



Environment Protection Authority Victoria

17 May 2023

Heatherdale Community Action Group Meeting

Northern Metropolitan Region Presentation



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Welcome



About EPA

EPA Victoria

Our purpose

Environment Protection Authority Victoria (EPA) is Victoria's environmental regulator protecting the health of our communities and environment.

We operate under the *Environment Protection Act 2017* (the Act) to meet the environmental challenges facing Victoria.

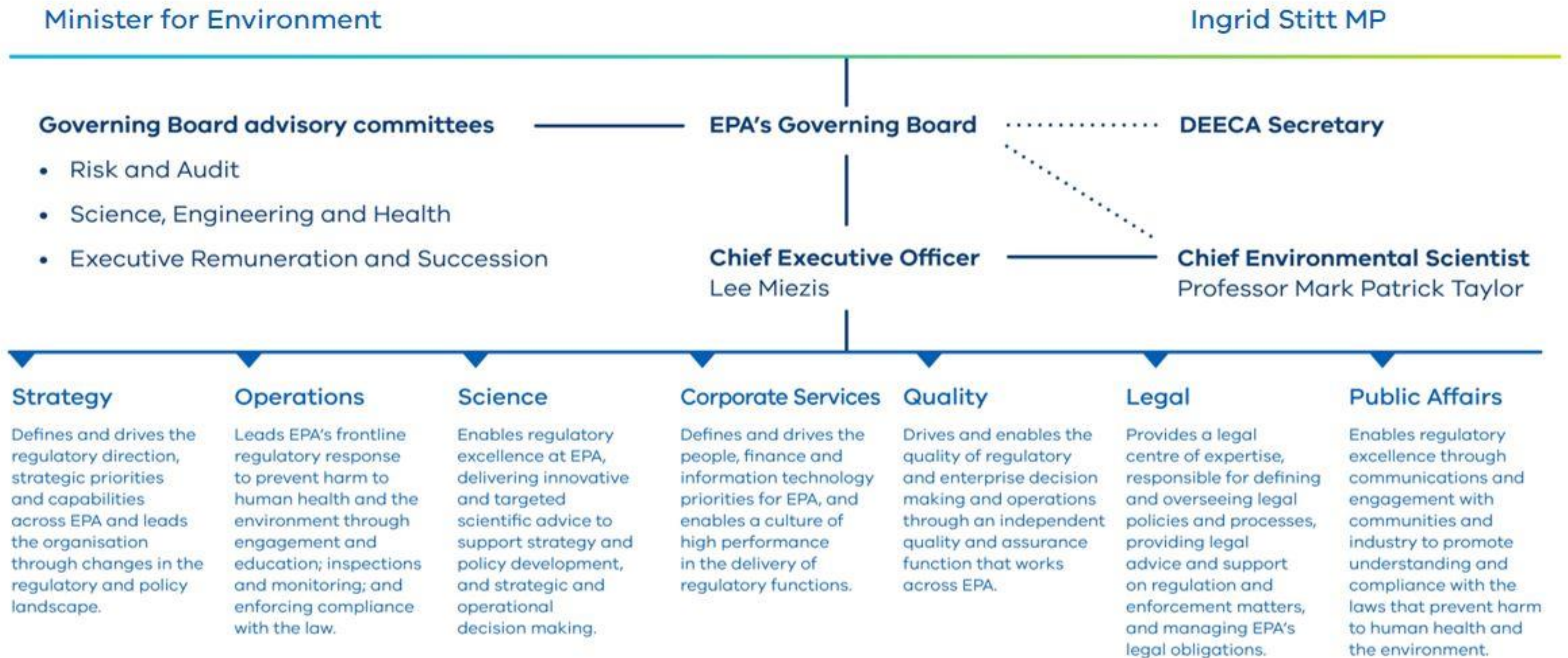
What do we do?

We work with community, industry and business to prevent and reduce the harmful effects of pollution and waste on Victoria's environment and people.

Why do we do this?

Everyone has a role in preventing harm to Victoria's environment. Small acts that harm our environment add up and can have a big impact. Like you, we want Victoria's environment to be a liveable, healthy place.

Our structure



Our values



EPA Strategic Plan 2022- 27

By 2027 we want to see the following outcomes and meet the following objectives:

- Our environment is cleaner and communities are healthier
- All Victorians reduce their environmental risks
- We have impact and influence



Objective 1

Make Victorians aware of their responsibilities to prevent harm to human health and the environment.



Objective 2

Target priority risks of harm so our efforts are optimised to make the biggest difference.



Objective 3

Integrate environmental public health into everything we do.



Objective 4

Strengthen our culture and capability to achieve organisational excellence.

A focus on prevention of harm

Activities



Harm to human health or the environment

2017 Act focus

Preventing harm by making **risk management** a positive legal obligation



1970 Act focus

Responding to incidents that have caused harm and punishing polluters

Victoria's key risks of harm to human health and the environment



Ongoing point
source generators



Potential catastrophic
events and other major
failures



Cumulative emissions from
individuals and diffuse sources



Spills and incidents
from businesses



Exposure to
contaminants and
legacy sites



Hidden criminal activities
creating new long-term
risks



Conflicts between adjacent
land uses and ongoing
encroachment

EPA in the Community

- EPA works closely with communities across Victoria to protect the environment.
- Guided by our Charter of Consultation, we consult in a timely and respectful way with the community about decisions we make and the issues that matter to them.
- The community can report pollution and waste to EPA for action and participate in environmental programs, including citizen science.
- We engage regularly with individual businesses and industry representatives through six Sector Consultation Groups.
- We are establishing regional community consultation forums in each of our seven regions – focusing on local issues and solutions.
- Led by our Aboriginal Strategy and Partnership team, we strive to embed Traditional Owner knowledge and cultural values into the protection of the environment.

