocean Variable for GOOS

First Nations Innovation

AIMS continues to acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of Australia as the Traditional Owners of the lands and seas on which it operates and recognise their extensive Indigenous Knowledge Systems and inherent rights, responsibilities, and enduring spiritual and cultural connections to Country. Alongside the launch of Strategy 2040, this year marked the establishment of First Nations Innovation as a research theme and a new strategic goal to create new advances in marine science and stewardship through First Nations leadership and the elevation of Indigenous Knowledge Systems in both Indigenous-led and genuinely co-designed collaborative projects.

Building on the foundation established over the past eight years through the implementation of AIMS' Indigenous Partnerships Policy, this represents the next significant step in strengthening AIMS' First Nations partnerships through a range of collaborative and innovative approaches.

We have continued to co-design and co-deliver science collaborations between AIMS and Indigenous partners in projects such as the marine monitoring partnerships within the Northern Australian Marine Monitoring Alliance (NAMMA). Annual monitoring and reporting-back have continued for our existing three partners (Bardi-Jawi (Kimberley), Anindilyakwa (Groote Eylandt) and Kemer Kemer Meriam Nation (Mer, Masig, Ugar and Erub in eastern Torres Strait), we have added a further monitoring partnership with the Murujuga Aboriginal Corporation to the alliance, and continued our monitoring collaborations with Thamarrur and Bawinanga Rangers in the Northern Territory. We have also delivered joint projects the Tiwi Land Council and rangers to understand risks to threatened marine turtles and track their movements, and this year saw the establishment of the Sea Country Initiative in collaboration with IMOS, to establish ocean observation collaborations with Traditional Owners and ranger groups in the north.

We take opportunities to use AIMS science as a platform for training and capacity building pathways in areas of priority to Traditional Owners, including marine monitoring and reef restoration interventions. Besides supporting their stewardship role with addition of new state-of-the-art skills, this has established a pathway for direct translation of research outcomes into practice and impact. For example, about 20 Indigenous rangers from across the Great Barrier Reef participated in the Reef Restoration and Innovation Program (RRAP) Indigenous Futures project and received training and capacity building in deployment-ready RRAP interventions and related reef monitoring methods. This 3-year project co-funded by the Reef Trust Partnership (RTP) and AIMS was extremely successful with the skilled rangers now transitioning to be delivery partners in the Pilot Deployment Program, and the training materials packaged as part of an accredited Certificate III qualification. Besides putting First Nations practitioners on the cutting edge of new technologies and emerging fee-for-service opportunities, this focus on Indigenous Futures supports growth in marine science and stewardship capacity and capability, through learning and development pathways linked to research and development outcomes.

Our Indigenous Partnerships team also continues to support AIMS staff to seek and document Free Prior and Informed Consent for new projects in alignment with our internal procedures. We have continued to expand cultural appreciation training delivered to AIMS staff to improve cultural competency across the organisation, established greater cultural capacity for Indigenous engagement and partnership projects, and promoted a culturally safe environment for our growing cohort of Indigenous staff.

AIMS' approach to Indigenous Partnerships continues to grow in reputation and influence with other organisations. AIMS staff contributed to the work of the National Indigenous Australians Agency led inter-jurisdictional working group for the national ranger sector strategy, IP Australia's Indigenous Knowledge Working Group, the Great Barrier Reef Foundation's Traditional Owner Technical Working Groups, and the board of the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation.

We have also engaged with Indigenous youth to promote and encourage pathways in marine science. We sponsored the Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders in Marine Science (ATSIMS) initiative in conjunction with partners in marine science, education and biological conservation, and this year welcomed 90 young ATSIMS scholars to AIMS. Through AIMS@JCU, AIMS also supports two initiatives: a marine science 'faculty' within James Cook University's 'Winter School' encourages university pathways in marine science for year 10-12 Indigenous students from across Australia, and marine science internships at AIMS for JCU enrolled Indigenous marine science undergraduates provide paid work experience and mentorship to support academic success and future career pathways.

Communication

The Communication team strengthened AIMS' reputation as a trusted, independent and authoritative voice on marine science, supporting organisational priorities through strategic communication, media engagement and stakeholder outreach.

During the year, the team led communication for several nationally significant science announcements, including the AIMS Long-Term Monitoring Program annual survey of the Great Barrier Reef and the widespread coral bleaching event at Ningaloo Reef in Western Australia. These activities generated substantial national and international media coverage, reinforcing AIMS' role as a trusted source of evidence on the condition of Australia's iconic coral reef ecosystems.

Integrated communication campaigns supported major initiatives including the Pilot Deployments Program, Indigenous Futures Project and annual coral spawning activities. Through coordinated media relations, digital content, field-based storytelling and stakeholder engagement, AIMS showcased collaborative approaches to reef adaptation, restoration and marine monitoring, highlighting partnerships with Traditional Owners, industry and research organisations.

Digital channels continued to expand AIMS' reach and engagement. Social media campaigns supporting reef monitoring, coral bleaching and coral spawning generated strong audience engagement, including 2.5 million impressions between November and March. Website and newsletter channels provided accessible, science-based information on key marine issues and organisational priorities, while readership of AIMS' external newsletter, [Waypoint](#), continued to grow.

Investment in media and spokesperson training strengthened scientists' capability to engage confidently with media and public audiences, further enhancing AIMS' ability to communicate evidence-based research and informed commentary on marine science issues.

Collectively, these activities increased public awareness of AIMS science, strengthened stakeholder engagement and supported AIMS' leadership in providing research and knowledge to inform the management, protection and sustainable use of Australia's tropical marine environment.

Research Infrastructure

AIMS' research focuses on Australia's tropical marine environments, from the southern Great Barrier Reef and across the north of the country to Shark Bay and the Abrolhos Islands in the west. Field activities are underpinned by laboratory and support in Townsville, Darwin, Perth, and administrative facilities located in Townsville, Darwin, Perth, and Canberra.

Our major research infrastructure is subject to detailed capital planning and asset management to ensure our facilities and equipment are safe, reliable, available, and functionally aligned with current and future needs. Delivery against preventive maintenance and capital investment plans is monitored throughout the year to ensure that targeted outcomes are met.

AIMS is progressing a Master Planning exercise to refurbish existing aging and identify new infrastructure required to support strategic science delivery over the next 25 years.

Table 4: AIMS research infrastructure

Description	Capability	Co-Located Partners
Cape Ferguson Campus 50 km from Townsville in North Queensland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Sea Simulator – the world's most advanced aquarium facility Coral core library Genetics and PC2 laboratories General laboratories Specialised electrical, electronic, and mechanical workshops Water-side marine operations facilities Small research vessel fleet 	James Cook University (AIMS@JCU) Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) Geoscience Australia (GA)
Arafura Timor Research Facility Located at the Australian National University Campus in Darwin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research aquarium facility General laboratories Small research vessels Logistics staging facility 	Charles Darwin University (AIMS@CDU)
Indian Ocean Marine Research Centre Located at the University of Western Australia Campus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General laboratories 	CSIRO University of Western Australia (AIMS@UWA) Western Australian Marine Science Institute (WAMSI) Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development
RV <i>Solander</i> AIMS Vessel Facility located in South Townsville (QLD) Operates between Exmouth (WA) and Southern Great Barrier Reef (QLD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 35 metre 12 researchers 28 day / 3,000 nm endurance 	
RV <i>Cape Ferguson</i> AIMS Vessel Facility located in South Townsville (QLD) Operates on the Great Barrier Reef	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 24 metre 8 researchers 14 day / 3,500 nm endurance 	

Field Operations

Our field activities are supported by a research fleet – two large, well-equipped research vessels, the RV *Cape Ferguson* and the RV *Solander* – and several smaller vessels,

capable of safely carrying researchers to remote, diverse habitats across Australia's tropical waters. About half of all trips on the RV *Cape Ferguson* and RV *Solander* involved researchers from collaborating organisations. The AIMS field program provides essential science for Australia and lies at the core of who we are as an organisation.

The demand for research time on AIMS' vessels exceeds their capacity. To meet this demand, AIMS typically charters additional days on large vessels plus numerous supplementary small vessel charters each year. In 2025-26, AIMS continued to work with charter operators to respond to additional demand from the Pilot Deployment Program supporting reef restoration science.

Field Operations Statistics

- 37,030 Nautical Miles steamed
- 4,272 dives
- 1,906 science sea days
- 253 collaborators
- 13,443 researcher field days

National Sea Simulator

The National Sea Simulator (SeaSim) is a globally unique marine experimental aquarium facility that enables researchers to precisely control environmental conditions and study tropical marine ecosystems across multiple generations.

SeaSim provides critical experimental capability through purpose-built systems for environmental simulation, coral spawning and larval rearing, climate-change and ocean-acidification research, contaminant testing, coral symbiont production and scalable coral aquaculture.

In 2025–26, AIMS secured an additional \$2 million through the 2026 NCRIS Capability Gap funding round to support SeaSim operations in 2027–28, maintaining national access to its specialist infrastructure, expertise and experimental capabilities.

Delivery of the broader \$42.7 million SeaSim Expansion project, supported by \$36.6 million from NCRIS, continued with work progressing on new seawater intakes, expanded seawater processing capacity and additional internal experimental spaces.

Planning also advanced for a dedicated marine biosecurity facility to support controlled research on novel species, pathogens, pests and genetically modified coral symbionts. Scoping, concept design, regulatory planning and risk-management documentation progressed, establishing the foundation for a nationally significant capability.

SeaSim continued its transition to a national research infrastructure facility offering merit-based access. Governance arrangements were strengthened following the NCRIS governance review, with Emeritus Professor Peter Steinberg appointed inaugural Chair of the National Sea Simulator Advisory Group.

The inaugural [SeaSim Year in Review](#) was released, providing a clear account of activities, achievements, facility development and strategic progress. A new KPI framework was also developed to monitor governance, access, engagement, research delivery, facility utilisation, workforce, safety, finance and longer-term impact, aligned with NCRIS obligations and the OECD Reference Framework for Research Infrastructure impact.

In FY 2025–26, SeaSim supported research across coral reef restoration and adaptation, climate change, coral symbiosis, ecotoxicology, marine pest biology, aquaculture and

Defence-relevant materials research. It also contributed to a successful Queensland Defence Science Alliance grant and provided costings for five ARC proposals.

SeaSim's scientific reach remained strong, with 35 linked publications in 2025, 95 per cent in Q1 journals, and a research network spanning 87 institutions across 25 countries.

Coral spawning was SeaSim's most intensive annual operational period, supporting the Reef Restoration and Adaptation Program Pilot Deployment Program. Across November and December, more than 19 million larvae were produced, over 6 million larvae were settled, and 32,580 larval settlement devices were deployed to targeted reef restoration sites. This level of up-scaled production was enabled by a dedicated focus on integrating new technologies to support expanded automated spawning, larval rearing, settlement and grow-out systems which increased throughput and scalability across coral reproduction workflows.

SeaSim also supported 15 other spawning-associated experiments, including work on Crown-of-Thorns Seastar early-life development, macroalgae-coral recruitment, coral CRISPR gene editing, cryopreservation, coral chimerism and ecotoxicology.

NCRIS-supported research

NCRIS support enabled national researchers to access highly controlled experimental systems, specialist expertise and advanced environmental simulation capabilities for studies of climate-change impacts on coral reef organisms.

Example projects included research on the combined effects of light, pH and temperature on corals and crustose coralline algae, demonstrating SeaSim's value for testing complex, interacting climate stressors. Research to investigate how bleaching may disrupt coral circadian rhythms, provided new insights into the effects of thermal stress on the biological timing systems that support coral health and recovery, and a project studying epaulette sharks examined how future warming may affect animal physiology of under naturally variable reef-flat temperature regimes.

Together, these projects highlight SeaSim's role in enabling sophisticated, multidisciplinary research into climate-change impacts across organisms and biological systems. These projects also supported the important task of national facility user acceptance testing.

Revenue

AIMS' operations were supported by a mix of Australian Government appropriation funding, funding from state and territory governments, competitive research funds, environmental regulators, and the private sector.

Total revenue for 2025-26 was \$152.118 million, \$3.5 million (2 per cent) less than 2024-25 (Figure 5). The decrease was due to:

- \$7.341 million increase in appropriation revenue
- \$6.123 million decrease in revenue from contracts with customers
- \$2.631 million decrease in NCRIS funding due to vacant positions and associated delayed operational spending; and
- \$1.038 million decrease in interest income.

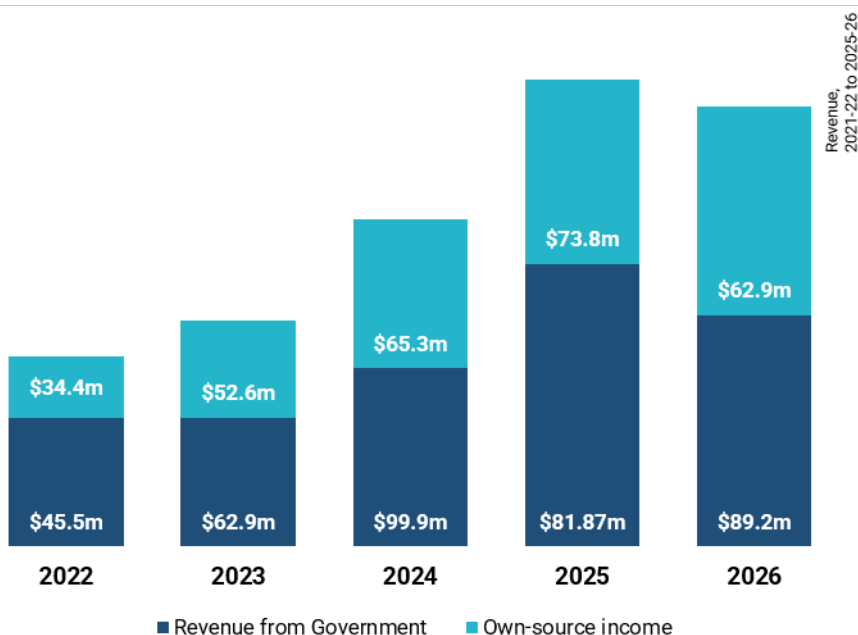


Figure 5: AIMS revenue, 2021-22 to 2025-26

External Revenue

In addition to appropriation funding, AIMS has contracts with Australian Government departments and agencies, Australian and international industry partners, and Australian and international philanthropic partners. External funding is critical as it ensures that AIMS can maintain its present level of scientific research. AIMS' own source revenue for the year was \$48.91 million (41 per cent) of total revenue (2025: 47 per cent) (Figure 6).

