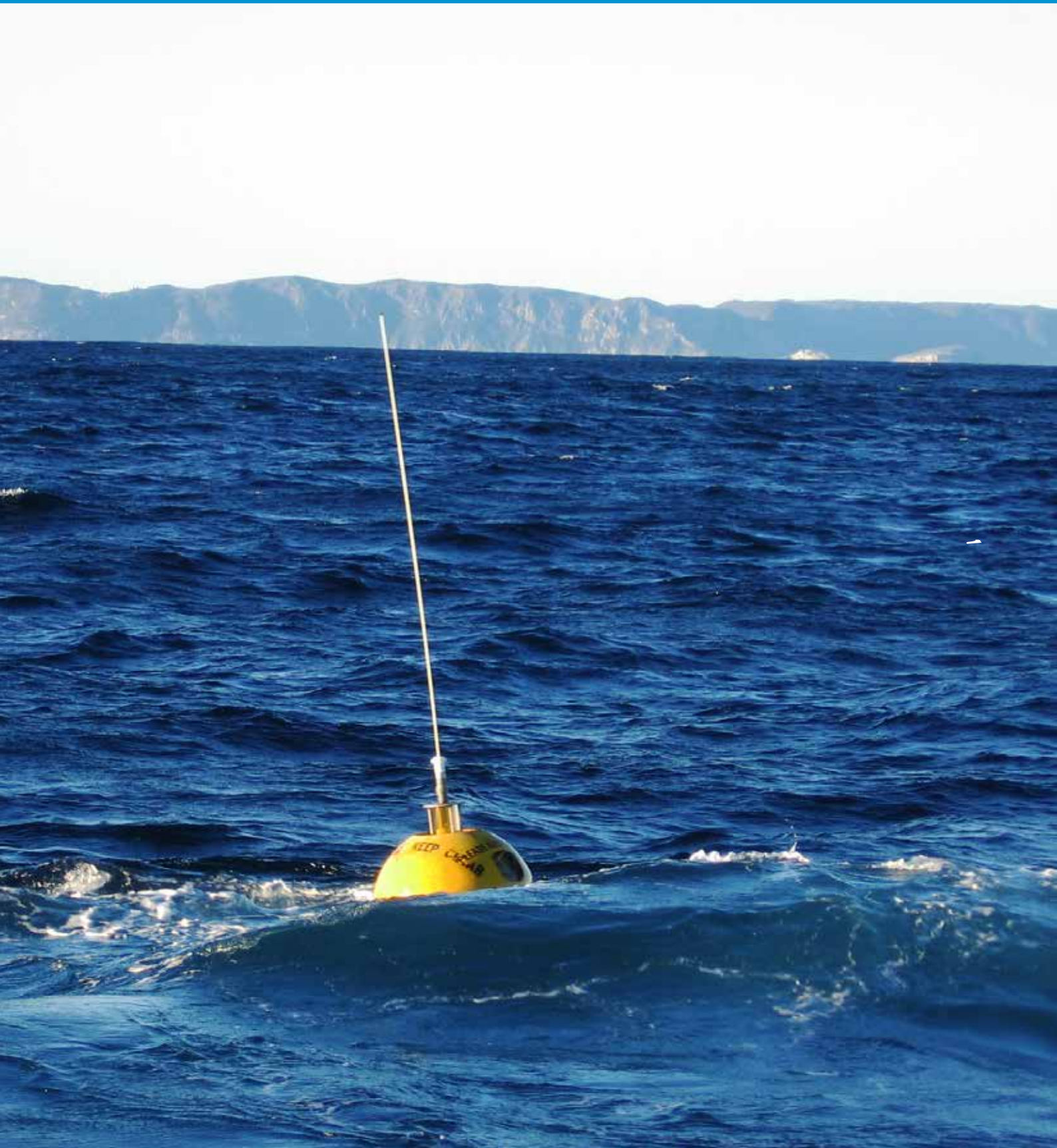




Department of  
Transport

# Coastal Infrastructure Coastal Hazard Management Role Statement

December 2016



## Definitions

The following definitions are adopted for the purposes of this statement.

**Coast:** the coastal zone where interaction of the sea and land processes occurs. It is highly dynamic. It shifts its position in seasons, years and decades.

**Coastal management:** The direction of day-to-day activities, occurring on coastal land and nearshore waters that have the potential to modify the physical or biological condition of the coast.

**Coastal engineering:** The applied science of assessing and addressing the reaction of different coastal features to the forces of ocean and tidal waters.

**Coastal hazard:** Consequences of coastal processes that affect the environment and safety of people. Potential coastal hazards include erosion, accretion and inundation (WAPC, 2013).

**Adaptation:** An adjustment in natural or human systems in response to actual or expected stimuli or their effects, which moderates harm or exploits beneficial opportunities. Adaptation is the means for maximising the gains and minimising the losses associated with coastal hazards over the planning timeframe.

**Coastal protection works:** Any permanent or periodic work undertaken primarily to alter physical coastal processes and/or manage the effects of coastal hazards.

**Local coastal manager:** Organisation with tenure/ ownership or vested management authority and responsibility of coastal land, as foreshore reserves, and coastal assets (whether natural or built).