North Metro Region

EPA Victoria Regions



North Metro Region



North Metro Councils:

1. Banyule
2. Boroondara
3. Darebin City Council
4. Hume City Council
5. Manningham
6. Maroondah
7. Meri-bek
8. Nillumbik
9. Whitehorse
10. Whittlesea
11. Yarra City
12. Yarra Ranges

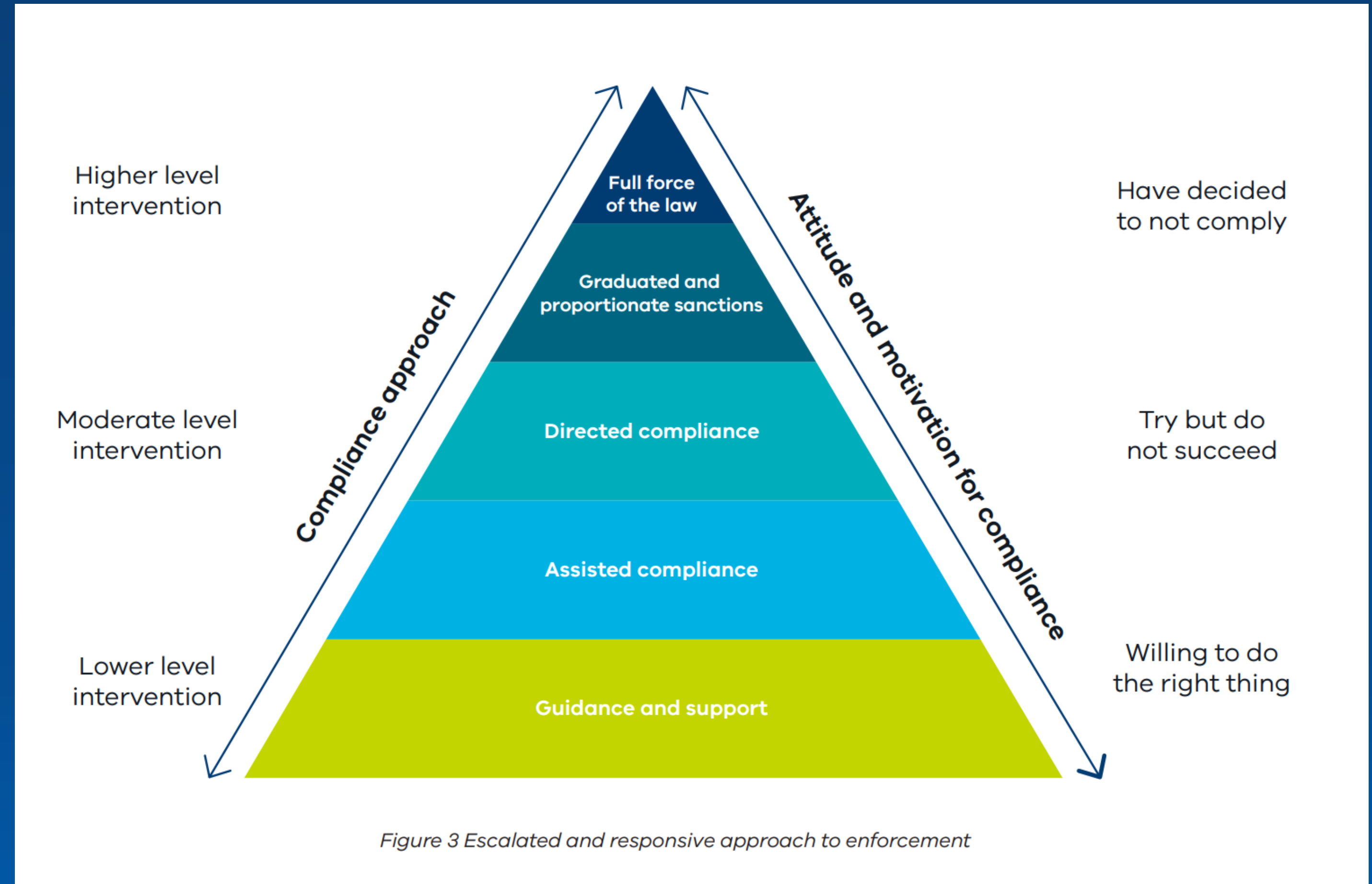
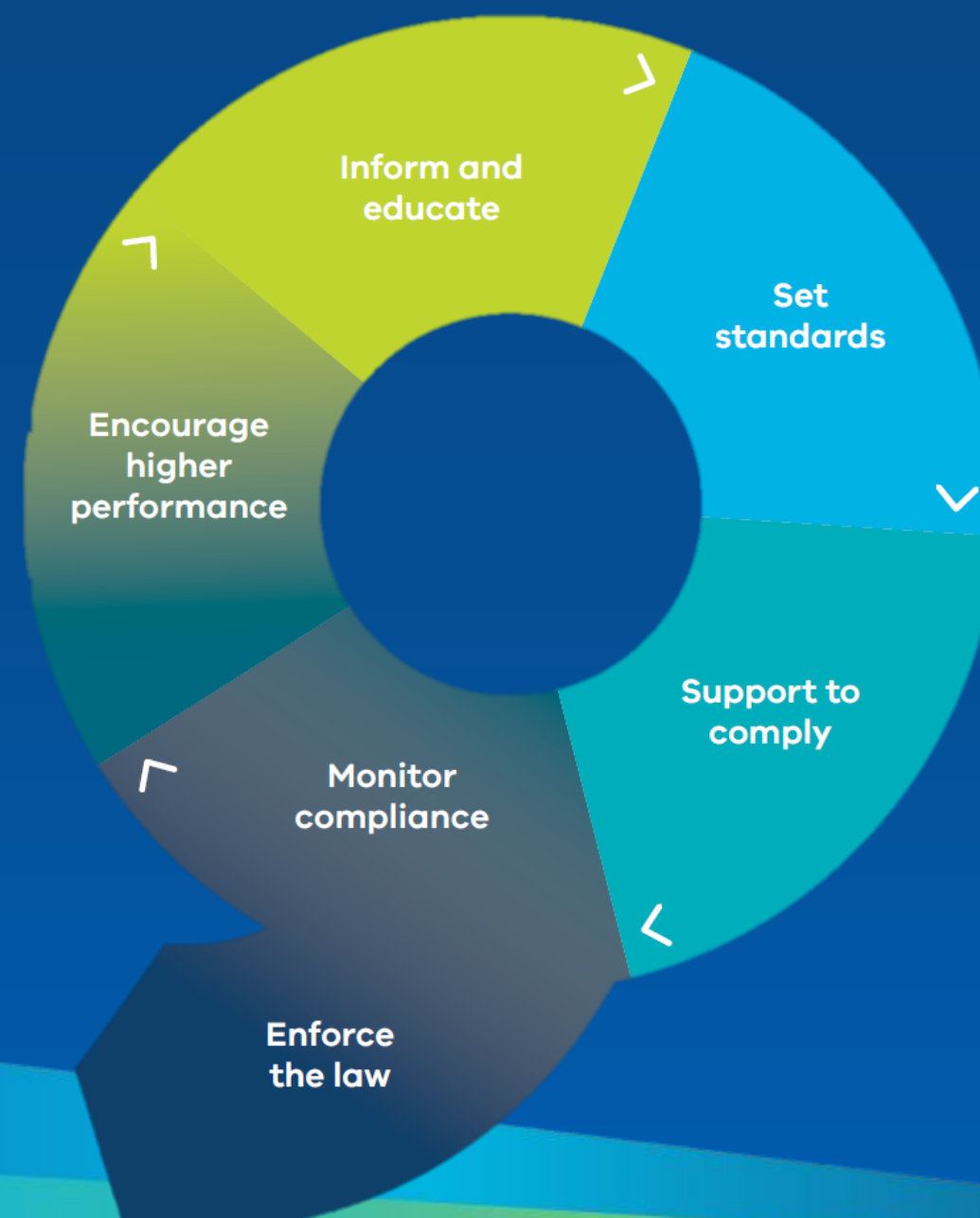
Our team