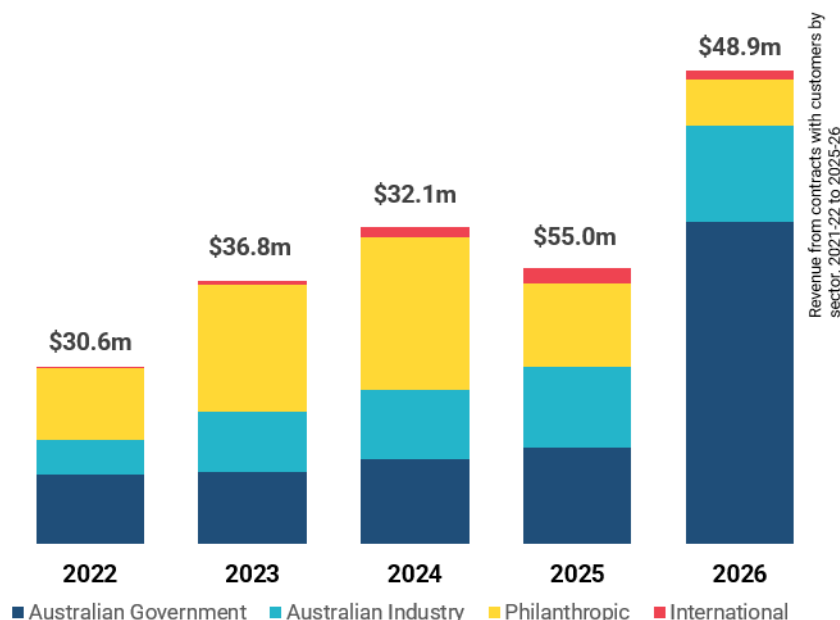
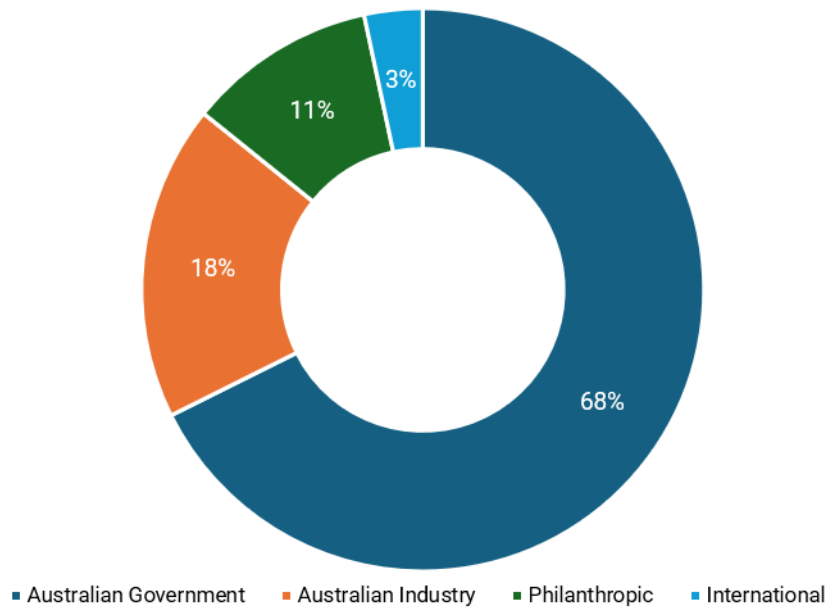


Figure 6: Revenue from contracts with customers by sector, 2021-22 to 2025-26

AIMS has built strategic alliances, working with our stakeholders to develop multi-year programs of work that provide solutions and address challenges at regional and national scales. This has enabled the leverage of our strategic science work with industry and philanthropy, broadening the external revenue opportunities and moving away from individual smaller discrete pieces of revenue earning work.

Sources of External Revenues for 2025-26

AIMS sourced \$47.271 million (97 per cent) of its external revenues from Australian sources (Figure 7).



Major sources of external revenues
2025-26

Figure 7: Major sources of external revenue, 2025-26

Part Three: Management and Accountability

Government Engagement

AIMS has a comprehensive system of financial reporting practices that provide compliance, disclosure and accountability of its activities.

Role and Legislation

AIMS was established by the *Australian Institute of Marine Science Act 1972* (AIMS Act) and is a corporate Commonwealth entity under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act).

The Institute's functions and powers are set out in the AIMS Act. AIMS has two main roles under its governing legislation:

- carry out research and development in relation to marine science and marine technology
- encourage and facilitate the non-commercial and commercial application of the results arising from such activities.

The PGPA Act sets out reporting, accountability and other requirements relating to our operations, management, and governance. Section 39 of the PGPA Act requires corporate Commonwealth entities to prepare annual performance statements and to include them in an annual report to the Australian Parliament. The *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014* (PGPA Rule) set out the requirements for annual reports to be produced by corporate Commonwealth entities in accordance with section 46 of the PGPA Act. A list which details how this annual report meets those requirements is provided in Part 6."

Responsible Minister

As at 30 June 2026, the responsible minister for AIMS is Senator the Hon Murray Watt, Minister for the Environment and Water.

General Policies of the Australian Government

Under section 22 of the PGPA Act, the Finance Minister may make a government policy order that specifies a policy of the Australian Government that is to apply in relation to one or more corporate Commonwealth entities. The AIMS Council did not receive any ministerial directions during 2025-26.

No companies, trusts or significant partnerships were formed by AIMS during 2025-26.

Governance

AIMS Council

AIMS is governed by a Council that reports to the relevant Minister. The CEO is responsible for the day-to-day affairs of the Institute.

Role of Council

The AIMS Council sets AIMS' strategic direction and key objectives and oversees management. The Council advises the Minister for the Environment and Water of AIMS'

progress against the targets in its Portfolio Budget Statements and Corporate Plan. The Minister is also provided with advice on developments of significance, as appropriate.

The PGPA Act requires the AIMS Council, as the accountable authority of AIMS, to comply with the following specific duties:

- to lead, govern and set the strategic direction of the Commonwealth entity;
- to establish and maintain systems relating to risk and internal controls;
- to encourage cooperation with others to achieve common objectives;
- to take into account the effects of imposing requirements on others; and
- to keep the responsible minister and the Finance Minister informed.

Council membership

The AIMS Council consists of a Chair, AIMS' CEO, a member nominated by James Cook University, and four other members. The AIMS Act requires that at least three members of the Council have scientific qualifications. All members of the Council, with the exception of the CEO, are non-executive appointments made by the Governor-General on the nomination of the Minister. Appointments can be up to five years and reappointment is permissible. The CEO is appointed by the Council for a period not exceeding five years and is eligible for reappointment.

Council members as at 30 June 2026 were:

- Dr Elizabeth Woods OAM (Chair);
- Professor Simon Biggs (JCU Representative);
- Patricia Kelly PSM;
- Stephen Duffield;
- Professor Peter Steinberg;
- Dr Cass Hunter; and
- Professor Selina Stead (CEO).

Biographical information of AIMS Council Members is provided below.

Dr Elizabeth Woods OAM B Agric Sci (Hons 1), D Phil (Oxon), Hon Doc UQ, FTSE MAICD

Council Chair: 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2027

Dr Woods was formerly Director-General of the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries where she led development initiatives to deliver an innovative, productive and sustainable agriculture, fisheries and forestry sector.

Previously Dr Woods was the foundation Director of the University of Queensland Rural Extension Centre, and Professor of Agribusiness at University of Queensland from 1997-2004. Dr Woods has served on boards and committees including for the Grains Research & Development Corporation, the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) Board, the Gatton College Council and the Queensland Rural Adjustment Authority Board (now QRIDA). She has also chaired the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation (now AgriFutures), the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), a National Drought Policy Review, the International Rice Research Institute and WorldFish.

She is a Commissioner for International Agricultural Research with ACIAR, a member of CSIRO's Marine National Facility Steering Committee overseeing the work of the RV *Investigator*, and Chair of the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation Board.

Professor Simon Biggs BSc (Hons), PhD, FEng, FTSE, CEng FIChemE, FIEAust, FRSC

Council Member: 3 March 2022 to 13 February 2027

Professor Simon Biggs commenced his appointment as Vice Chancellor and President of James Cook University Australia in February 2022. He is responsible for ensuring clear and effective leadership and management of the University across all operating sites, including campuses in Cairns, Townsville and Singapore.

Educated at the University of Bristol in the UK, Professor Biggs holds a PhD in Colloid Science.

Professor Biggs' main research interests are in the field of colloid and interface engineering. He was the chief investigator on numerous research projects and has authored more than 270 refereed publications as well as being named on over 20 patents.

Professor Biggs is an experienced board member with numerous appointments in both Australia and the UK over the last 20 years. He was elected as a Fellow of the Royal Academy of Engineering in 2011 and in 2016, as a Fellow of the Australian Academy for Technological Sciences and Engineering.

Patricia Kelly PSM, GAICD

Council member: 6 July 2023 to 5 July 2028

Ms Kelly has substantial experience in strategy and policy formulation for science and research. She was a Deputy Secretary in Commonwealth departments responsible for industry, science and innovation from 2004 -2013, where her responsibilities included science policy, national research agencies, international science engagement and major research infrastructure programs. Between 2013 and 2018 she was Director-General of IP Australia (the Australian patent and trademark office). She brings significant experience in public administration and governance to the Council.

Ms Kelly is currently Deputy Chancellor at the University of Canberra and chairs Co-operative Research Australia, the National Youth Science Forum and the Australian Square Kilometre Array Regional Centre. She is a Director of DMTC and a member of CSIRO's Australia Telescope Steering Committee. She has a Bachelor of Arts degree, with a major in communication and is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Stephen Duffield BBus, GradDip (Management), MBA, FAIM, GAICD

Council member: 13 December 2023 to 12 December 2028

Stephen has been involved with the Hydrographic and Marine Geophysics industry for over 30 years both in Australia and internationally. Stephen has served in leadership roles in the companies, starting in Finance and then moving to General and Strategic management roles. These roles include Regional Financial Controller Racal Survey, Managing Director for Thales Geosolutions and Country Manager for Fugro and being one of the founding shareholders and director for Guardian Geomatics.

Stephen is currently the President of the Australasian Hydrographic Society and a Council member of the Society of Underwater Technology. In the past, Stephen served on the Advisory Board of the Centre for Marine Science Technology (Curtin University) and on the Board of The International Federation of Hydrographic Societies.

Professor Peter Steinberg BSc, PhD

Council member: 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2028

Peter Steinberg is Emeritus Professor of Biology at the University of New South Wales (UNSW) Sydney, retiring in 2021 after 30 years at UNSW. From 2009-2020 he was the inaugural Director and CEO of the multi-university Sydney Institute of Marine Science (SIMS). His interests in marine science include kelp, coastal ecology and habitat restoration, environmental microbiology, and marine conservation and management.

Professor Steinberg has been a Fulbright Scholar, a Queen Elizabeth II Fellow and CEO of an ASX listed biotechnology company. Awards for Peter's achievements include the Australian Marine Science Association's Silver Jubilee Award in 2017 for outstanding contributions to Australian marine sciences and the 2021 NSW Premier's Science and Engineering Prize for Biological Sciences (Environmental). He has been a Web of Science highly cited researcher for multiple years, awarded to the top 1% of researchers globally.

Peter has extensive leadership and governance experience in marine science and related fields. He currently chairs the Research Advisory Committee for the nation's main oceanographic research vessel, the RV *Investigator*, and was a member of the Marine Estate Expert Advisory Panel (MEEKP) for the NSW Government for 7 years. He is on the Board of Ocean Impact Organisation (OIO), a not-for-profit start-up accelerator/incubator in the marine technology space.

Dr Cass Hunter BSc (Hons), BEnvSc

Council Member: 16 March 2025 to 15 March 2030

Advisor to the Council: 26 March 2024 to 15 March 2025

Dr Hunter has a PhD in quantitative marine science and more than 20 years' experience leading collaborative approaches in design, planning, and decision-making with First Nations communities.

A descendant of the Kuku Yalanji (Far North Queensland) and Maluiligal (Torres Strait) nation, Dr Hunter has worked for CSIRO as an Indigenous system researcher and currently works for NAILSMA as an Enterprise Impact Manager.

Her other appointments include: the Australian Government's Indigenous Advisory Committee; the Biodiversity Assessment Expert Reference Group - Nature Repair Scheme; the North Marine Parks Advisory Committee; the Reef 2050 Independent Expert Panel and the Reef Traditional Owner Taskforce. She also chairs the Great Barrier Reef Foundation Traditional Owner Healthy Water Technical Working Group.

Professor Selina Stead BSc, MSc, PhD

CEO and Council member: 1 February 2024 to 31 January 2029

Professor Selina Stead is a marine biologist and environmental scientist with expertise in coral reef ecosystems, aquaculture, fisheries, environmental governance and science policy. She has enjoyed an active dual career in academia and government.

Selina's last roles have been as Executive Dean for the Faculty of Environment at the University of Leeds and the UK Government's Chief Scientific Adviser for the Marine Management Organisation. Her research focuses on biodiversity conservation, climate change, food insecurity and sustainability, which spans the Caribbean, East Africa, Europe, Middle East, SE Asia and the UK.

She has a Personal Professorship of Marine Governance and Environmental Science from Newcastle University in the UK where she acted as Dean of Research and is a Fellow of the Alan Turing Institute.

Previously she has served as Chair and Non-Executive Director of the Scottish Government's Science Advisory Board and Ministerial Appointed Scientific Fisheries Advisor. Selina was President of the European Aquaculture Society and her research on climate-smart seafood and conservation was recognised with their highest honour, the Distinguished Services Award.

Selina is a member of Science Advisory Panels for Australia's Blue Economy Cooperative Research Centre and the Plant and Food Forum, New Zealand. She holds a BSc in Marine Biology and Oceanography, MSc in Fisheries Biology and Management and a PhD in Zoology.

Council Meeting Attendance

Eight meetings of the Council were held during 2025-26.

Table 5: Attendance at Council meetings, 2025-26

Attendance	26 Aug 2025	8 Sep 2025*	28 Oct 2025	21 Nov 2025*	17 Dec 2025	26 Feb 2026	28 Apr 2026	23 Jun 2026
Dr Elizabeth Woods, OAM	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Professor Simon Biggs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Patricia Kelly, PSM	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Stephen Duffield	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Professor Peter Steinberg	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Dr Cass Hunter	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Professor Selina Stead	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

* Extraordinary meetings were held in September 2025 and November 2025

Education and Performance Review Processes for Council Members

The AIMS Council Training and Development Policy establishes the framework for induction, ongoing training and professional development for members of the AIMS Council and its Committees, ensuring compliance with statutory obligations and strengthening governance effectiveness.

At induction, Council members are provided with a comprehensive set of documents including the PGPA Act, AIMS Act, Directors' Duties, AIMS strategy, structure and research, governance documents and key policies including those relating to fraud control, cyber and information security, safety and integrity.

Council members are encouraged to maintain their membership with the Australian Institute of Company Directors. The performance of Council members is reviewed regularly through a self-assessment process and as required, by external review.

Ethics

Council members are briefed on, and are required to sign, the AIMS Code of Conduct.

Disclosure of Interests

Section 29 of the PGPA Act provides for the disclosure of material personal interests in a matter that is being considered by the Council, and prohibits participation, deliberation and decision making by any member on such matters, unless so resolved by the Council or entitled by the Minister. Details of such disclosure are recorded in the minutes of Council meetings. All these requirements are currently being met.

Audit Committee

The Audit Committee is a formal sub-committee of the Council that meets quarterly. Audit Committee members in 2025-26 were:

- Peter Bell (Independent Committee Chair)
- David Hinton (Independent Committee Member)
- Patricia Kelly PSM (Council Member on Audit Committee from 1 October 2023 to 27 July 2025)
- Steve Duffield (Council Member on Audit Committee from 5 July 2024)
- Dr Cass Hunter (Council Member on Audit Committee from 28 July 2025)

The AIMS CEO, Chief Finance Officer, Chief Operating Officer, Finance Manager, representatives of the Australian National Audit Office, and an internal auditor, attend all meetings or relevant parts of all meetings, by invitation.

In accordance with best practice, all Council members may receive copies of the Audit Committee agenda and meeting minutes and can attend meetings as a right.

The Audit Committee Chair attends relevant sections of Council meetings.

The Audit Committee is responsible for providing independent assurance and assistance to Council on:

- financial reporting;
- performance reporting;
- systems of risk oversight and management;
- systems of internal control;
- internal audit; and
- external audit.

Four meetings of the committee were held during 2025-26. The committee's charter is available at <https://www.aims.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-08/Audit%20Committee%20Charter.pdf>.

Audit Committee Skills and Experience

Peter Bell (BSc (Econ), CIPFA, FCPA, IIA)

Independent Committee Chair from 25 October 2022

Peter has more than 30 years' experience in internal audit, external audit, performance audit and risk management. This has included senior roles in the federal government for the Australian National Audit Office and Australian Broadcasting Corporation, and as a Partner in Ernst & Young and Managing Director of Protiviti. Peter is an FCPA.

David Hinton (B.Bus, FCA, GAICD)

Independent member from 24 October 2022

David is an experienced non-executive director in the life science and technology sectors. He has been involved in the establishment of financial and governance structures and the development of strategy in a rapidly changing environment. His recently concluded executive career included Chief Financial Officer and Company Secretary of a leading IT solutions provider and a national telecommunications provider.

Patricia Kelly PSM

Committee member from 1 October 2023 to 27 July 2025

Skills and experience of Ms Patricia Kelly PSM (AIMS Council Member and Audit Committee Member) included with Council Member biographies.

Dr Cass Hunter

Committee member from 28 July 2025

Skills and experience of Dr Cass Hunter (AIMS Council Member and Audit Committee Member) included with Council Member biographies.