**Ownership:** Ownership (of structures) implies responsibility for ongoing use, care, control and maintenance, rather than simple proprietorship of land.

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## Introduction

The purpose of this document is to articulate the role of the Department of Transport (DoT) in regard to data, advice and funding for coastal hazard management in WA. This document replaces the 2006 Coastal Protection Policy for WA.

DoT's role applies primarily to the coastline immediately adjacent to the oceans of WA. Estuarine shorelines are included as an area of secondary focus.

Assistance and authority for expenditure provided by DoT is by Ministerial direction under Section 5(1)(k) of the *Marine and Harbours Act 1981*, ("perform such other duties relating to marine affairs within the State, not being inconsistent with this Act").

### 1.1 Context

Most future coastal development in WA will have a coastal foreshore reserve accommodating a range of functions and values, including allowance to absorb the likely impacts of coastal hazards with

minimal management. However, coastal management activities may still be required in many locations where:

- existing assets and values are under threat;
- existing management strategies require ongoing attention;
- older coastal protection structures (deemed essential) are deteriorating;
- future development requires a coastal location (e.g. ports and harbours, surf clubs etc.); and
- extreme cyclones and storms can cause damage.

There is no Commonwealth legislation for coastal management in Australia, and no national agency with a mandate to monitor and manage the coastal zone.

There is no specific statute for coastal hazard management in WA. Instead, since the early 1970s the State Government has involved itself in coastal hazard management through the functions of its agencies using a 'networked' approach, as described in *Coasts WA: Better Integration* (DPI, 2003).

The Western Australian Planning Commission's (WAPC) *State Planning Policy No.2.6 - State Coastal*

*Planning Policy* (gazetted in 2013) provides statutory guidance and informs matters related to sustainable coastal land use and development.

The *State Coastal Planning Policy* requires coastal planning to adhere to the principles of coastal hazard risk management and adaptation planning (CHRMAP). CHRMAP is the practice of systematically identifying and understanding coastal hazard risks and putting in place controls to manage them. The Department supports the use of CHRMAP principles for coastal erosion and inundation management and recognises they can be applied at different time and space scales.

For information on CHRMAP please refer to:

- WAPC's *State Planning Policy No.2.6 State Coastal Planning Policy 2013*
- WAPC's *State Planning Policy No.2.6 State Coastal Planning Policy Guidelines 2013*
- WAPC's *Coastal Hazard Risk Management and Adaptation Planning Guidelines 2014*

The Department provides advice and assistance in relation to coastal hazard management recognising that:

- Many local coastal managers cannot maintain expertise in coastal engineering and science or collect and maintain the necessary data to make informed decisions.
- In many cases built coastal assets are at risk to coastal hazards. This is often due to limited knowledge, information or understanding of coastal hazards at the time of past decision making.
- Coastal erosion and inundation management is an ongoing complex, and expensive, task and the Department is willing to share coastal data and support local coastal managers with its technical expertise.

## 1.2 Coastal management responsibility

The management of coastal lands and assets (whether natural or built) on public land is the responsibility of the organisation with management authority, vesting or tenure of the area, known as the local coastal manager. Management activities to address coastal erosion and inundation risks on public land will be undertaken by the local coastal manager.

Most local coastal managers are local government authorities that have designated management responsibility (through land tenure or vesting) for large tracts of coastal land as foreshore reserves. They have an active role in the planning and development of their coastal land. However, in some instances the local coastal manager is an organisation, other than

a local government authority, which has management authority over a section of the coastal foreshore, e.g. Port Authorities, Aboriginal land councils, State agencies and authorities, and other corporate bodies directly involved in coastal management.

## 2. The Department's role

Under the *Marine and Harbours Act 1981* the Department is charged with providing management, engineering, and scientific services for the planning of its land and water based maritime facilities. To provide these services the acquisition, analysis, management and presentation of information and data measuring the physical characteristics of the coast is required. The same coastal information, data, and expertise are useful to other State agencies and local coastal managers in decision-making for the WA coast.

### 2.1.1 Provision of information, data and technical advice

On account of the clear public benefit to WA the Department shares coastal information and data with local coastal managers where requested and available. The Department provides specialist scientific and engineering advice for coastal hazard risk assessment and management when and where resources permit.

### 2.1.2 Provision of funding assistance

Where appropriate the Department provides funding assistance to local coastal managers through a competitive coastal grants scheme to undertake projects which manage coastal hazards for the public benefit. These are known as Coastal Adaptation and Protection (CAP) Grants.

### 2.1.3 Temporary coastal erosion management measures

Temporary management measures are often required when local coastal managers consider there to be imminent threat to local values and assets, or there is an emergency where human life is at risk. Effective temporary management allows time for long-term sustainable management approaches to be developed and implemented, without limiting future management options.

The Department recommends temporary works only when the value of the public assets is greater than the cost of the works. Local coastal managers are responsible for initiating and managing temporary works. The Department will provide technical advice and assistance when and where resources permit.

## Contact

### **Department of Transport**

1 Essex St, Fremantle WA 6160

Phone: (08) 9435 7500

Fax: (08) 9435 7800

**[www.transport.wa.gov.au](http://www.transport.wa.gov.au)**

Email: [coastalmanagement@transport.wa.gov.au](mailto:coastalmanagement@transport.wa.gov.au)

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