- Regulatory arm of the EPA
- Located in Preston (13A Albert Street, Preston)
- 30 team members
- 4 teams
- 8 Senior Environment Protection Officers
- 10 Environment Protection Officers
- 4 Officers for the Protection of the Local Environment
- Operating in 12 Local Government Areas



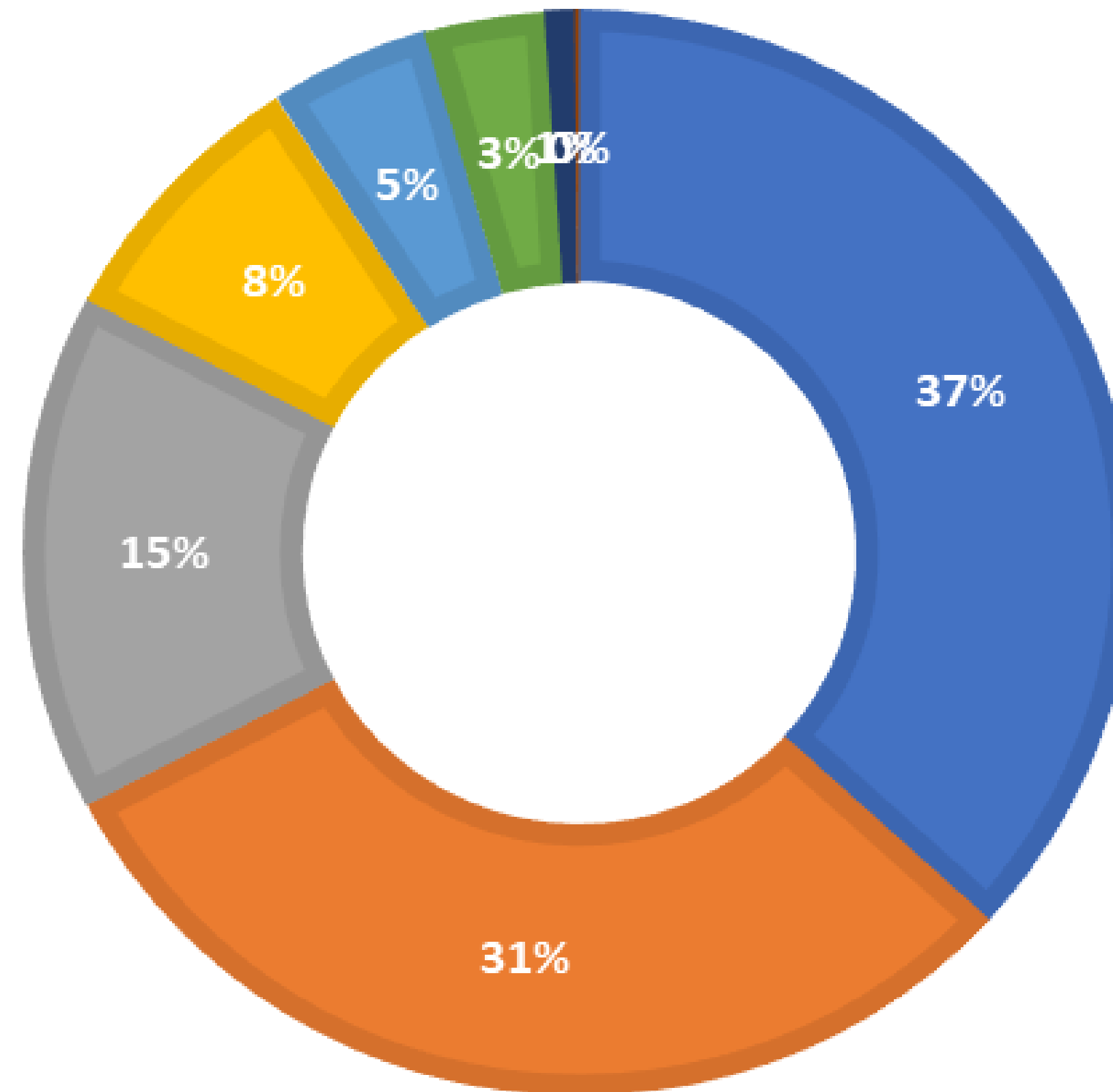
Our regulatory approach

- Raise awareness and build knowledge