Steve Duffield

Committee member from 5 July 2024

Skills and experience of Steve Duffield (AIMS Council Member and Audit Committee Member) included with Council Member biographies.

Audit Committee Remuneration

- Peter Bell - Independent Committee Chair: \$20,500
- David Hinton – Independent member: \$3,144
- Patricia Kelly PSM– Council Member and Audit Committee Member: \$5,620
- Steve Duffield – Council Member and Audit Committee Member: \$5,620
- Dr Cass Hunter – Council Member and Audit Committee Member: \$5,620

Audit Committee Attendance

Table 6: Attendance at Audit Committee meetings, 2025-26

Attendance	12 Aug 2025	27 Oct 2025	10 Mar 2026	28 May 2026
Peter Bell	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
David Hinton	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Steve Duffield	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Dr Cass Hunter	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Patricia Kelly, PSM	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Remuneration and Nominations Committee

The Remuneration and Nominations Committee is a sub-committee of the Council which provides advice to Council regarding the remuneration of senior AIMS staff and recommends nominations for Council membership. The Committee reviews the employment arrangements of the Council, of the CEO, and of AIMS employees not covered by the AIMS Enterprise Agreement. On an annual basis, the Committee reviews AIMS’ reporting arrangements to ensure that AIMS is adhering to the administrative requirements of the Remuneration Tribunal. Remuneration of AIMS employees not covered by the AIMS Enterprise Agreement is determined having regard to the Government’s Workplace Relations Bargaining Policy and relativity of comparable positions within AIMS, the Australian Public Service and the wider employment market. Council member and CEO remuneration is in accordance with the directions of the Commonwealth Remuneration Tribunal.

The Committee comprises of at least three Council members, appointed by the Council. Committee members during 2025-26 were Prof Simon Biggs, Patricia Kelly and Dr Elizabeth Woods.

Independent professional advice

The Council has the right to obtain, at AIMS' expense, relevant independent professional advice in connection with the discharge of its responsibilities. The Council sought advice during 2025-26 in relation to a range of matters.

Integrity and ethical standards

AIMS holds itself to the highest standards of ethical conduct and professional behaviour. Integrity is one of AIMS Values. Demonstrating integrity by being always transparent, ethical and objective supports AIMS in maintaining its reputation for being a trusted, independent adviser.

AIMS integrity controls are managed across four key functions:

- Conduct and Culture,
- Legal Services,
- Research Services, and
- Financial control.

In 2025-26 AIMS continued to build its pro-integrity culture with the:

- implementation of early intervention and improvement case management to ensure to support staff in identifying and raising suspicions of corruption or integrity issues in a way where they are confident these issues will be appropriately managed, investigated and addressed,
- establishment of the AIMS Office of Research Integrity supported by new policies and training for science and research staff, and
- strengthening of financial integrity controls with the transition from a manual expense management system to a fully integrated travel and expense management system.

Fraud Control

AIMS maintains a Fraud and Corruption Control Plan (Plan) in compliance with section 10 of the PGPA Rule.

The plan sits within the broader AIMS integrity controls and details AIMS' fraud prevention and detection strategies which are designed to minimise the incidence of fraud and corruption against its programs, and to contribute to an overall management environment and culture which makes active fraud and corruption control the responsibility of all staff.

The strategies include:

- provision of fraud and corruption prevention and awareness training for appropriate staff biennially;
- issue of standards and procedures to encourage minimising and deterring fraud and corruption;
- identification and assessment of fraud risks regularly and the development and implementation of a fraud and corruption control plan;
- use of all available avenues to recover money or property lost through fraudulent or corrupt activity;
- supporting the prosecution of persons and/or organisations for fraudulent activity;

- provision of information to the Australian Federal Police on all relevant cases of fraud and corruption;
- regular review of controls and checks over operations to ensure prevention, identification and detection of fraud and corruption; and
- provision of a mechanism for staff to report suspected incidents of fraud or corruption in a secure and confidential manner.

In addition to these strategies, financial controls are monitored by internal audits and the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO).

In 2025-26 AIMS conducted a triennial review of its fraud and corruption control risks. Since the last review in 2023, AIMS implemented improvements across all fraud risks, to ensure the management of fraud risk remains within AIMS Council's risk appetite.

AIMS reports its fraud data to the Australian Institute of Criminology by 30 September each year. No instances of fraud were reported in 2025-2026 financial year.

Financial Reporting

AIMS' financial statements are prepared in accordance with:

- *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability (Financial Reporting) Rule 2015* (FRR);
- Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations – Reduced Disclosure Requirements issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board that apply for the reporting period; and
- The financial statements notes satisfy the requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*.

The financial statements are accompanied by a signed statement by the Accountable Authority (the AIMS Council), CEO and CFO, declaring that the statements comply with the accounting standards and any other requirements prescribed by the FRR and present fairly the entity's financial position, financial performance and cash flows in accordance with section 42 of the PGPA Act.

Performance Reporting

Section 39 of the PGPA Act requires an annual performance statement to be provided by corporate Commonwealth entities. AIMS' annual performance statement for 2025-26 is provided in the Results and Commentary on Performance section.

Systems of Risk Oversight and Management

In 2025-26 the AIMS Council approved the Risk Management Policy including setting an appropriate risk appetite and tolerance in line with the AIMS Strategy 2040. This policy provides the basis for continued improvement and embedding of risk management processes and practices appropriate to AIMS risk profile and context.

Our governance arrangements for risk reporting through the independent Audit and Risk Committee, and the AIMS Leadership Team, provide the AIMS Council with assurance that risk is assessed and managed.

Under section 17(2)(c) of the PGPA Rule, the Audit Committee is responsible for reviewing the Institute's risk framework (and monitoring management's compliance with that framework) and making recommendations to the Council to address any significant issues raised.

System of Internal Audit Control

The Audit Committee's responsibilities include reviewing the Audit Plan and internal audit reports, and making recommendations to the Council and management to address any significant issues raised. The Committee also reviews whether the internal audit coverage aligns with AIMS' key risks. The internal audit function was performed by Grant Thornton during 2025-26.

The internal auditor is responsible for independently reviewing risk in accordance with the Council approved 3-year Internal Audit Work Plan.

External Audit

Under section 43 of the PGPA Act, the Commonwealth Auditor-General, through the ANAO, is the external auditor for the Institute. The Audit Committee reviewed the ANAO Audit Plan and reported to, and met with, ANAO representatives before recommending to the Council that the annual financial statements be accepted, and the Statement by Council be signed.

Investing and Financing Activities

AIMS invested its surplus money in accordance with section 59 of the PGPA Act and AIMS' policy on investments.

Related Parties

AIMS transacts with Australian Government related entities consistent with normal day-to-day business operations provided under normal terms and conditions, including the purchase and rendering of science services (refer to section 3.3 of the Financial Statements).

The AIMS Council delegates decision making for related party contracts up to \$10 million to the AIMS CEO. The AIMS Council retains decision making for any contracts greater than \$10 million. The Council delegation to the CEO was increased in 2025-26 from \$5 million to ensure that decisions are being made at the appropriate governance and decision-making level in the context of AIMS' increasing size and operations.

The AIMS Council reviews a schedule of significant contracts entered into by AIMS three times each year. Any AIMS Officer who may have a perceived or real conflict of interest relating to any contract is required to declare the conflict and is not involved in decision making.

Indemnities and Insurance Premiums for Officers

There were no liabilities to any current or former officials of AIMS during the reporting period. No premium was paid (or was agreed to be paid) against a current or former official's liability for legal costs. AIMS paid \$26,699 in premiums for Directors' and Officers' Liability insurance in 2025-26.

Compliance

AIMS conducted its affairs in accordance with the requirements of all applicable laws and regulations, including the PGPA Act and prescribed rules, the applicable policies of the Australian Government, and the internal policies of AIMS.

Any government policy orders notified as being applicable to AIMS would be duly complied with in accordance with section 22(3) of the PGPA Act. There were no policy orders applied to AIMS in 2025-26.

Duty to Inform and Ministerial Notifications

The AIMS Council is required to notify the responsible minister of any significant issue that has affected AIMS in accordance with section 19(1)(e) of the PGPA Act. There were no significant issues requiring notification to the responsible minister during 2025-26 relating to non-compliance with finance law.

Consultancy Services

AIMS engages individuals and companies as external consultants from time to time where it lacks specialist expertise or when independent research, review, or assessment is required.

Consultants are engaged to investigate or diagnose a defined issue or problem, carry out defined reviews or evaluations, or provide independent advice, information, or creative solutions to assist in AIMS' decision making.

Decisions to engage consultants take into consideration the skills and resources required for the task, the skills or resources available internally, and the cost-effectiveness of these options. AIMS spent \$1.675 million (excluding GST) on consultancies during 2025-26.

Public Accountability

Judicial Decisions and Reviews by Administrative Tribunals

No judicial decisions relating to AIMS were handed down during 2025-26.

Commonwealth Ombudsman

No reports relating to AIMS were given by the Commonwealth Ombudsman during 2025-2026.

Office of the Australian Information Commissioner

No reports relating to AIMS were given by the Australian Information Commissioner during 2025-2026.

Parliamentary Committees

No reports were produced on the operations of AIMS by a parliamentary committee during 2025-26.

Auditor-General

No reports were produced on the operations of AIMS by the Auditor-General during 2025-26.

Service Charter

AIMS' service charter outlines the standards it commits to regarding management of our relationships, a copy of which is posted on our website. AIMS actively seeks and welcomes feedback on our performance against our service standards. The charter and details on how to provide feedback can be found at <https://www.aims.gov.au/docs/about/corporate/service-charter.html>

Privacy Act 1988

To ensure the proper management, administration and safety of its officers, employees, visitors, volunteers and contractors, AIMS is required to collect personal, and occasionally sensitive, information. AIMS is committed to the Australian Privacy Principles contained within the *Privacy Act 1988* and has formal processes to manage privacy, as detailed in the AIMS Privacy Policy. AIMS has a Privacy Officer (privacy@aims.gov.au) who is responsible for ensuring that the Institute's Privacy Policy is adhered to and that AIMS complies with all applicable statutory requirements.

Freedom Of Information

FOI Operations

Agencies subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* are required to make information available to the public as part of the Information Publication Scheme (IPS). Under their IPS, each agency must display on its website a plan showing what information it publishes in accordance with the IPS requirements in Part II of the FOI Act.

The documents listed in our IPS Agency Plan are generally freely available to any person requesting them. The availability of other information is subject to assessment, which is made on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the relevant provisions of the FOI Act, as supplemented and explained in the relevant fact sheets, guidelines and other materials published on the website of the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC). The grounds for assessment include considerations of commercial confidentiality, legal professional privilege and personal privacy. The FOI Act and the above website explain these, the other unconditional exemptions and the conditional exemptions as contained in the current legislation.

Requests for any such information from AIMS must be made in writing, addressed to the relevant person, and must contain the information set out under 'How to make an FOI request' on the above website. The request should be addressed to the FOI contact officer at the address given below.

Information Publication Scheme

AIMS continues to undertake actions consistent with compliance requirements under the IPS pursuant to the relevant provisions of the FOI Act. The IPS encourages governments and government agencies to provide open, accountable, and transparent information in formats that are easy to understand and freely accessible.

Contact

All enquiries and requests for information, or concerning access to documents or any other matters relating to FOI, should be directed to:

FOI Contact Officer, Australian Institute of Marine Science
PMB No. 3, Townsville Mail Centre MC, QLD 4810
Telephone: (07) 4753 4444
Email: FOI@aims.gov.au

Part Four: Our People

Organisational Structure

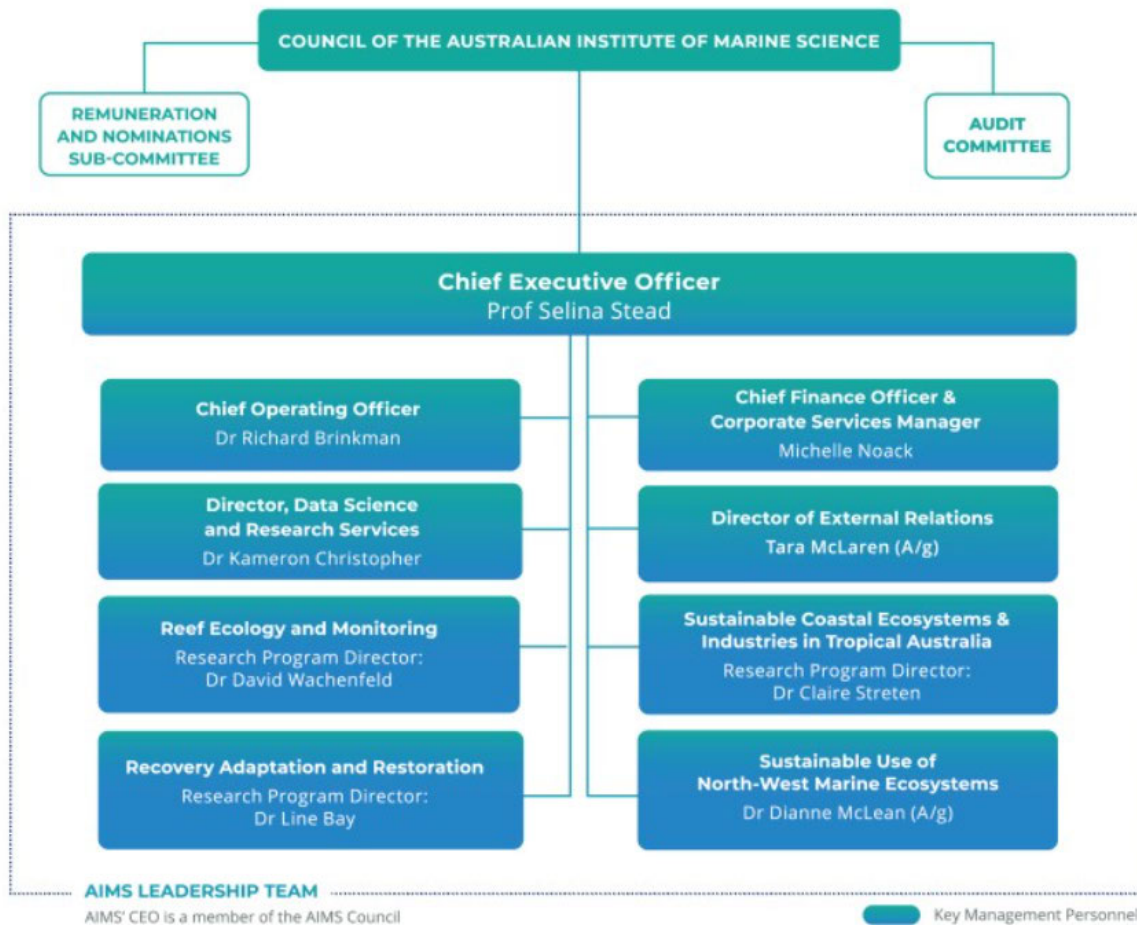


Figure 8: Organisational structure of the Australian Institute of Marine Science

Staff

As at 30 June 2026, AIMS employed an average of 404.13 full-time equivalent (FTE) science and support staff (including 0.51 FTE casuals), plus an additional 37.83 FTE under labour hire arrangement. AIMS also obtains specialist services through outsourced functions as required.

Many of our scientists are world authorities in their field who have achieved international acclaim for their research. The work of the research scientists is supported by a variety of professional and technical support staff skilled in the following:

- research support;
- laboratory and analytical services;
- data collection and data management;
- commercial and business development services;
- intellectual property portfolio management;
- engineering and field operations services;
- science communication; and
- corporate support functions comprising human resources, financial, information services, supply and general management.

Where appropriate, AIMS contracts services. Currently, contracted services are for catering, cleaning, site maintenance, security, and crewing marine research vessels.