- Work with the industry on what compliance looks like
- If we see non-compliance, our response will be measured and proportionate
- Deliberate and criminal non-compliance will be taken seriously



POLLUTION REPORTS RECEIVED BY EPA - FY 2022-23

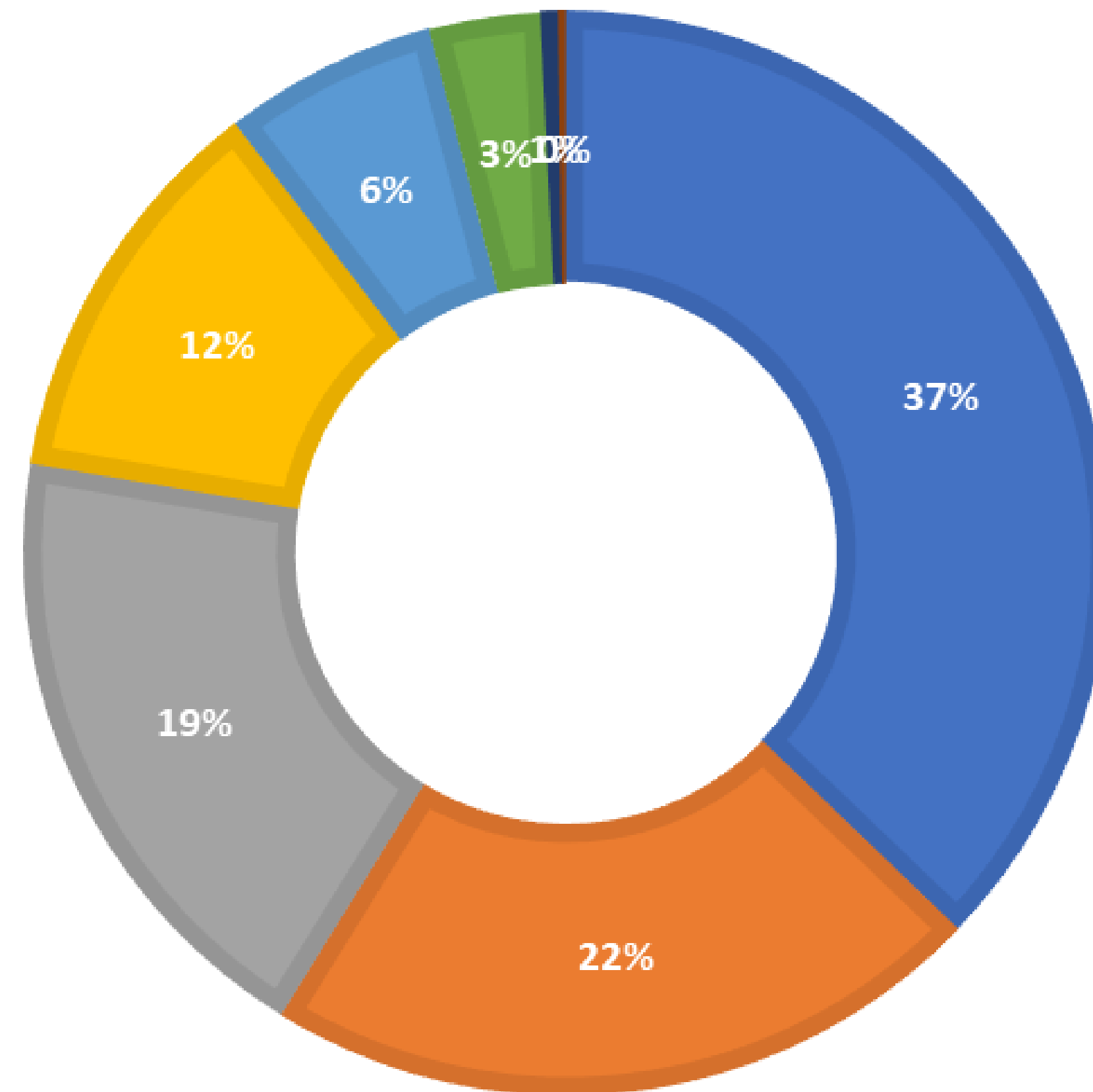
■ Odour ■ Noise ■ Waste ■ Water ■ Smoke ■ Dust ■ Emergency Response ■ Banned Products



Total: 23,367 (to date)

POLLUTION REPORTS IN NORTH METRO REGION - FY 2022-23

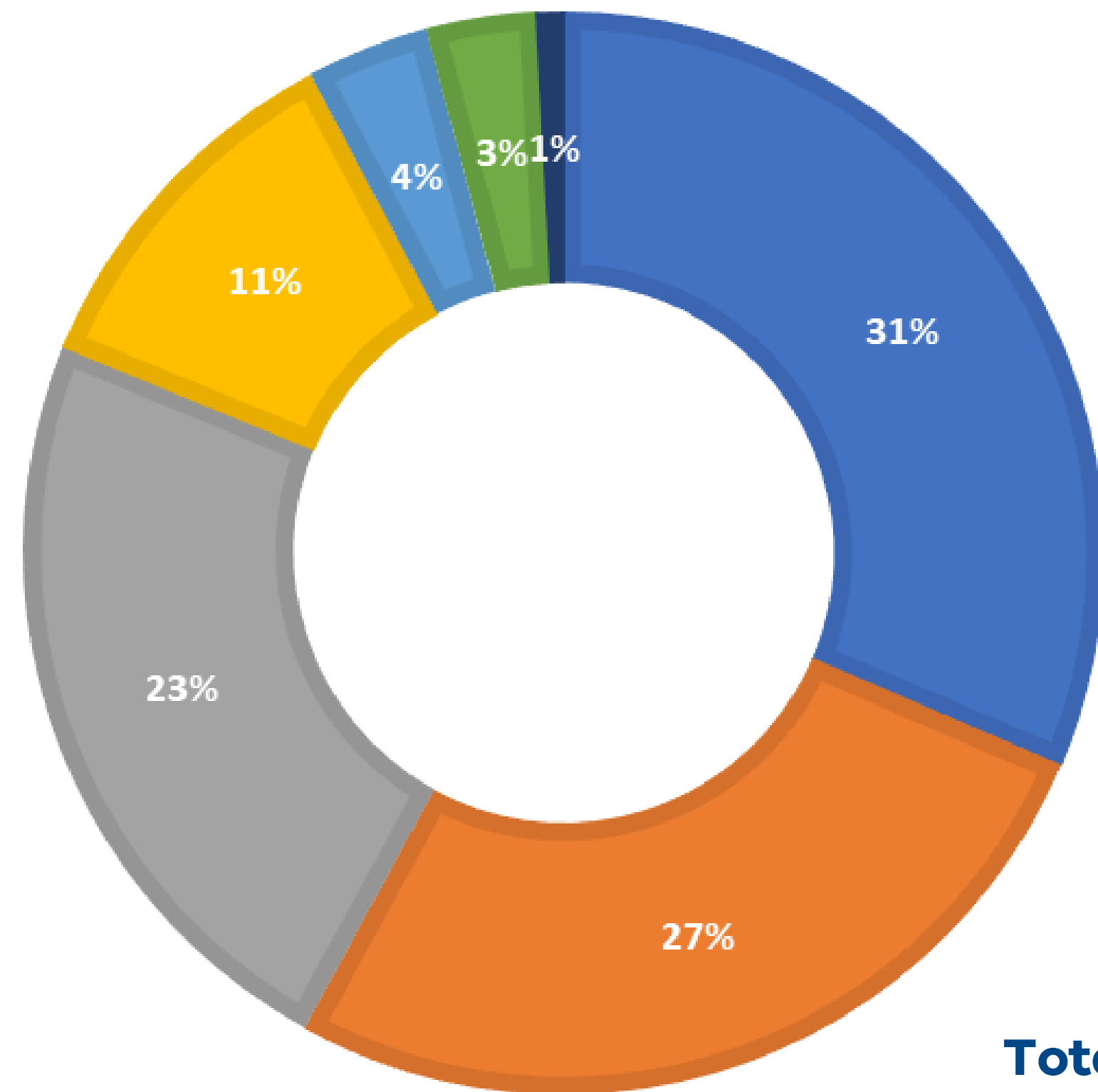
Noise Waste Odour Water Smoke Dust Emergency Response Banned Products



Total: 4,011 (to date)