AIMS Staff Numbers

Table 7: Ongoing employee headcount, by gender and location 2025-26

	Location									
	NSW	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA	ACT	NT	External	Overseas
Man/Male Full time	1	145		2		32	6	5		
Man/Male Part time		2								
Man/Male Total	1	149	0	2	0	32	6	5	0	0
Woman/Female Full time		104			1	23	2	6		
Woman/Female Part time		8			1	5				
Woman/Female Total	0	112	0	0	2	28	2	6	0	0
Non-Binary Full time										
Non-Binary Part time										
Non-Binary Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Prefers not to answer Full time										
Prefers not to answer Part time										
Prefers not to answer Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Uses a different term Full time										
Uses a different term Part time										
Uses a different term Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	1	259	0	2	2	60	8	11	0	0

Table 8: Non-ongoing employee headcount, by gender and location 2025-26

	Location									
	NSW	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA	ACT	NT	External	Overseas
Man/Male Full time		19				6	1			
Man/Male Part time		1								
Man/Male Total	0	20	0	0	0	6	1	0	0	0
Woman/Female Full time		33			1	3	1			
Woman/Female Part time		4				0				
Woman/Female Total	0	37	0	0	1	3	1	0	0	0
Non-Binary Full time										
Non-Binary Part time										
Non-Binary Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Prefers not to answer Full time										
Prefers not to answer Part time										
Prefers not to answer Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Uses a different term Full time										
Uses a different term Part time										
Uses a different term Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0
TOTAL	0	57	0	0	1	9	2	0	0	0

Staff Consultation

Staff consultation and communication take place via a range of mediums such as all-staff meetings, emails, and various electronic platforms. The Joint Consultative Committee – comprising of the AIMS CEO (Chair), management representatives (Chief Operating Officer and Chief Finance Officer), the Manager People and Culture, Community and Public Sector Union (CPSU) representatives (internal), a CPSU organiser (external), and staff representatives – met four times in 2025-26. This committee provides a forum for discussion and consultation between management and staff representatives on issues that may affect staff conditions and entitlements.

The AIMS Safety Committee is a long-standing forum dedicated to identifying potential hazards, risks, and safety issues in the workplace, and developing plans to mitigate or eliminate those risks to ensure safe work practices and workplaces. The committee is comprised of AIMS Chief Operating Officer, the Health and Safety Manager (Chair), Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs), a People and Culture representative and operational managers and addresses safety specific matters. The Committee met four times in 2025-26.

The Psychologically Safe Network concluded its regular meetings in November 2024 to focus efforts on policy and procedure development in 2025- 2026. These efforts resulted in the revision, publishing and promotion of the Respect suite of policies and procedures in July 2026. Psychosocial risk has been discussed regularly as part of the AIMS Safety Committee 2025-2026 agenda to ensure sufficient workgroup consultation and engagement. Psychosocial Hazards and Controls will continue to be monitored, assessed and improved by the Health and Safety Manager, Manager People and Culture and the AIMS Safety Committee which meet four or more times each year.

The Change Management Committee supports organisational change. The Committee is chaired by Research Program Director – Program 2, and is attended by AIMS' Change Manager and corporate, operational, and science managers and leaders. The Committee met 11 times in 2025-26.

Organisational and Leadership Development

Since the launch of the Organisation Development Framework, Leadership capability development remains a key focus. With the ALT Leadership Program workshops concluding, the program is progressing through coaching and targeted training. The SeaSim Leadership Training Program launched in December 2025, with future leadership efforts aligned to staff leadership roles identified through current organisational change.

A number of tools were launched to support organisational development, workforce engagement and learning. Staff engagement in LinkedIn Learning has had strong uptake, with 56% of employees accessing the platform, generating 1,042 course views, 114 course completions and 181 learning hours. The most popular learning areas are Artificial Intelligence, Project Management and Leadership, reflecting key organisational capability priorities. AIMS also launched APS Learn to complement our learning suite with courses tailored to the Australian Government context, as well as CultureAmp to enable powerful workforce engagement and reporting. Work also commenced on a refresh of AIMS internal Learning Management system to provide a modern and scalable platform to enhance learning, compliance and development outcomes.

Over the coming year, Organisational Development will focus on realigning the Organisational Development Framework to support AIMS' future organisational structure

and strategic direction. This work will include a workforce skills gap analysis, targeted capability development planning, and tailored support for employees transitioning into redeployed or evolving roles.

A suite of compliance training modules and supporting workshops to support the launch of AIMS revised Respect suite of policies and procedures is being developed to strengthen employee capability and awareness of AIMS policies, procedures, values, and legislative obligations. The program will promote consistent compliance practices, embed desired workplace behaviours, and reinforce organisational standards across AIMS.

Equal Employment Opportunity and Workforce Diversity

Our workforce diversity policy acknowledges differences and adapts work practices to create an inclusive work environment in which diverse skills, perspectives, and cultural backgrounds are valued.

The Institute's staffing policies and procedures align with the requirements of the *Equal Employment Opportunity (Commonwealth Authorities) Act 1987*. Designed to ensure that workforce diversity and equality of opportunity are fundamental operating principles for AIMS, they include:

- regularly reviewing employment policies and practices;
- promoting AIMS as an equal opportunity employer in all recruitment advertisements placed in online media and on our website;
- supporting equity of access and providing amenities for parents and people with disabilities and in AIMS' public access facilities;
- constructing new facilities that support equity of access;
- provide facilities to support staff wellbeing including breastfeeding rooms and quiet space for prayer/meditation/reflection;
- catering to staff and visitors with a disability, and providing a wheelchair, if required, for visitors to AIMS in Townsville; and
- having mechanisms in place to handle complaints and grievances (formal and informal) to address issues and concerns raised by staff and visitors.

Table 9: Staff in equal employment opportunity categories

EEO category	Proportion of total staff (per cent)						
	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25	2025–26
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	2.18	2.47	5.41	3.38	3.28	3.7	3.4
Non-English-speaking background	15.1	16.44	14.44	17.6	16.1	18.98	18.5
Staff with disability	1.32	1.84	4.7	2.2	2.1	1.85	1.68
Women	39.23	40.92	46.44	44.96	46.5	46.3	46.88

Inclusiveness and Diversity in the Workplace

Our workforce initiatives support the wider Australia Public Service undertakings on Indigenous employment, diversity, and gender equity. AIMS continues to support career improvement for individuals across all gender groups in higher education and research, helping to facilitate a diverse and inclusive workplace and culture.

In 2020-21 we were awarded Athena Swan Bronze Award certification through Science in Australia Gender Equity (SAGE) and AIMS continues to demonstrate a solid foundation for

improving gender equity, diversity, and an inclusive culture that values all staff. This includes:

- Progressing activities outlined in our action plan that are based on quantitative and qualitative assessments to continue to identify challenges and opportunities;
- Building upon initiatives that are planned or already in place towards greater awareness, understanding, and practices towards gender equity, diversity and inclusion, and to measure our progress and impact; and

A dedicated working group has been structured to progress our action plan initiatives and collaborates across the organisation to continue our accreditation pathway towards the Silver Award certification, in collaboration with the People and Culture team. This includes dedication to the submission and achievement of five Cygnet awards that demonstrate progress, impact, and outcomes in addressing key identified barriers on our gender equity, diversity, and inclusion improvement journey. In 2025-26, AIMS was awarded a third Cygnet Award on inclusive recruitment practices, and a fourth one was submitted for assessment on improving inclusion.

Code of Conduct

AIMS has a Code of Conduct to which the Council, management, staff, and visitors are required to adhere. The Code complies with the PGPA Act. New Council members, staff, and visitors are briefed on the Code during induction.

Workplace Behaviour

Management, staff, and visitors at AIMS share responsibility for providing and working in an environment free of harassment and other unacceptable forms of behaviour. In accordance with the AIMS Code of Conduct, staff are required to treat others with courtesy, respect, dignity, fairness, and equity, and to have concern for their rights, freedoms, and individual needs. A high standard of behaviour is expected, and AIMS has a set of principles outlining the way staff are expected to behave towards others. AIMS also revised, consulted and launched a suite of policies and procedures targeting workplace behaviour and complaints management and handling.

Workplace harassment contact officers are available throughout AIMS to discuss, in confidence, matters of concern regarding harassment and associated issues raised by a staff member. AIMS received and responded to six formal reported cases of bullying/harassment in 2025-26.

Public Interest Disclosure

AIMS has a Public Interest Disclosure policy designed to facilitate effective notification, assessment, and management of the disclosure of serious wrongdoings in accordance with the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2013*.

AIMS strongly encourages reporting of serious wrongdoing and will take appropriate and necessary action to uphold the integrity of the Institute and to promote the public interest. To achieve our goals and obligations in this regard, AIMS is committed to creating and maintaining an environment and culture in which the disclosure of serious wrongdoings is fully supported and protected.

National Disability Strategy

AIMS is committed to ensuring that people with disabilities are given opportunities for independence, access, and full participation. AIMS assesses cases individually and endeavours to implement the most appropriate measures to assist people with disabilities.

AIMS' physical resources continue to be upgraded to meet access needs for people with disabilities, which includes building modifications and the construction of new facilities.

Employee Assistance Program

TELUS Health is contracted by AIMS to provide an independent employee assistance program. The program is free to staff, their family members, and students, and provides for up to six sessions to assist with issues of:

- relationship and family problems;
- maximising performance;
- depression, anxiety and stress;
- conflict and communication;
- children or family member concerns;
- grief and bereavement;
- elder care issues;
- addiction;
- work–life balance;
- career path issues;
- retirement; and
- work stress.

In addition, a supervisor support hotline is available.

Participants can refer themselves or be encouraged by a colleague, supervisor, people and culture staff, or workplace health and safety staff to access the program.

Health and Safety

Our Approach

The safety of our people, collaborators, contractors and visitors remains paramount. AIMS operates in challenging, diverse and dynamic environments, requiring a proactive and systematic approach to managing risk. We identify hazards early, implement practical and effective controls, and empower our people to make conservative risk-based decisions to perform work safely. AIMS is committed to continuously improving its health and safety management systems and safety culture to achieve year-on-year improvements in safety performance.

Early Intervention, Injury Reduction, and Health Management

A proactive approach to preventing and mitigating harm (injury and illness) is implemented through review, assessment, and early reporting processes. These processes support the timely identification of psychosocial and physical hazards and risks, enabling early intervention to reduce the likelihood and severity of work-related injury or illness. They also ensure appropriate support mechanisms are available when a work-impacting injury or illness occurs.

Health management and prevention programs include individual ergonomic assessments, manual handling and task-based functional assessments, as well as vaccination and skin check clinics.

Leadership and Cultural Change

Safety is a core AIMS value and an integral part of the *Way We Work*. We continue to strengthen our safety culture through ongoing development of our risk, reporting, and learning cultures, focusing on the proactive identification and control of psychosocial and physical hazards, encouraging reporting, and sharing lessons learned.

Through clear accountability, worker consultation, and targeted education and awareness programs, we enhance safety knowledge, support informed decision-making, and foster a safe, healthy, and respectful work environment.

Physical and Mental Wellbeing

AIMS continued to implement its Psychologically Safe Workplace Network and Action Plan in accordance with the APS Mental Health Capability Framework, providing information, training, confidential Psychological Incident (PI) reporting, and access to support services.

Through ongoing consultation with workers, AIMS identifies and manages psychosocial hazards and risks, promotes early intervention, and works to reduce stigma associated with mental health and workplace concerns.

During 2025-2026, AIMS developed and published the Respect Suite of documents, establishing a structured framework for managing psychosocial risks and supporting safe, respectful, and supportive workplaces. The suite includes policies, procedures, and guidance materials addressing workplace behaviour, complaints management, bullying, and sexual harassment.

Employee health and wellbeing are further supported through initiatives such as Fitness Passport, access to the Townsville campus gym, and other health and fitness programs.

Internal Audit and Inspection Regimes

AIMS verifies the effectiveness of its HSE Management System through workplace inspections, desktop reviews, inspections by regulators and independent audits managed by the Risk Office. These assurance activities support continual improvement and confirm that safety controls remain effective.

In 2025–26, independent audits of diving and small vessel operations were completed, together with a Comcare-led Proactive Engagement and Inspection of AIMS' risk management processes. The outcomes of these reviews have informed ongoing improvements to organisational risk management and safety performance.

Risk Management

AIMS maintained a robust approach to risk management during 2025–26 through governance reviews of key operational areas, training and competency assurance activities, risk assessment quality reviews, and the development and maintenance of risk registers in accordance with the AIMS Risk Management Framework and associated procedures.

Safety Roles & Responsibilities

AIMS demonstrates its commitment to the health, safety, and wellbeing of workers through dedicated HSE resources and the integration of key safety responsibilities across operational and support functions. These roles provide specialist expertise, oversight, consultation, and assurance to support the effective management of health and safety risks across the organisation.

Key health and safety roles include:

- HSE Manager
- HSE Coordinator
- HSE Advisors
- Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs)
- Safety Committee Members
- Emergency Management and Response Personnel
- Contact Officers
- Field Operations Personnel
- Laboratory Managers
- Quarantine Officer
- Biosafety Officer
- Radiation Safety Officer

Together, these roles contribute to a strong safety governance framework, support compliance with legislative requirements, and promote a safe, healthy, and respectful workplace for all workers.

Lead and Lag Indicators

AIMS continues to foster a strong reporting and learning culture, with hazard reporting representing a significant proportion of all safety reports submitted during the year. The reporting of hazards, near misses, and incidents supports the early identification and management of risks and contributes to continuous improvement in workplace health and safety performance.

Of the 158 hazards, incidents, and near misses reported during 2025–26, 3 resulted in Lost Time Injuries, 5 resulted in restricted work duties, 2 required medical treatment, and 16 were managed through minor first aid. Additionally, 21 psychosocial incidents have been reported to the HSE team or through Riskware. Psychosocial incident and hazard reporting remains steady, demonstrating the workforce's awareness of the reporting processes and willingness to use this process to raise concerns and improve workplace culture.

During the reporting period, 2 regulatory notifiable incidents were recorded. Both involved contractor personnel and were reported to Comcare and the relevant state regulatory authorities in accordance with legislative requirements.

A total of 3 new workers' compensation claims were accepted under the Comcare workers' compensation scheme during 2025–26, AIMS continues to focus on injury prevention, early intervention, and effective return-to-work support to minimise the impact of workplace injuries and illnesses on workers and the organisation.

Environmental Performance

We have delivered against our commitments to protect the environment and conserve biodiversity during the year through our work with multiple industries, government, the community, and other scientific institutions and agencies on programs and projects dedicated to conserving and sustainably managing tropical marine resources. As a community leader and a Commonwealth statutory authority, we have both a moral obligation and a statutory obligation under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) to protect and maintain the biodiversity and heritage under our control. Accordingly, we carefully guard against any avoidable adverse impacts on the environment arising from our own activities and work proactively to minimise the environmental footprint of our operations.

Reducing Our Environmental Impacts

In 2025-26 AIMS continued to make progress towards our target of a 30 per cent reduction in carbon emissions. The overall reduction in total carbon emissions compared with the base year of 2017-18 was 26 per cent (for Scope 1 and 2 emissions and Scope 3 air travel). AIMS' on-site photovoltaic (PV) solar systems and procurement of electricity from renewable energy sources continue to be the most significant contributions to our emissions reduction, with smaller contributions from our hybrid commuter car fleet, and reduced fuel consumption from the RV Cape Ferguson following an upgrade in 2024-25 to more fuel efficient drive trains.

AIMS 2025-26 Emissions Reporting Summary

Table 10 2025-26 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory

Emissions Source	Scope 1	Scope 2	Scope 3	Total
Electricity (Location-Based Approach)	n/a	4,991.78	678.25	5,670.03
Natural Gas	92.43	n/a	14.17	106.60
Solid Waste	0.00	n/a	220.19	220.19
Refrigerants	0.00	n/a	n/a	0.00
Fleet and Other Vehicles	1,768.94	n/a	435.91	2,204.85
Domestic Commercial Flights	n/a	n/a	413.02	413.02
Domestic Hire Car	n/a	n/a	0.00	0.00
Domestic Travel Accommodation	n/a	n/a	52.77	52.77
Other Energy	242.55	n/a	59.92	302.47
Total	2,103.92	4,991.78	1,874.23	8,969.93

1. Scope 1, Scope 2, Scope 3 and Total emissions are presented as tonnes carbon dioxide equivalent (t CO₂-e)
2. Electricity emissions are calculated using the location-based method. See [Emissions Reporting Framework](#) for more details.

Table 11 2025-26 Electricity Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Emissions Source	Scope 2	Scope 3	Total	Electricity
Location-based electricity emissions	4,991.78	678.25	5,670.02	7,536,026.37
Market-based electricity emissions	3,924.60	532.97	4,457.56	4,845,173.70
Total renewable electricity	n/a	n/a	n/a	2,690,582.68
Renewable Power Percentage	n/a	n/a	n/a	1,302,978.96
Jurisdictional Renewable Power Percentage	n/a	n/a	n/a	0.00
GreenPower	n/a	n/a	n/a	1,387,873.72
Large-scale generation certificates	n/a	n/a	n/a	0.00

1. The above table presents emissions related to electricity usage using both the location-based and the market-based accounting methods.
2. Scope 2, Scope 3 and Total emissions are presented as tonnes carbon dioxide equivalent (t CO₂-e). Electricity data is reported in kilowatt hours (kWh).
3. Total renewable electricity excludes behind-the-meter solar other than generation used to create large-scale generation certificates (LGCs).
4. The renewable power percentage (RPP) accounts for the portion of electricity used, from the grid, that falls within the Renewable Energy Target (RET).
5. Jurisdictional Renewable Power refers to the Jurisdictional Renewable Power Percentage (JRPP). Currently, the Australian Capital Territory is the only jurisdiction with a JRPP.

Water Usage

Water usage was 41.37 megalitres (ML) for 2025-26, an increase of 2.5 ML from the previous year, but an overall reduction of 26% compared with 2017-2018.

Recycling and Waste

This year we have achieved a reduction in solid waste to landfill of 20 tonnes, compared with 2018-19. This represents a 13 per cent reduction from the 2018-19 base year. In 2025-26 we recycled 36.5 tonnes of paper, cardboard and plastic products. This is a 4 per cent increase on the previous year and 65 per cent increase from 2018-19.

Energy Usage

Our total energy usage across the sites that we operate was 7536 MW for 2025-26. This represents a 22 per cent reduction from 2017-18. We also avoided 871 T of emissions through PV solar generation at our Townsville and Darwin sites.

Radiation Safety

During the year, AIMS continued to hold a source licence issued by the Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency (ARPANSA). This licence is subject to conditions including quarterly reporting, maintaining a source inventory and complying with relevant regulations, codes and standards.

Gene Technology

One proposal for a dealing involving genetically modified organisms (GMOs) was assessed by the AIMS Biosafety Committee this year.

AIMS has three active dealings with GMOs. All projects are Notifiable Low Risk Dealings (NLRDs).

Our Alignment to Ecologically Sustainable Development

Table 22: Alignment and contribution to ESD principles

Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) Principle	Our Alignment and Contribution
Decision-making processes should effectively integrate both long-term and short term economic, environmental, social, and equitable considerations.	All AIMS work is assessed with ESD impact in mind. Projects are selected based on their environmental, economic, and social net value to the organisation, community, and country in line with the AIMS Strategy 2040.
If there are threats of serious or irreversible environmental damage, lack of full scientific certainty should not be used as a reason for postponing measures to prevent environmental degradation.	AIMS complies with all major environmental laws and requirements in its operations and capital works. Environmental protection is mandated when planning and undertaking major capital works. Any proposed activities that may fall under the EPBC Act are assessed for referral to the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water. Proposals for new or modifications to existing facilities undergo rigorous internal safety, regulatory, and environmental processes with independent oversight. A continuous improvement program is in place to reduce environmental impact through reducing energy and water consumption and waste generated. AIMS conducts large scale environmental monitoring programs and risk-based modelling to provide impartial advice on management and policy for government and industry decision makers. The organisation is leading the Australian research effort to identify innovative ways to assist coral reefs to recover from the impact of existing environmental conditions.
The principle of inter-generational equity – that the present generation should ensure that the health, diversity and productivity of the environment is maintained or enhanced for the benefit of future generations.	AIMS' Project Management Framework includes evaluations of future impact (targeting net social, economic, and environmental benefits) for Australia. The organisation leads the global research effort to assist coral reefs in adapting to future environmental conditions to ensure the benefits of coral reefs are sustained for generations of Australians to come. AIMS actively integrates environmental responsibility and sustainability into our operations, minimising our environmental footprint through building infrastructure and behaviour change, and preventing, minimising, and controlling pollution. Reducing our consumption of energy, water, and resources not only supports sustainable objectives, it also contributes to our financial sustainability and allows us to redirect more funds into our science.
The conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity should be a fundamental consideration in decision-making.	AIMS provides monitoring, modelling, and research ensuring that the impact of policy and decisions on biological diversity and ecological integrity are understood by tropical marine managers. AIMS works with managers and decision makers to deliver sustainability.
Improved valuation, pricing and incentive mechanisms should be promoted.	AIMS has no activities in this area.

Part Five: Financial Statements

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INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Minister for the Environment and Water

Opinion

In my opinion, the financial statements of the Australian Institute of Marine Science (the Entity) for the year ended 30 June 2026:

- (a) comply with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures and the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability (Financial Reporting) Rule 2015*;
- (b) comply with Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* and Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2022*; and
- (c) present fairly the financial position of the Entity as at 30 June 2026 and its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended.

The financial statements of the Entity, which I have audited, comprise the following as at 30 June 2026 and for the year then ended:

- Statement by the Accountable Authority, Chief Executive and Chief Financial Officer;
- Statement of Comprehensive Income;
- Statement of Financial Position;
- Statement of Changes in Equity;
- Cash Flow Statement; and
- Notes to the financial statements, comprising material accounting policy information and other explanatory information.

Basis for opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards, which incorporate the Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of my report. I am independent of the Entity in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements for financial statement audits conducted by the Auditor-General and their delegates. These include the relevant independence requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including Independence Standards)* (the Code) to the extent that they are not in conflict with the *Auditor-General Act 1997*. I have also fulfilled my other responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

I confirm that the independence declaration required by the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* which has been given to the Council, would be in the same terms if given to the Council as at the time of this auditor's report.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Accountable Authority's responsibility for the financial statements

As the Accountable Authority of the Entity, the Council is responsible under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (the Act) for the preparation and fair presentation of annual financial statements that comply with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures and the rules made under the Act. The Council is also responsible for such internal control as the Council determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

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38 Sydney Avenue, Forrest ACT 2603
Phone (02) 6203 7300

In preparing the financial statements, the Council is responsible for assessing the ability of the Entity to continue as a going concern, taking into account whether the Entity's operations will cease as a result of an administrative restructure or for any other reason. The Council is also responsible for disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting, unless the assessment indicates that it is not appropriate.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

My objective is to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control;
- obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Entity's internal control;
- evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Accountable Authority;
- conclude on the appropriateness of the Accountable Authority's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Entity's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Entity to cease to continue as a going concern; and
- evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with the Accountable Authority regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

Australian National Audit Office



Philip Collier

Acting Executive Director

Delegate of the Auditor-General

Canberra

26 August 2026

STATEMENT BY THE ACCOUNTABLE AUTHORITY, CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

In our opinion, the attached financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2026 comply with subsection 42(2) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act), are based on properly maintained financial records as per subsection 41(2) of the PGPA Act and the financial statements and notes satisfy the requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* .

In our opinion, at the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Australian Institute of Marine Science will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the directors and signed in accordance with subsection 60.15(2) of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission Regulations 2022* .

Signed



Dr Elizabeth Woods
Council Chair
On behalf of the Accountable
Authority
25 August 2026

Signed



Prof Selina Stead
Chief Executive Officer

25 August 2026

Signed



Michelle Noack
Chief Finance Officer

25 August 2026

Statement of Comprehensive Income
for the period ended 30 June 2026

	Notes	2026 \$'000	2025 \$'000	Original Budget \$'000
NET COST OF SERVICES				
Expenses				
Employee Benefits	1.1A	64,689	61,322	72,071
Suppliers	1.1B	57,441	71,337	70,634
Depreciation and amortisation	2.2	16,103	19,745	18,409
Finance costs		14	16	14
Foreign exchange losses		25	1	-
Losses from asset disposal		196	483	100
Total Expenses		138,468	152,904	161,228
Own-source Income				
Own-source revenue				
Revenue from contracts with customers	1.2A	48,910	55,033	55,371
National Sea Simulator construction and operations funding		4,090	6,721	17,582
Interest		8,527	9,565	6,534
Other revenue		1,281	1,494	-
Total own-source revenue		62,808	72,813	79,487
Gains				
Gains from sale of assets		100	944	102
Total gains		100	944	102
Total own-source income		62,908	73,757	79,589
Net cost of services		(75,560)	(79,147)	(81,639)
Revenue from Government		89,210	81,869	89,775
Total Revenue from Government		89,210	81,869	89,775
Surplus/(deficit) attributable to the Australian Government		13,651	2,722	8,136
OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME				
Items not subject to subsequent reclassification to net cost of services				
Changes in asset revaluation reserve		-	3,548	-
Total comprehensive income/(loss) attributable to the Australian Government		13,651	6,270	8,136

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Statement of Financial Position
as at 30 June 2026

	Notes	2026 \$'000	2025 \$'000	Original Budget \$'000
ASSETS				
Financial Assets				
Cash and cash equivalents	2.1A	36,242	168,384	22,413
Trade and other receivables	2.1B	14,889	15,083	8,296
Other investments	2.1C	150,000	-	96,233
Total financial assets		201,131	183,467	126,942
Non-Financial Assets				
Buildings ¹	2.2	120,590	123,166	155,551
Infrastructure, plant & equipment	2.2	55,642	52,453	63,174
Computer software	2.2	454	402	162
Prepayments		2,997	2,745	3,583
Inventory		552	370	4,500
Total non-financial assets		180,235	179,136	226,970
Total assets		381,366	362,603	353,912
LIABILITIES				
Payables				
Suppliers	2.3A	5,132	5,088	3,884
Salaries and wages		-	1,710	-
Other payables	2.3B	49,193	47,146	29,691
Total payables		54,325	53,944	33,575
Interest bearing liabilities				
Leases	2.3B	626	678	655
Total interest bearing liabilities		626	678	655
Provisions				
Employee provisions	3.1	19,024	18,165	19,065
Other provisions		17	17	17
Total provisions		19,041	18,182	19,082
Total liabilities		73,992	72,804	53,312
Net assets		307,374	289,799	300,600
EQUITY				
Contributed equity		150,493	146,569	150,493
Reserves		118,886	120,227	116,680
Retained earnings		37,995	23,003	33,427
Total equity		307,374	289,799	300,600

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.
1. Right-of-use assets are included in the non-financial assets buildings line item.

Statement of Changes in Equity
for the period ended 30 June 2026

	2026 \$'000	2025 \$'000	Original Budget \$'000
CONTRIBUTED EQUITY			
Opening balance as at 1 July			
Balance carried forward from previous period	146,569	135,153	135,153
Transactions with owners			
Contributions by owners			
Equity injection	3,924	11,416	11,416
Total transactions with owners	3,924	11,416	11,416
Closing balance as at 30 June	150,493	146,569	146,569
RETAINED EARNINGS			
Opening balance			
Balance carried forward from previous period	23,003	20,281	5,014
Comprehensive income			
Surplus/(Deficit) for the period	13,651	2,722	(10,330)
Total comprehensive income	13,651	2,722	(10,330)
Transfers between equity components	1,341	-	-
Closing balance as at 30 June	37,995	23,003	(5,316)
ASSET REVALUATION RESERVE			
Opening balance			
Balance carried forward from previous period	120,227	116,680	118,767
Comprehensive income			
Other comprehensive income	-	3,547	-
Total comprehensive income	-	3,547	-
Transfers between equity components	(1,341)	-	-
Closing balance as at 30 June	118,886	120,227	118,767
TOTAL EQUITY			
Opening balance			
Balance carried forward from previous period	289,799	272,114	258,934
Comprehensive income			
Surplus/(Deficit) for the period	13,651	2,722	(10,330)
Total comprehensive income	13,651	2,722	(10,330)
Asset revaluation reserve			
Other comprehensive income	-	3,547	-
Total asset revaluation reserve	-	3,547	-
Transactions with owners			
Contributions by owners			
Equity injection	3,924	11,416	11,416
Total transactions with owners	3,924	11,416	11,416
Closing balance as at 30 June	307,374	289,799	260,020

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Accounting Policy

Equity injections

Amounts appropriated which are designated as 'equity injections' for a year (less any formal reductions).

Cash Flow Statement
for the period ended 30 June 2026

	Notes	2026 \$'000	2025 \$'000	Original Budget \$'000
OPERATING ACTIVITIES				
Cash received				
Receipts from Government		89,210	81,869	89,775
Sale of goods and rendering of services		41,466	57,301	63,235
National Sea Simulator construction and operational expenses funding		8,827	8,688	-
Interest		5,855	11,132	6,682
GST received		7,588	11,225	-
Other		1,256	1,493	9,187
Total cash received		154,202	171,708	168,879
Cash used				
Employees		65,035	58,810	69,170
Suppliers		54,915	70,182	71,094
Interest payments on lease liabilities		14	16	14
GST paid		3,386	4,628	-
Total cash used		123,350	133,636	140,278
Net cash from/(used by) operating activities		30,852	38,072	28,601
INVESTING ACTIVITIES				
Cash received				
Proceeds from sales of property, plant & equipment		100	944	102
Proceeds from investments		-	114,000	-
Total cash received		100	114,944	102
Cash used				
Purchase of property, plant and equipment		16,963	18,380	39,468
Investments		150,000	-	-
Total cash used		166,963	18,380	39,468
Net cash from/(used by) investing activities		(166,863)	96,564	(39,366)
FINANCING ACTIVITIES				
Cash received				
Contributed equity		3,924	11,416	3,924
Total cash received		3,924	11,416	3,924
Cash used				
Principal payments of lease liabilities		52	84	46
Total cash used		52	84	46
Net Cash from/(used by) financing activities		3,872	11,332	3,878
Net increase/(decrease) in cash held		(132,141)	145,967	(6,887)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		168,384	22,417	22,413
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period	2.1A	36,242	168,384	15,526

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Budgetary Reporting of Major Variances (AASB1055)

The Budget variances reporting commentary provides a comparison between the 2025-26 Portfolio Budget Statements (PBS) provided to Parliament in March 2025 and the final outcome in the 2025-26 financial statements. The PBS was not audited. Major changes in budget have been explained as part of the variance analysis where relevant.

Variances are considered to be 'major' where:

- (a) the variance between budget and actual is greater than +/-10% of the budget for the line items; and
- (b) the variance between budget and actual is greater than +/-2% of the relevant budget base.

Variance explanations will also be provided where there have been major changes to business activities that may not be numerically material but by nature may assist users in understanding underlying business changes that may have occurred since the original budget was released.