POLLUTION REPORTS IN CITY OF WHITEHORSE FY-2022-23

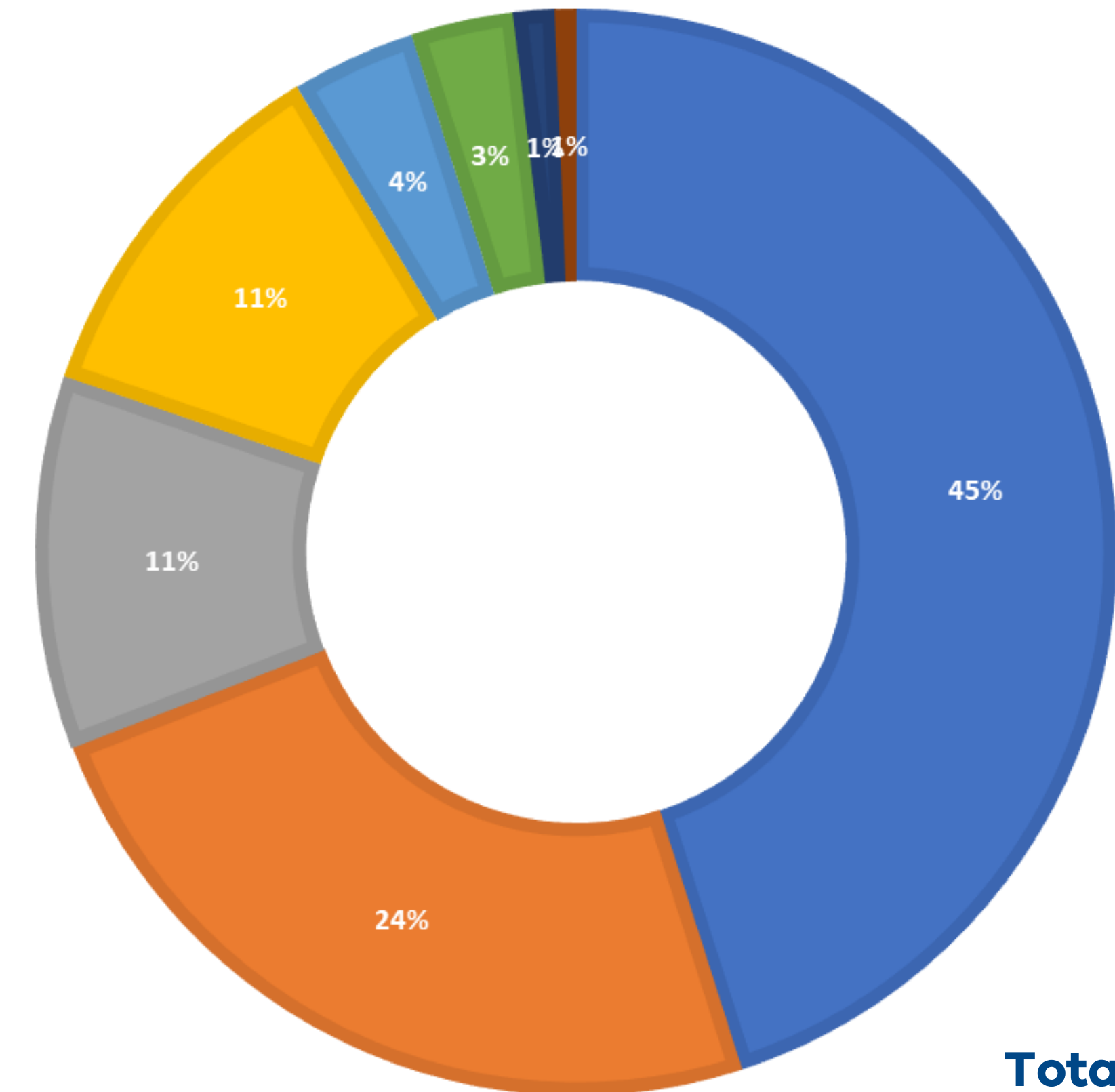
Noise Water Waste Smoke Dust Odour Banned Products



Total: 245
(to date)