Explanations of major variances	Affected line items/statements
<u>Statement of Comprehensive Income</u>	
<u>Expenses</u>	
Employee Benefits were \$7.3m lower than budget due to full year impact of vacant positions (time to fill replacement positions), budgeting parameters where positions are budgeted for at the top of the AOF band to allow for annual increments, and unallocated positions.	Employee benefits
Suppliers expenses were \$13.2m below budget reflecting the final year of Reef Restoration and Adaptation Program activity and project activity and related variable expenditure extending into 2026-27, resulting in lower than forecast expenditure.	Suppliers
Depreciation and amortisation were \$2.3m lower reflecting the extended timeframes of capital infrastructure projects associated with stage one of the power upgrade and the refurbishment of west wing/laboratories.	Depreciation and amortisation
<u>Revenue</u>	
Revenue from contracts with customers was \$6.5m lower than budget primarily attributed to project activity and related variable expenditure extending into 2026-27, resulting in revenue being deferred to 2026-27.	Revenue from contracts with customers
National Sea Simulator funding was \$13.4m lower than budget represented by \$8m underspend in Phase II deliverables and vacant National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy (NCRIS) funded positions.	National Sea Simulator operations funding
Interest income was \$2m higher than budget due to higher than budgeted cash and investment balances.	Interest
<u>Statement of Financial Position</u>	
Total Financial Assets were \$74m higher than budgeted and Total Non-Financial Assets were \$46m lower than budgeted as a result of the timing associated with major capital and infrastructure works.	Total Financial Assets Total Non-Financial Assets
The equity contributions received for the AIMS wharf remediation remains unspent and the work to date associated with concept and revocations continue to be recorded as expenditure.	
Other Payables were \$19.5m higher than budget largely due to the ongoing National Sea Simulator fitout and unearned income for payments received from contracts with customers for services that are not yet fully performed.	Other Payables
<u>Statement of Changes in Equity</u>	
Retained earnings performed favourably. The actual surplus of \$13.6m was higher than \$8.6m budgeted largely due to lower supplier expenses on contracts with customers for services that are not yet fully performed, higher than budgeted interest received and lower employee expenses.	Surplus
<u>Cashflow Statement</u>	
Total cash received was \$14m lower than budget due to delayed deliverables in external revenue projects and National Sea Simulator.	Operating receipts
Total cash used was \$16m lower than budget due to decreased employee expenses reflecting vacant positions and decreased supplier expenses due to delayed deliverables in external revenue projects.	Operating payments
Purchase of property, plant and equipment was lower than budgeted due to timing associated with major capital and infrastructure works, resulting in purchase of investments.	Purchase of property, plant and equipment Purchase of investments

Overview

Objectives of the Australian Institute of Marine Science

The Australian Institute of Marine Science (AIMS) is a Corporate Commonwealth entity established by the *Australian Institute of Marine Science Act 1972*. It is a not-for-profit entity. AIMS registered office address is included at the front of the Annual Report.

The mission of AIMS is to provide the research and knowledge of Australia's tropical marine estate required to support growth in its sustainable use, effective environmental management and protection of its unique ecosystems.

The continued existence of AIMS in its present form and with its present programs is dependent on Government policy and on continuing funding by Parliament for AIMS administration and science research programs.

The Basis of Preparation

The financial statements are required by section 42 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.

The financial statements and notes have been prepared in accordance with:

- a) *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability (Financial Reporting) Rule 2015* (FRR); and
- b) Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations - including simplified disclosures for Tier 2 Entities under AASB 1060 issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) that apply for the reporting period.
- c) The financial statements and notes satisfy the requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*.

The financial statements have been prepared on an accrual basis and in accordance with the historical cost convention, except for certain assets and liabilities at fair value. Except where stated, no allowance is made for the effect of changing prices on the results or the financial position.

The financial statements are presented in Australian dollars and values are rounded to the nearest thousand dollars unless otherwise specified.

Significant Accounting Judgements and Estimates

In the process of applying the accounting policies listed in this note, AIMS has made the following judgements that have the most significant impact on the amounts recorded in the financial statements.

- Recognition of revenue for rendering of services – Refer Note 1.2: Own-Source Revenue and Gains
- Fair value of buildings, plant and equipment – Refer Note 2.2: Non-Financial Assets
- Remaining useful lives of buildings, infrastructure, plant and equipment - Refer Note 2.2: Non-Financial Assets
- Employee entitlement provision – Refer Note 3.1: Employee Provisions

No accounting assumptions or estimates have been identified that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the current reporting period.

New Australian Accounting Standards

All new/revised standards and/or interpretations that were issued prior to the sign-off date and are applicable to the current reporting period, did not have a material effect to AIMS' financial statements.

Taxation

AIMS is exempt from all forms of taxation except Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT) and the Goods and Services Tax (GST). Revenues, expenses, assets and liabilities are recognised net of GST, except:

- a) where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office; and
- b) for receivables and payables.

Insurance

AIMS is insured through the Federal Government self-insured managed insurance fund Comcover. Workers compensation is insured through Comcare.

Events After the Reporting Period

There was no subsequent event that had the potential to significantly affect the ongoing structure and financial activities of AIMS.

Financial Performance

This section analyses the financial performance of Australian Institute of Marine Science for the year ended 2026

1.1: Expenses

	2026 \$'000	2025 \$'000
1.1A: Employee Benefits		
Wages and salaries	48,580	46,046
Superannuation		
Defined contribution plans	7,151	6,271
Defined benefit plans	1,294	1,309
Leave and other entitlements	7,160	7,182
Fringe Benefit Tax	504	514
Total employee benefits	64,689	61,322

Accounting Policy

Accounting policies for employee related expenses are contained in the People and relationships section.

1.1B: Suppliers

Goods and services supplied or rendered

ANAO Audit fees	50	52
Assistance to external providers	172	440
Communication expenses	834	781
Consultants	1,675	6,803
Consumables	3,657	2,909
Contractors	7,155	19,881
Corporate memberships and subscription	222	185
Electricity	1,557	1,520
Employee related expenses	1,271	2,199
Fuel, oil and gas	1,439	1,199
General expenses	1,890	1,326
Hire of equipment	3,161	3,434
IT expenses	3,634	2,937
Labour Hire staff	5,193	4,543
Legal and instrument registration expenses	695	707
Library expenses	88	98
Meeting expenses	519	504
Property expenses	1,846	1,890
Repairs and maintenance	9,852	7,361
Science expenses	1,327	832
Support for post-doctorate positions	2,390	3,466
Travel	3,473	3,126
Vessel management	5,217	5,022
Total goods and services supplied or rendered	57,317	71,215

Goods supplied	9,313	9,373
Services rendered	48,004	61,842
Total goods and services supplied or rendered	57,317	71,215

Other Suppliers

Workers compensation expenses	125	122
Total other suppliers	125	122
Total suppliers	57,442	71,337

Accounting Policy

Short-term leases and lease of low-value assets

AIMS has elected not to recognise right-of-use assets and lease liabilities for short-term leases of assets that have a lease term of 12 months or less and leases of low-value assets (less than \$10,000). AIMS recognises the lease payments associated with these leases as an expense on a straight-line basis over lease term, these expenses are included in Hire of equipment.

Finance costs

All borrowing costs are expensed as incurred.

1.2 Own-Source Revenue and Gains

	2026 \$'000	2025 \$'000
Own-Source Revenue		
1.2A Revenue from contracts with customers		
Rendering of services	48,910	55,033
Total revenue from contracts with customers	48,910	55,033
Disaggregation of revenue from contracts with customers		
Major product/service line:		
Research services	48,910	55,033
	48,910	55,033
Type of customer:		
Australian Government entities (related parties)	22,888	13,547
Australian Government entities (Reef Restoration and Adaptation Program)	9,400	23,782
Industry	8,872	11,086
International Government	599	996
International Industry	700	19
International Philanthropic	340	97
Philanthropy	5,317	5,347
State and Territory Governments	794	159
	48,910	55,033
Timing of transfer of goods and services:		
Over time	37,747	28,348
Point in time	11,163	26,685
	48,910	55,033

Accounting Policy - AASB 15 & AASB 1058

AIMS contracts comprise of a number of performance obligations pertaining to research services. Under the AASBs, AIMS needs to first determine whether such a contract is in scope of AASB 15 or AASB 1058, that is whether the transaction is a contract with a customer (AASB 15) or a genuine donation or volunteer service (AASB 1058) or construction of an asset (AASB 1058).

The standard (AASB 15.9) specifies criteria which must be met for each contract to be in the scope of AASB 15. These are:

- The parties have approved the contract;
- AIMS can identify each party's rights regarding the goods or services to be transferred;
- AIMS can identify the payment terms for the transferred goods;
- The contract has commercial substance; and
- It is probable that AIMS will collect the consideration to which it is entitled.

Notwithstanding paragraph 15.9, in respect of not-for-profits, if a contract that would otherwise be within the scope of AASB 15 does not meet the criteria in paragraph 9 noted above, as it is unenforceable or not sufficiently specific, it is not a contract with a customer within the scope of AASB 15. AIMS shall consider the requirements of AASB 1058 in accounting for such contracts.

Additional considerations from the standard also contemplate cancellability of arrangements, and states a contract does not exist if each party to the contract has the unilateral enforceable right to terminate a wholly unperformed contract without compensating the other party.

A contract is wholly unperformed if both of the following criteria are met (AASB 15.12):

- AIMS has not yet transferred any promised goods or services to the customer; and
- AIMS has not yet received, and is not yet entitled to receive, any consideration in exchange for the promised goods or services.

If a contract does not meet the criteria above, AIMS shall continue to reassess the contract until the criteria are met. Once the criteria have been met, no subsequent reassessment is needed unless there is a significant change in circumstances (AASB 15.13 and 15.14). AIMS recognises contract liabilities for consideration received in respect of performance obligations paid for up-front and reports these amounts as contractual liabilities in the statement of financial position. Similarly, if AIMS satisfies a performance obligation before it receives the consideration, AIMS recognises either a contractual asset or a receivable in its statement of financial position, depending on whether something other than the passage of time is required before the consideration is due.

The transaction price is the total amount of consideration to which AIMS expects to be entitled in exchange for transferring promised goods or services to a customer. The consideration promised in a contract with a customer may include fixed amounts, variable amounts, or both.

AIMS recognises a construction liability for income received in respect of its obligations under construction grant agreement. AIMS will satisfy its obligations over-time during construction process (AASB 1058). The operations component of the grant agreement will recognise revenue, similar to contracts with customers, according to annual agreed activities (AASB 15) of the grant agreement otherwise refunds may be processed.

Receivables for goods and services, which have 30 day terms, are recognised at the nominal amounts due less any impairment allowance account. Collectability of debts is reviewed at end of the reporting period. Allowances are made when collectability of the debt is no longer probable.

National Sea Simulator operational expenses funding

The operations component of the SeaSim grant agreement will recognise revenue, similar to contracts with customers, according to annual agreed activities (AASB 15) of the grant agreement otherwise refunds may be processed.

Interest

Interest revenue is recognised using the effective interest method.

Revenue from Government

Funding received or receivable from agencies (appropriated to AIMS as a corporate body payment item) is recognised as revenue from Government when the entity gains control of the funding unless the funding is in the nature of an equity injection or loan.

Accounting Judgement and Estimates

Revenue recognition for contractual revenue with customers has significant judgements. The determination of the revenue recognition is on contractual term, distinction of research services over time or time and materials at a point in time, transaction price, satisfaction of control has passed to a client, identification of costs that can be capitalised and any material variations to contracts.

Financial Position

This section analyses the Australian Institute of Marine Science assets used to conduct its operations and the operating liabilities incurred as a result. Employee related information is disclosed in the People and Relationships section.

2.1 Financial Assets

	2026 \$'000	2025 \$'000
2.1A: Cash and Cash Equivalents		
Cash on hand	1	1
Cash on deposit	36,241	168,383
Total cash and cash equivalents	36,242	168,384

Accounting Policy

Cash is recognised at its nominal amount. Cash and cash equivalents includes:

- a) Cash on hand; and
- b) Demand deposits in bank accounts with an original maturity of 3 months or less that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and subject to insignificant risk of changes in value.

2.1B: Trade and other receivables

Goods and services receivables

Contract assets from contracts with customers	5,257	5,778
Goods and services	6,326	8,634
Total Goods and services receivables	11,583	14,412

Other receivables

GST receivable from the Australian Taxation Office (net)	107	144
Interest	3,199	527
Total services receivables	3,306	671

Total trade and other receivables (gross)

14,889	15,083
---------------	---------------

The contract assets from contracts with customers are associated with research services.

Refer Note 2.3A for information relating to contract liabilities.

Credit terms for goods and services were within 30 days (2024: 30 days).

Accounting Policy

Financial Assets

Trade receivables and other receivables that are held for the purpose of collecting the contractual cash flows where the cash flows are solely payments of principal and interest, that are not provided at below-market interest rates, are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method adjusted for an loss allowance.

2.1C: Investments

Deposits	150,000	-
Total investments	150,000	-

Accounting Policy

Investments

Investments are placed with Council authorised Australian banks who provide the highest quoted interest rate, ensuring maximum amount invested with an individual bank does not exceed 75% of total AIMS' relevant monies.

2.2 Non-Financial Assets

2.2.1 Reconciliation of the Opening and Closing Balances of Property, Plant and Equipment and Computer Software

	Infrastructure		Computer		Vehicles		Office		Ships, Launches & Vessels		Total
	Buildings	Plant & Equipment	Equipment	Software	Equipment	Software	Equipment	Software	Equipment	Vessels	\$'000
As at 1 July 2025											
Gross book value	124,984	33,378	4,330	8,613	3,514	79	23,988	198,886			
Accumulated depreciation, amortisation and impairment	(1,818)	(7,182)	(1,316)	(8,211)	(1,039)	(25)	(3,273)	(22,864)			
Net book value 1 July 2025	123,166	26,196	3,014	402	2,475	54	20,714	176,022			
Additions											
Purchase or internally developed	-	197	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	197
Work in progress additions	2,922	8,159	1,265	-	312	72	1,085	13,815			
Work in progress transferred to capital	2,683	1,618	150	292	-	-	86	4,829			
Work in progress write-down and impairment of assets	(1,878)	-	-	-	-	-	-	(1,878)			
Depreciation and amortisation	(6,222)	(4,205)	(1,326)	(2,40)	(1,124)	(26)	(2,879)	(16,022)			
Depreciation on right-of-use assets	(81)	-	-	-	-	-	-	(81)			
Disposals Cost	-	(313)	(36)	(245)	(126)	-	(14)	(734)			
Disposals Depreciation	-	165	33	245	84	-	11	538			
Total as at 30 June 2026	120,590	31,816	3,100	454	1,622	100	19,003	176,686			
Total as at 30 June 2026 represented by											
Gross book value	128,711	43,038	5,709	8,660	3,700	152	25,145	215,114			
Accumulated depreciation, amortisation and impairment	(8,121)	(11,222)	(2,609)	(8,206)	(2,078)	(51)	(6,141)	(38,428)			
Total as at 30 June 2026	120,590	31,816	3,100	454	1,622	101	19,004	176,686			
Carrying amount of right-of-use assets	530										530

Depreciation rates are based on the following useful lives:

	5-72 years	2-42 years	4-23 years	2-10 years	5-30 years	3-25 years
--	------------	------------	------------	------------	------------	------------

1. Right-of-use assets associated with the lease of buildings have been classified as buildings.
2. No property, plant and equipment and intangibles are expected to be sold or disposed of within the next 12 months.
3. In 2026 the carrying amount of property, plant and equipment included \$32,983m (2025: \$29,806m) relating to expenditure incurred in the course of construction.

Contractual commitments for the acquisition of property, plant, equipment and intangible assets

As at 30 June 2026, AIMS had contractual commitments for the construction of assets of \$4.51m (2025: \$4.494m).

Revaluations of non-financial assets

In the current year a desktop valuation was completed by Pickles Valuation Services (Pickles).

For assets classified as having Level 2 inputs, AIMS reviewed the market data and replacement costs against similar assets in the most appropriate active market. This enabled AIMS to ascertain that the fair value was materially in line with observable market data. For assets classified as having Level 3 inputs, these assets were valued using the cost approach which is replacement cost net less physical deterioration, less functional (design/materials) and economic obsolescence to determine fair value.

All increments and decrements are transferred to the asset revaluation surplus by asset class and included in the equity section of the statement of financial position.

The carrying values of assets are in line with their fair value and resulted in no increment/decrement (2025: \$3,550m increment).

Any disposals of revalued assets, the revaluation amount is transferred to the retained surplus/deficit account. The Library assets were disposed in June 2023, the Library asset revaluation reserve of \$1.341m was transferred to retained earnings (2025: Nil).

2.2 Non-Financial Assets (cont)

Accounting Policy

Assets are recorded at cost on acquisition except as stated below. The cost of acquisition includes the fair value of assets transferred in exchange and liabilities undertaken. Financial assets are initially measured at their fair value plus transaction costs where appropriate.

Assets acquired at no cost, or for nominal consideration, are initially recognised as assets and income at their fair value at the date of acquisition, unless acquired as a consequence of restructuring of administrative arrangements. In the latter case, assets are initially recognised as contributions by owners at the amounts at which they were recognised in the transferor's accounts immediately prior to the restructuring.

Asset Recognition Threshold

Purchases of property, plant and equipment are recognised initially at cost in the statement of financial position, except for purchases costing less than \$2,000, which are expensed in the year of acquisition (other than where they form part of a group of similar items which are significant in total such as IT equipment).

Lease Right of Use (ROU) Assets

Leased ROU assets are capitalised at the commencement date of the lease and comprised of the initial lease liability amount, initial direct costs incurred when entering into the lease less any lease incentives received. These assets are accounted for by Commonwealth lessees as separate asset classes to corresponding assets owned outright, but included in the same column as where the corresponding underlying assets would be presented if they were owned.

On initial adoption of AASB 16 AIMS adjusted the ROU assets at the date of initial application by the amount of any provision for onerous leases recognised immediately before the date of initial application. Following initial application, an impairment review is undertaken for any right of use lease asset that shows indicators of impairment and an impairment loss is recognised against any right of use lease asset that is impaired. Lease ROU assets continue to be measured at cost after initial recognition in Commonwealth agency, GGS and Whole of Government financial statements.

Revaluations

Following initial recognition at cost, property plant and equipment (excluding ROU assets) are carried at fair value less subsequent accumulated depreciation and accumulated impairment losses. Valuations are conducted with sufficient frequency to ensure that the carrying amounts of assets do not differ materially from the assets' fair values as at the reporting date. The regularity of independent valuations depends upon the volatility of movements in market values for the relevant assets.

Revaluation adjustments are made on a class basis. Any revaluation increment was credited to equity under the heading of asset revaluation surplus except to the extent that it reversed a previous revaluation decrement of the same asset class that was previously recognised in the surplus/deficit. Revaluation decrements for a class of assets were recognised directly in the surplus/deficit except to the extent that they reverse a previous revaluation increment for that class.

Any accumulated depreciation as at the revaluation date is eliminated against the gross carrying amount of the asset and the asset restated to the revalued amount.

Depreciation

Depreciable property, plant and equipment assets are written-off to their estimated residual values over their estimated useful lives to the AIMS using, in all cases, the straight-line method of depreciation. Depreciation rates (useful lives), residual values and methods are reviewed at each reporting date and necessary adjustments are recognised in the current, or current and future reporting periods, as appropriate.

The depreciation rates for ROU assets are based on the commencement date to the earlier of the end of the useful life of the ROU asset or the end of the lease term.

Impairment

All assets were assessed for impairment at 30 June 2026. Where indications of impairment exist, the asset's recoverable amount is estimated and an impairment adjustment made if the asset's recoverable amount is less than its carrying amount.

The recoverable amount of an asset is the higher of its fair value less costs to sell and its value in use. Value in use is the present value of the future cash flows expected to be derived from the asset. Where the future economic benefit of an asset is not primarily dependent on the asset's ability to generate future cash flows, and the asset would be replaced if AIMS were deprived of the asset, its value in use is taken to be its depreciated replacement cost.

Derecognition

An item of property, plant and equipment is derecognised upon disposal or when no further future economic benefits are expected from its use or disposal.

2.2 Non-Financial Assets (cont)

Computer software

These assets are carried at cost less accumulated amortisation and accumulated impairment losses. Computer software costing less than \$2,000 is expensed in the year of acquisition. Computer software is amortised on a straight-line basis over its anticipated useful life and SaaS assets over the contractual term of the agreement. All software assets were assessed for indications of impairment as at 30 June 2026.

Accounting Judgements and Estimates

The fair value of property, plant and equipment is assessed at market value or current replacement costs as determined by an independent valuer. Every 3 years a full revaluation is completed and in between those years a desktop valuation is completed.

2.3 Payables

	2026 \$'000	2025 \$'000
2.3A: Suppliers		
Trade creditors and accruals	5,132	5,088
Total suppliers	5,132	5,088
2.3B: Other payables		
Contract liabilities from contracts with customers	24,720	27,410
National Sea Simulator construction and operational expenses funding	24,473	19,736
Total other payables	49,193	47,146

The contract liabilities are associated with research service contracts.
Refer Note 2.1B for information relating to contract assets.

Accounting Policy

Contract liabilities from contracts with customers

Contract liabilities from contracts with customers is classified as other payables is recognised for payments received for services that are not yet fully performed. This is measured in accordance with the accounting policy in Note 1.2A for own-source revenue.

2.3B: Leases

Lease liabilities	626	678
Total leases	626	678

Total cash outflow for leases for the year ended 30 June 2026 was \$66,203 (2025: \$131,121).

AIMS in its capacity as lessee has significant leasing arrangements at Port of Townsville for vessel berthing facilities. The lease has a monthly amount payable with annual CPI inflator clauses over 25 years.

Maturity analysis - contractual undiscounted cash flows

Within one year	61	90
Between one to five years	254	250
More than five years	369	434
Total leases	684	774

The above lease disclosure should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes 2.2.

Accounting Policy

For all new contracts entered into, AIMS considers whether the contract is, or contains a lease. A lease is defined as 'a contract, or part of a contract, that conveys the right to use an asset (the underlying asset) for a period of time in exchange for consideration'. Once it has been determined that a contract is, or contains a lease, the lease liability is initially measured at the present value of the lease payments unpaid at the commencement date, discounted using the interest rate implicit in the lease, if that rate is readily determinable, or the Governments incremental borrowing rate. Subsequent to initial measurement, the liability will be reduced for payments made and increased for interest. It is remeasured to reflect any reassessment or modification to the lease. When the lease liability is remeasured, the corresponding adjustment is reflected in the right-of-use asset or profit and loss depending on the nature of the reassessment or modification.

People and relationships

This section describes a range of employment and post employment benefits provided to our people and our relationships with other key people.

3.1 Employee Provisions

	2026 \$'000	2025 \$'000
Leave	19,024	18,165
Total employee provisions	19,024	18,165

Accounting Policy

Liabilities for 'short-term employee benefits' (as defined in AASB 119 *Employee Benefits*) and termination benefits expected within twelve months of the end of reporting period are measured at their nominal amounts.

Other long term employee benefits are measured as net total of the present value of the defined benefit obligation at the end of the reporting period minus the fair value at the end of the reporting period of plan assets (if any) out of which the obligations are to be settled directly.

Leave

The liability for employee benefits includes provision for annual leave and long service leave. No provision has been made for sick leave as all sick leave is non-vesting and the average sick leave taken in future years by employees of AIMS is estimated to be less than the annual entitlement for sick leave.

The leave liabilities are calculated on the basis of employees' remuneration at the estimated salary rates that will be applied at the time the leave is taken, including AIMS's employer superannuation contribution rates to the extent that the leave is likely to be taken during service rather than paid out on termination.

The estimate of the present value of the liability takes into account attrition rates and pay increases through promotion and inflation.

Superannuation

AIMS staff are members of the Commonwealth Superannuation Scheme (CSS), the Public Sector Superannuation Scheme (PSS), the PSS accumulation plan (PSSap), or other superannuation funds held outside the Australian Government.

The CSS and PSS are defined benefit schemes for the Australian Government. All other schemes are defined (accumulated funds) contribution schemes.

The liability for defined benefits is recognised in the financial statements of the Australian Government and is settled by the Australian Government in due course. This liability is reported by the Department of Finance administered schedules and notes.

AIMS makes employer contributions to the employees' superannuation schemes at rates determined by an actuary to be sufficient to meet the current cost to the Government. AIMS accounts for contributions as if they were contributions to defined contribution plans.

Accounting Judgements and Estimates

Leave provisions involve assumptions based on the expected tenure of existing staff, patterns of leave claims and payouts, future salary movements and future discount rates.

3.2: Key Management Personnel Remuneration

Key management personnel are those persons having authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the entity, directly or indirectly, including any director (whether executive or otherwise) of the entity. AIMS has determined the Key Management Personnel during the reporting period to be Council members, CEO and Senior Management. Key management personnel remuneration is reported below.

	2026	2025
	\$'000	\$'000
Short-term employee benefits	2,936	2,896
Post-employment benefits	389	387
Other long-term employee benefits	(190)	(5)
Total key management personnel remuneration expenses¹	3,135	3,278

Name & Position title	Short-term benefits		Post employment benefits	Other long term benefits	Total remuneration
	Base Salary	Other benefits and allowances			
Dr Elizabeth Woods OAM - Chairperson*	57,445	-	9,154	-	66,599
Ms Patricia Kelly PSM - Council and Audit Committee member (Audit Committee member to 27 July 2025)*	38,311	-	6,054	-	44,365
Professor Simon Biggs - Council member*	29,850	-	-	-	29,850
Mr Stephen Duffield - Council member and Audit Committee member*	34,142	-	5,441	-	39,583
Professor Peter Steinberg - Council member*	28,732	-	4,579	-	33,311
Dr Cass Hunter - Council member and Audit Committee member (Audit Committee member from 28 July 2025)*	33,836	-	5,368	-	39,204
Professor Selina Stoad - CEO and Council member*	54,147	23,702	30,037	13,021	608,231
Mr David Mead - Executive Director Strategic Development* (ceased 23 December 2025)	3,010	-	-	(146,104)	(143,094)
Ms Michelle Noon - Chief Finance Officer*	279,687	21,153	43,253	6,667	350,760
Dr Richard Brinkman - Chief Operating Officer*	232,101	-	56,265	10,459	298,825
Dr Claire Streeten - Research Program Director	200,260	37,358	35,032	7,536	280,186
Dr Line Bay - Research Program Director	207,837	34,157	31,973	7,469	281,436
Dr Karen Miller - Research Program Director	56,853	17,756	20,733	(56,505)	38,837
Dr David Wachenfeld - Research Program Director	152,012	34,157	42,428	(49,265)	179,332
Dr Kamron Christopher-Research Program Director*	303,538	9,698	38,500	5,951	357,687
Ms Tara McLaren - Acting Research Program Director	176,641	31,946	29,935	3,343	241,865
Ms Justine Bolton - Acting Chief Finance Officer (from 01/04/2025 to 08/04/2026)	5,814	-	-	-	5,814
Ms Dianne McLean - Acting Research Program Director (from 18/08/2025 to 30/06/2026)	155,336	48,327	30,638	7,589	241,890
Ms Barbara Robson - Acting Research Program Director (from 04/07/2025 to 14/07/2025)	6,137	383	-	-	6,520
Mr David Crossman - Research Program Director (from 04/08/2025 to 4/08/2025 & 15/12/2025 to 23/01/2026)	33,068	-	-	-	35,123
Mr Manuel Gonzalez Rivero - Acting Research Program Director (from 28/01/2025 to 19/06/2026)	74,441	13,045	-	-	87,486
Mr Patrick Bunday - Acting Chief Operating Officer (from 11/05/2026 to 16/06/2026)	12,116	-	-	-	12,116
Total	2,662,638	273,737	389,390	(189,839)	3,135,926

* denotes staff paid under Remuneration Tribunal (Remuneration and Allowances for Holders of Part-time Public Office) Determination 2025.

+ denotes staff paid under Remuneration Tribunal (Principal Executive Officers) Determination 2025.

+ denotes staff paid through Individual Workplace Agreements.

All other KMP are paid with accordance to AIMS Enterprise Agreement.

The total number of key management personnel that are included in the above table are 22 individuals (2025; 18 individuals). All members in the table were a Key Management Personnel for the financial year except where noted.

¹ The above key management personnel remuneration excludes the remuneration and other benefits of the Portfolio Minister. The Portfolio Minister's remuneration and other benefits are set by the Remuneration Tribunal and are not paid by AIMS.

Remuneration of Senior Executives

All AIMS Senior Executives are captured within the Key Management Personnel (above).

Other highly paid staff - non-Key Management Personnel

	# highly paid staff	Short-term benefits		Post employment benefits		Other long term benefits		Total Remuneration	
		Average base Salary	Average other benefits and allowances	Average superannuation contributions	Average long service leave	Average total remuneration	Average total remuneration	Average total remuneration	Average total remuneration
Total remuneration Band									
\$265,000 - \$270,000 *	2	187,571	9,351	32,593	11,651	241,166	241,166	241,166	241,166
\$270,001 - \$295,000	1	219,597	26,184	37,806	7,907	291,494	291,494	291,494	291,494
Total		407,168	35,535	70,399	19,558	532,660	532,660	532,660	532,660

* Includes 1 staff member who worked 0.80 FTE

3.3 Related Party Disclosures

Related party relationships

AIMS is a Commonwealth controlled entity. Related parties to AIMS are Board members, Executive and Senior Management, the Portfolio Minister, and other Australian Government entities.

Transactions with related parties

Given the breadth of Government activities, related parties may transact with the Government sector in the same capacity as ordinary citizens. These transactions have not been separately included in this note.

Details of transactions with related parties during the year for the purchase of science services were:

	2026 \$,000	2025 \$'000
James Cook University	438	687
University of Western Australia	-	725
Total	438	1,412

Details of transactions with related parties during the year for the rendering of science services were:

	2026 \$,000	2025 \$'000
Great Barrier Reef Foundation	5,552	5,958
University of Tasmania	3,508	3,013
Total	9,060	8,971

There were no other transactions with related entities during the year.

Managing Uncertainties

This section analyses how the Australian Institute of Marine Science manages financial risks within its operating environment.

4.1 Contingent Assets and Liabilities

Contingent assets

	2026	2025
Guarantees	\$,000	\$'000
Balance from previous period	1,042	1,110
New contingent assets recognised	108	-
Rights expired	(1,042)	(68)
Total	108	1,042

Quantifiable Contingencies

AIMS holds performance guarantees of \$0.108m (2025: \$1.042m). Performance guarantees include Bank guarantees in relation to the supply of generators as part of the AIMS electrical resilience upgrade.

Unquantifiable Contingencies

AIMS has a 25 year lease on a berthing facility with Port of Townsville. At the expiry of the lease AIMS is required to carry out its own cost remediation work necessary to return the level of contamination in the leased land to a level as prescribed by Assessment and Management of Containment Land in Queensland (May 1998). AIMS is unable to reliably estimate the cost of any future remediation.

Accounting Policy

Contingent liabilities and contingent assets are not recognised in the statement of financial position but are reported in the relevant schedules and notes. They may arise from uncertainty as to the existence of a liability or asset or represent an asset or liability in respect of which the amount cannot be reliably measured. Contingent assets are disclosed when settlement is probable but not virtually certain and contingent liabilities are disclosed when settlement is greater than remote.

Accounting Judgements and Estimates

AIMS does not hold any or transport dangerous goods and/or chemicals at the Port of Townsville property and we are required to formally assess the property every 5 years for contamination by an independent environmental assessor therefore our estimate is that there will be no contamination of the Townsville Port land over the lease period and we will not be required to complete any remediation work at the end of the lease.

4.2 Financial Instruments

	2026 \$,000	2025 \$'000
4.2: Categories of Financial Instruments		
Financial Assets at amortised cost		
Cash and cash equivalents	36,242	168,384
Other investments	150,000	-
Trade and other receivables	14,889	15,083
Total financial assets at amortised cost	201,131	183,467
Financial Liabilities		
Financial liabilities measured at amortised cost		
Suppliers	5,132	5,088
Total financial liabilities measured at amortised cost	5,132	5,088

Accounting Policy

Financial Assets

AIMS classifies its financial assets measured at amortised cost as per AASB 9 Financial Instruments.

The classification depends on both the AIMS's business model for managing the financial assets and contractual cash flow characteristics at the time of initial recognition. Financial assets are recognised when the AIMS becomes a party to the contract and, as a consequence, has a legal right to receive or a legal obligation to pay cash and derecognised when the contractual rights to the cash from the financial asset expire or are transferred upon trade date.

Impairment of Financial Assets

Financial assets are assessed for impairment at the end of each reporting period based on Expected Credit Losses, using the general approach which measures the loss allowance based on an amount equal to lifetime expected credit losses where risk has significantly increased, or an amount equal to 12-month expected credit losses if risk has not increased.

The simplified approach for trade, contract and lease receivables is used. This approach always measures the loss allowance as the amount equal to the lifetime expected credit losses.

A write-off constitutes a derecognition event where the write-off directly reduces the gross carrying amount of the financial asset.

Financial Assets at amortised cost

Financial assets included in this category need to meet two criteria:

1. the financial asset is held in order to collect the contractual cash flows; and
2. the cash flows are solely payments of principal and interest (SPPI) on the principal outstanding amount.

Amortised cost is determined using the effective interest rate method.