POLLUTION REPORTS IN CITY OF MAROONDAH FY 2022-23

Noise Waste Smoke Water Odour Dust Emergency Response Banned Products



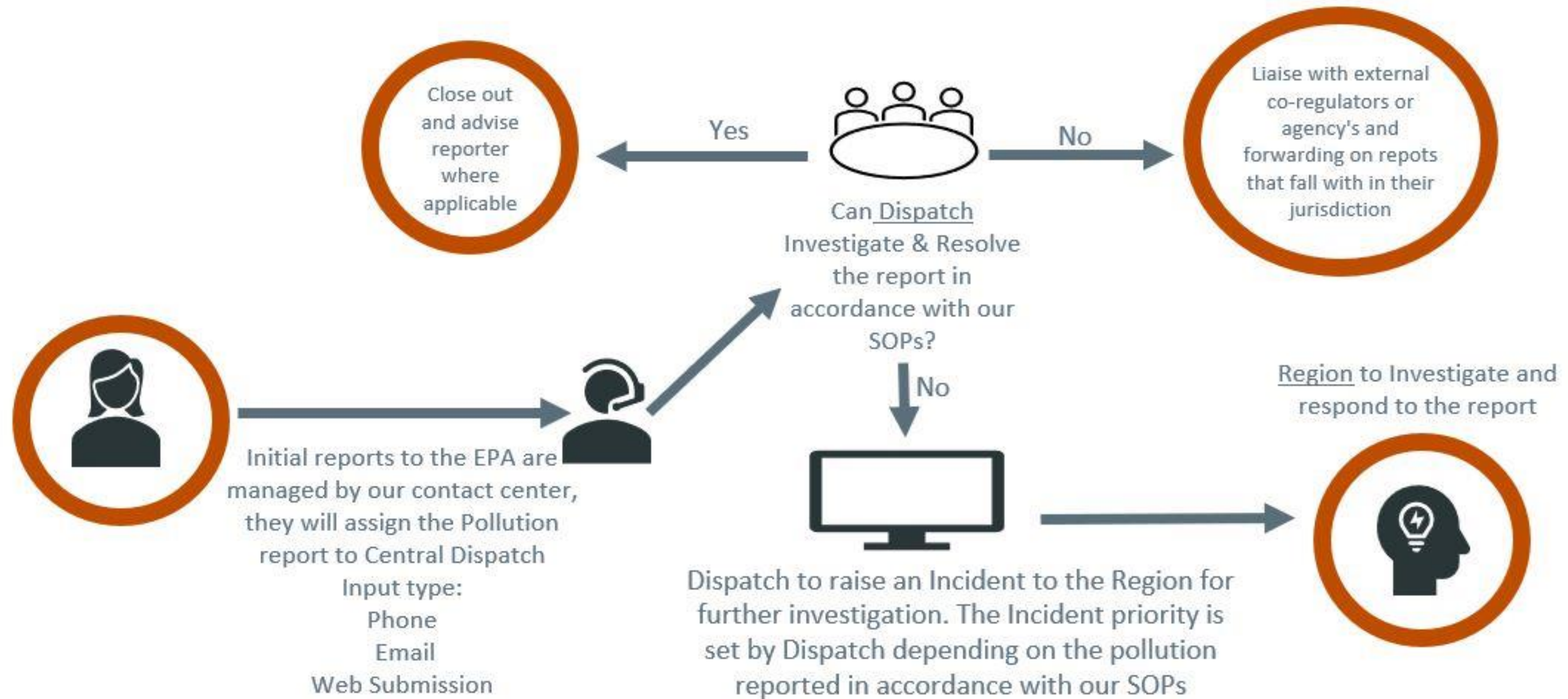
Total: 162
(to date)

How to report litter and pollution to EPA?

Reporting process (public/community, businesses, emergency services, other government bodies) – 24hrs, 7 days a week.

- Call the EPA pollution hotline: 1300 372 842 (1300 EPA VIC), or
- Complete our [report pollution form](#) available on the EPA website, or
- Email us: contact@epa.vic.gov.au , or
- Visit our online portal: <https://www.epa.vic.gov.au/report-pollution>.

EPA Dispatch Centre



General Environmental Duty

Jeremy Settle – Manager, North Metro Region

General Environmental Duty

Applies to all Victorians, and all businesses located in Victoria. The expectation is that all Victorian businesses will manage their activities to avoid the risk of environmental damage.

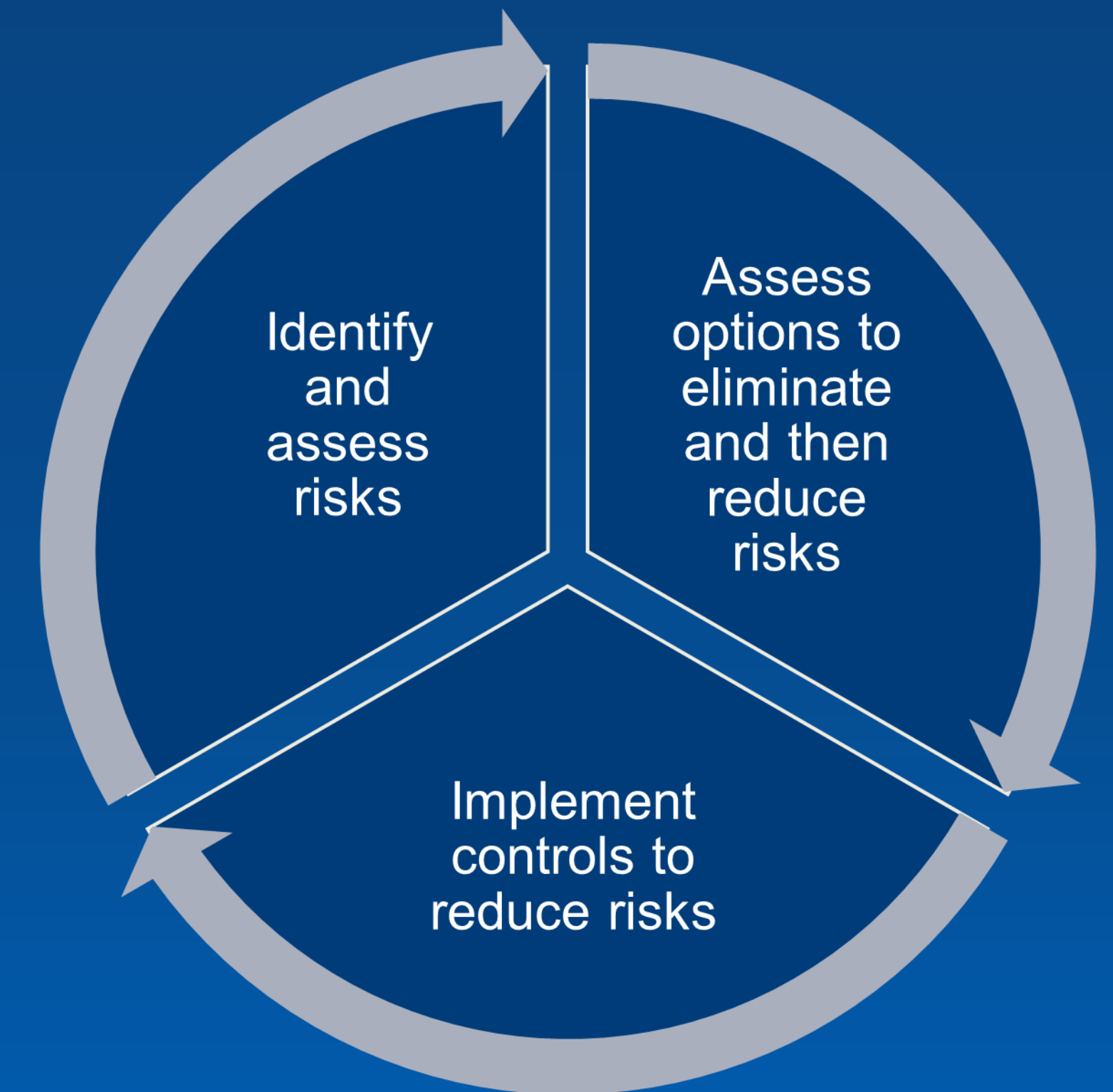
"A person who is engaging in an activity that may give rise of harm to human health or the environment from pollution or waste must minimise those risks, so as far as reasonably practicable."