Effective interest rate

Income is recognised on an effective interest rate basis for financial assets that are recognised at amortised cost.

Financial Liabilities

Financial liabilities are classified as either financial liabilities 'at fair value through profit or loss' or other financial liabilities. Financial liabilities are recognised and derecognised upon 'trade date'.

Financial liabilities at amortised cost

Financial liabilities, including borrowings, are initially measured at fair value, net of transaction costs. These liabilities are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, with interest expense recognised on an effective interest basis.

Suppliers and other payables are recognised at amortised cost. Liabilities are recognised to the extent that the goods or services have been received (irrespective of having been invoiced).

4.3 Fair Value Measurements

Accounting Policy

AIMS deems transfers between levels of the fair value hierarchy to have occurred at 30 June 2026.

4.3: Fair Value Measurements

	Fair value measurements at the end of the reporting period	
	2026 \$,000	2025 \$,000
Non-financial assets		
Buildings	120,590	123,166
Infrastructure, plant and equipment	31,816	26,196
Ships, launches & vessels	19,004	20,714
Computer equipment	3,554	3,416
Vehicles	1,622	2,475
Office equipment	101	54
Total non-financial assets	176,686	176,020

1. The following valuation techniques were used:

Cost approach: based on the amount required to replace the service potential of an asset

Market approach: based on market transactions involving identical or similar assets or liabilities

AIMS procured valuation services from Pickles Valuation Services (Pickles) and relied on valuation models provided by Pickles. Pickles re-tests the valuation model every 12 months and has provided written assurance to AIMS that the model developed is compliant with AASB 13.

Other Information

5.1 Current / non-current distinction for assets and liabilities

	2026 \$,000	2025 \$,000
Assets expected to be recovered in:		
No more than 12 months		
Cash and cash equivalents	36,242	168,384
Trade and other receivables	14,889	15,083
Other investments	150,000	-
Inventory	552	370
Prepayments	2,997	875
Total no more than 12 months	204,680	184,712
More than 12 months		
Buildings	120,590	123,166
Infrastructure, plant & equipment	31,816	26,196
Computer equipment	3,100	3,014
Computer software	454	402
Vehicles	1,622	2,475
Office Equipment	101	54
Ships, Launches and vessel	19,004	20,714
Prepayments	-	1,870
Total more than 12 months	176,687	177,891
Total assets	381,366	362,603
Liabilities expected to be settled in:		
No more than 12 months		
Suppliers	5,132	5,088
Salaries and wages	-	1,710
Other payables	46,109	43,109
Leases	48	76
Employee provisions	16,850	16,258
Total no more than 12 months	68,139	66,241
More than 12 months		
Other payables	3,084	4,036
Leases	578	603
Make good provision	17	17
Employee provisions	2,174	1,907
Total more than 12 months	5,853	6,563
Total Liabilities	73,992	72,804

5.2 Management of Great Barrier Reef Foundation Reef Restoration and Adaptation Program funds

From 1 July 2020, AIMS has managed the Great Barrier Reef Foundation (GBRF) Reef Restoration and Adaptation Program (RRAP) funds on behalf of the RRAP collaboration partnership (RRAP partnership). The RRAP partnership ceased in June 2026.

In its capacity as the Managing Entity (ME), AIMS managed the funds received by the RRAP partnership and managed the milestone payments paid from these funds to the contracted RRAP participants. Transactions managed by AIMS in its capacity as ME of the RRAP partnership do not form part of these accounts.

AIMS recognised \$9,400,000 DCCEE funding (2025: \$23,782,000) made up of \$7,198,000 2025-26 annual RRAP funding and \$2,202,000 transferred from Unearned Revenue.

AIMS created separate bank accounts to manage receiving the funding and paying the contracted milestone payments from these funds. At the completion of the RRAP partnership in June 2026, \$2,015,844 in unspent funds were transferred to AIMS. At 30 June 2026, \$2,000,911 of these unspent funds are recognised by AIMS as unearned income and will be applied in 2026-27 in accordance with DCCEE agreement.

As the RRAP partnership bank accounts were closed on 30 June 2026, the total balance of these bank accounts on 30 June 2026 are \$Nil (2025: \$12,877,244).

Part Six: Appendices and Indexes

Appendix A: Science Publications

AIMS' complete bibliography for 2025-26 is available at <https://www.aims.gov.au/information-centre/corporate-publications/annual-reports>.

Appendix B: External Committees and Non-Government Organisations and Positions

A list of external committees and non-government organisations and positions in which AIMS participates is available at <https://www.aims.gov.au/information-centre/corporate-publications/annual-reports>.

Appendix C: Research Impact Case Studies

AIMS has produced 2 impact case studies which align with international assessment of research impact contributions. The case studies are available at <https://www.aims.gov.au/information-centre/corporate-publications/annual-reports>.

Index: Acronyms

Acronym	Term in full
ABN	Australian Business Number
AI	Artificial Intelligence
AIMS	Australian Institute of Marine Science
AIMS Act	Australian Institute of Marine Science Act 1972
AIMS@CDU	AIMS at Charles Darwin University
AIMS@JCU	AIMS at James Cook University
ANAO	Australian National Audit Office
AODN	Australian Ocean Data Network
APS	Australian Public Service
ASSETS	Aboriginal Summer School for Excellence in Technology and Science
ASV	Autonomous Surface Vehicle
ATSIMS	Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders in Marine Science
AUV	Autonomous Underwater Vehicle
BOM	Bureau of Meteorology
BRIN	National Research and Innovation Agency (Indonesia)
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CDU	Charles Darwin University
CFO	Chief Finance Officer
CORDAP	Coral Research and Development Accelerator Platform
CPSU	Community and Public Sector Union
CRISPR	Clustered Regularly Interspaced Short Palindromic Repeats
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
DBCA	Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions
DCCEEW	Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water

Acronym	Term in full
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DISR	Department of Industry, Science and Resources
DPIRD	Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development
ECR	Early Career Researcher
EEO	Equal Employment Opportunity
EPBC Act	Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999
ESD	Ecologically Sustainable Development
FOI	Freedom of Information
FOI Act	Freedom of Information Act 1982
FSANZ	Food Standards Australia New Zealand
FTE	Full-Time Equivalent
FWCI	Field Weighted Citation Impact
GA	Geoscience Australia
GBR	Great Barrier Reef
GBRF	Great Barrier Reef Foundation
GCRMN	Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network
GLUBS	Global Library of Underwater Biological Sounds
GMO	Genetically Modified Organism
GOOS	Global Ocean Observing System
HDR	Higher Degree Research
HSE	Health, Safety and Environment
HSR	Health and Safety Representative
ICES	International Council for the Exploration of the Sea
ICRI	International Coral Reef Initiative
IMOS	Integrated Marine Observing System
IPOI	Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative
IPS	Information Publication Scheme
IQOE	International Quiet Ocean Experiment
ISSN	International Standard Serial Number
JCC	Joint Consultative Committee
LTMP	Long-Term Monitoring Program
ML	Megalitre
MMP	Marine Monitoring Program
MMRI	Maldives Marine Research Institute
MRI	Marine Resources Initiative
NAMMA	Northern Australian Marine Monitoring Alliance
NCCR	National Centre for Coastal Research (India)
NCRIS	National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy
NESP	National Environmental Science Program
NLRD	Notifiable Low Risk Dealing

Acronym	Term in full
NMSC	National Marine Science Committee
NOAA	US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NOPSEMA	National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority
NPS	Net Promoter Score
OAIC	Office of the Australian Information Commissioner
OAM	Order of Australia Medal
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OOSC	One Ocean Science Congress
PBS	Portfolio Budget Statement
PGPA Act	Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013
PI	Psychological Incident
PV	Photovoltaic
QRIDA	Queensland Rural and Industry Development Authority
RDA	Research Data Australia
RIMReP	Reef 2050 Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Program
ROV	Remotely Operated Vehicle
RRAP	Reef Restoration and Adaptation Program
RTP	Reef Trust Partnership
SCOR	Scientific Committee on Oceanic Research
SeaSim	National Sea Simulator
SHAMS	General Organization for the Conservation of Coral Reefs and Turtles in the Red Sea
SIMS	Sydney Institute of Marine Science
SPREP	Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme
UNOC	United Nations Ocean Conference
VALMAS	Value of Marine Artificial Structures
WAMSI	Western Australian Marine Science Institution
WHS	Work Health and Safety

List of Requirements

AIMS' requirement for annual reporting is outlined under s. 7 (2) of the AIMS Act, which states that the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013 applies to the Institute. That Act deals with matters relating to corporate Commonwealth entities, including reporting and the use and management of public resources.

The list below shows AIMS' compliance with annual report information requirements for corporate Commonwealth entities as stipulated under s. 46 of Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013 (PGPA Act).

The annual financial statements (Part 5 of this report) were prepared in accordance with ss. 42 and 43 of the PGPA Act and the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability (Financial Reporting) Rule 2015.

This annual report complies with parliamentary standards of presentation and printing and uses plain English and clear design.

PGPA Rule Reference	Part of Report	Description	Requirement
17BE	Contents of annual report		
17BE(a)	Part 1 Overview - About AIMS Part 3 Management and Accountability - Role and Legislation	Details of the legislation establishing the body	Mandatory
17BE(b)(i)	Part 3 Management and Accountability - Role and Legislation	A summary of the objects and functions of the entity as set out in legislation	Mandatory
17BE(b)(ii)	Part 3 Management and Accountability - Role and Legislation	The purposes of the entity as included in the entity's corporate plan for the reporting period	Mandatory
17BE(c)	Part 3 Management and Accountability - Responsible Minister	The names of the persons holding the position of responsible Minister or responsible Ministers during the reporting period, and the titles of those responsible Ministers	Mandatory
17BE(d)	Part 3 Management and Accountability Government Engagement	Directions given to the entity by the Minister under an Act or instrument during the reporting period	If applicable, mandatory
17BE(e)	Part 3 Management and Accountability Government Engagement	Any government policy order that applied in relation to the entity during the reporting period under section 22 of the Act	If applicable, mandatory
17BE(f)	Part 3 Management and Accountability Government Engagement	Particulars of non-compliance with: (a) a direction given to the entity by the Minister under an Act or instrument during the reporting period; or (b) a government policy order that applied in relation to the entity during the reporting period under section 22 of the Act	If applicable, mandatory
17BE(g)	Part 2 Performance Statements	Annual performance statements in accordance with paragraph 39(1)(b) of the Act and section 16F of the rule	Mandatory
17BE(h), 17BE(i)	Part 3 Management and Accountability Duty to inform & Ministerial issues Fraud control	A statement of significant issues reported to the Minister under paragraph 19(1)(e) of the Act that relates to non-compliance with finance law and action taken to remedy non-compliance	If applicable, mandatory
17BE(j)	Part 3 Management and Accountability Governance, AIMS Council	Information on the accountable authority, or each member of the accountable authority, of the entity during the reporting period	Mandatory
17BE(k)	Part 4 Our People Organisational Structure	Outline of the organisational structure of the entity (including any subsidiaries of the entity)	Mandatory
17BE(ka)	Part 4 Our People Staff	Statistics on the entity's employees on an ongoing and non-ongoing basis, including the following: (a) statistics on full-time employees; (b) statistics on part-time employees; (c) statistics on gender; (d) statistics on staff location	Mandatory
17BE(l)	Part 1 Overview About AIMS	Outline of the location (whether or not in Australia) of major activities or facilities of the entity	Mandatory
17BE(m)	Part 3 Management and Accountability Corporate Governance	Information relating to the main corporate governance practices used by the entity during the reporting period	Mandatory
17BE(n), 17BE(o)	Part 3 Management and Accountability Related Parties Part 5 Financial Statements section 3.3	For transactions with a related Commonwealth entity or related company where the value of the transaction, or if there is more than one transaction, the aggregate of those transactions, is more than \$10,000 (inclusive of GST): (a) the decision-making process undertaken by the accountable authority to approve the entity paying for a good or service from, or providing a grant to, the related Commonwealth entity or related company; and (b) the value of the transaction, or if there is	If applicable, mandatory

PGPA Rule Reference	Part of Report	Description	Requirement
		more than one transaction, the number of transactions and the aggregate of value of the transactions	
17BE(p)	Part 2 Performance Statements Results and Commentary on Performance	Any significant activities and changes that affected the operation or structure of the entity during the reporting period	If applicable, mandatory
17BE(q)	n/a	Particulars of judicial decisions or decisions of administrative tribunals that may have a significant effect on the operations of the entity	If applicable, mandatory
17BE(r)	n/a	Particulars of any reports on the entity given by: (a) the Auditor-General (other than a report under section 43 of the Act); or (b) a Parliamentary Committee; or (c) the Commonwealth Ombudsman; or (d) the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner	If applicable, mandatory
17BE(s)	n/a	An explanation of information not obtained from a subsidiary of the entity and the effect of not having the information on the annual report	If applicable, mandatory
17BE(t)	Part 3 Management and Accountability Indemnities and Insurance Premiums for Officers	Details of any indemnity that applied during the reporting period to the accountable authority, any member of the accountable authority or officer of the entity against a liability (including premiums paid, or agreed to be paid, for insurance against the authority, member or officer's liability for legal costs)	If applicable, mandatory
17BE(taa)	Part 3 Management and Accountability Governance, Audit Committee, AIMS Council	The following information about the audit committee for the entity: (a) a direct electronic address of the charter determining the functions of the audit committee; (b) the name of each member of the audit committee; (c) the qualifications, knowledge, skills or experience of each member of the audit committee; (d) information about each member's attendance at meetings of the audit committee; (e) the remuneration of each member of the audit committee	Mandatory
17BE(ta)	Part 5 Financial Statements section 3.2	Information about executive remuneration	Mandatory

Performance Statements		
The accountable authority must include a copy of the annual performance statements in the entity's annual report that is tabled in the Parliament. The annual performance statements must: (a) provide information about the entity's performance in achieving its purposes; and (b) comply with any requirements prescribed by the rules.	s. 39(1) and (2)	Part 2 Performance Statements
The performance statement must include a statement: declaring that the performance statements are prepared for section 39(1)(a) of the PGPA Act and any other applicable legislation specifying the reporting period for which the performance statements are prepared declaring that, in the opinion of the accountable authority, the performance statements accurately present the entity's performance and comply with s. 39(2) of the PGPA Act.	s. 16F(2)	Part 2 Performance Statements
The performance statement must include the results of the measurement and assessment of performance.	s. 16F(2)	Part 2 Performance Statements
The performance statement must include an analysis of the factors that contributed to the entity's performance, including any changes to: the entity's purpose, activities or organisational capacity; or the environment in which the entity operated that may have had a significant impact on performance.	s. 16F(2)	Part 2 Performance Statements Results and Commentary on Performance

Financial statements		
The accountable authority must prepare annual financial statements and given to the Auditor-General.	s. 42(1)	Part 5 Financial Statements
The accountable authority must ensure that all the subsidiaries' financial statements are audited by the Auditor-General.	s. 44(2)	n/a
A copy of the financial statement and the Auditor-General's report must be included in the annual report.	s. 43(4)	Part 5 Financial Statements
The financial statement must comply with the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability (Financial Reporting) Rule 2015.	s. 42(2)(a)	Part 5 Financial Statements

Other requirements		
Statement of Expectations	Suggested practice	Part 2 Performance Statements Statement of Ministerial Expectations
Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999	EPBC Act Section 516A(6)	Part 4 Our People Environmental Performance
Equal Employment Opportunity (Commonwealth Authorities) Act 1997	EEO Act Section 9	Part 4 Our People Equal Opportunity and Workforce Diversity
Work Health and Safety Act 2011	WHS Act Section 4(1)	Part 4 Our People Health and Safety
Privacy Act 1988		Part 3 Management and Accountability Privacy Act 1988
Freedom of Information Act 1982	Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PMC)	Part 3 Management and Accountability Freedom of Information Act 1982
National Disability Strategy 2010–2020	PMC	Part 4 Our People Equal Opportunity and Workforce Diversity
Public Interest Disclosure Act 2013	PID Act	Part 3 Management and Accountability Public Interest Disclosure Act 2013
Fraud control		Part 3 Management and Accountability Fraud Control

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