Modelled on OHS Act (established in Victoria since 1985)

Minimise means to eliminate the risks (as far as reasonably practicable) and if not, reduce the risks.

- Criminal liability for a person conducting a business

Serious criminal offence – maximum of approximately **\$1.6 million** for a company.



Third-Party Civil Remedies

What are third-party civil remedies?

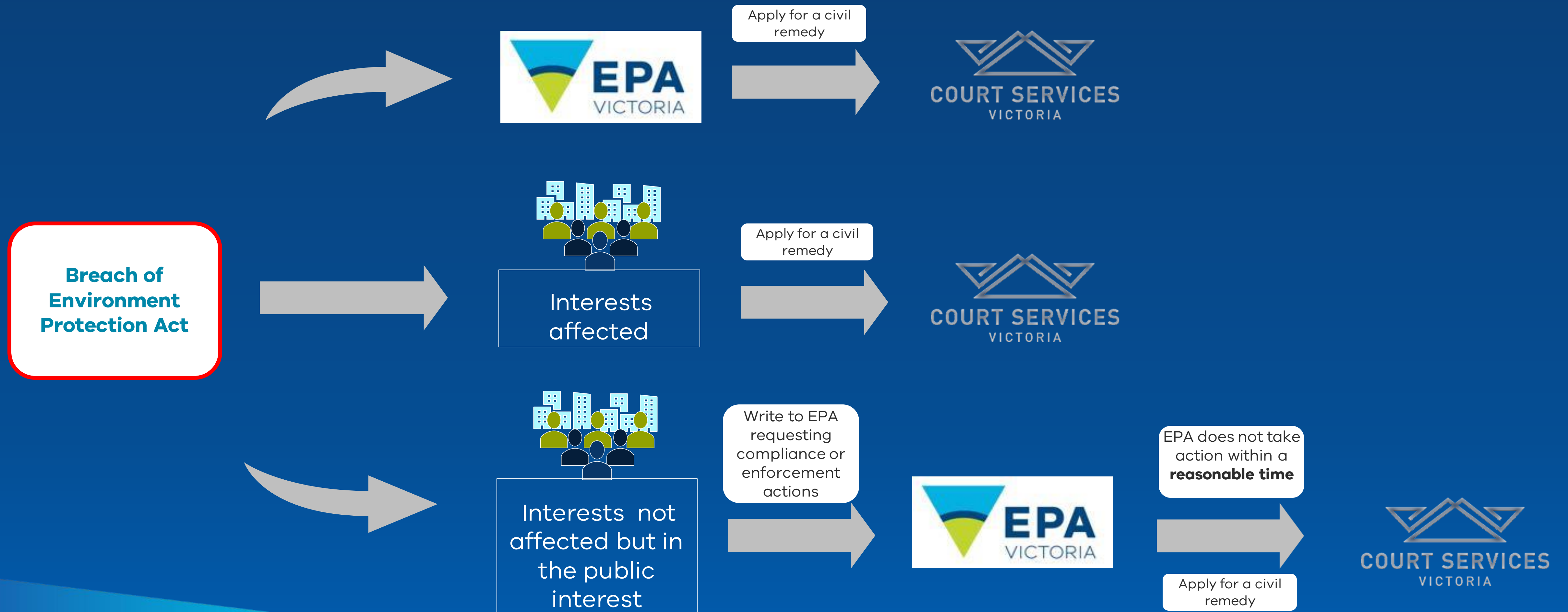
An obtained order from the Court directing person to:

- do something (e.g. comply with GED)
- stop doing something (e.g. stop a polluting activity)
- compensate a person who has suffered or may suffer injury, loss or damage from non-compliance

Civil remedies can apply to any person who:

- Has a duty under the EP Act (duty holders)
- Holds permission under the EP Act (permission holder)

Who can seek a civil remedy?



Officers for the Protection of the Local Environment (OPLE) Program

OPLEs

The purpose of the OPLE Program is to decrease the environmental and amenity impacts of lower risk and lower complexity waste and pollution issues in the state of Victoria. The OPLE scope includes:

- litter
- noise
- odour
- dust
- Illegal chemical and waste stockpiling.

OPLEs work with local Councils to help industry, business and community find, prevent and resolve environmental issues.

EPA Authorised Officers (AOs) tasked with responding to smaller-scale and lower-risk pollution and waste reports, in collaboration with local Councils.

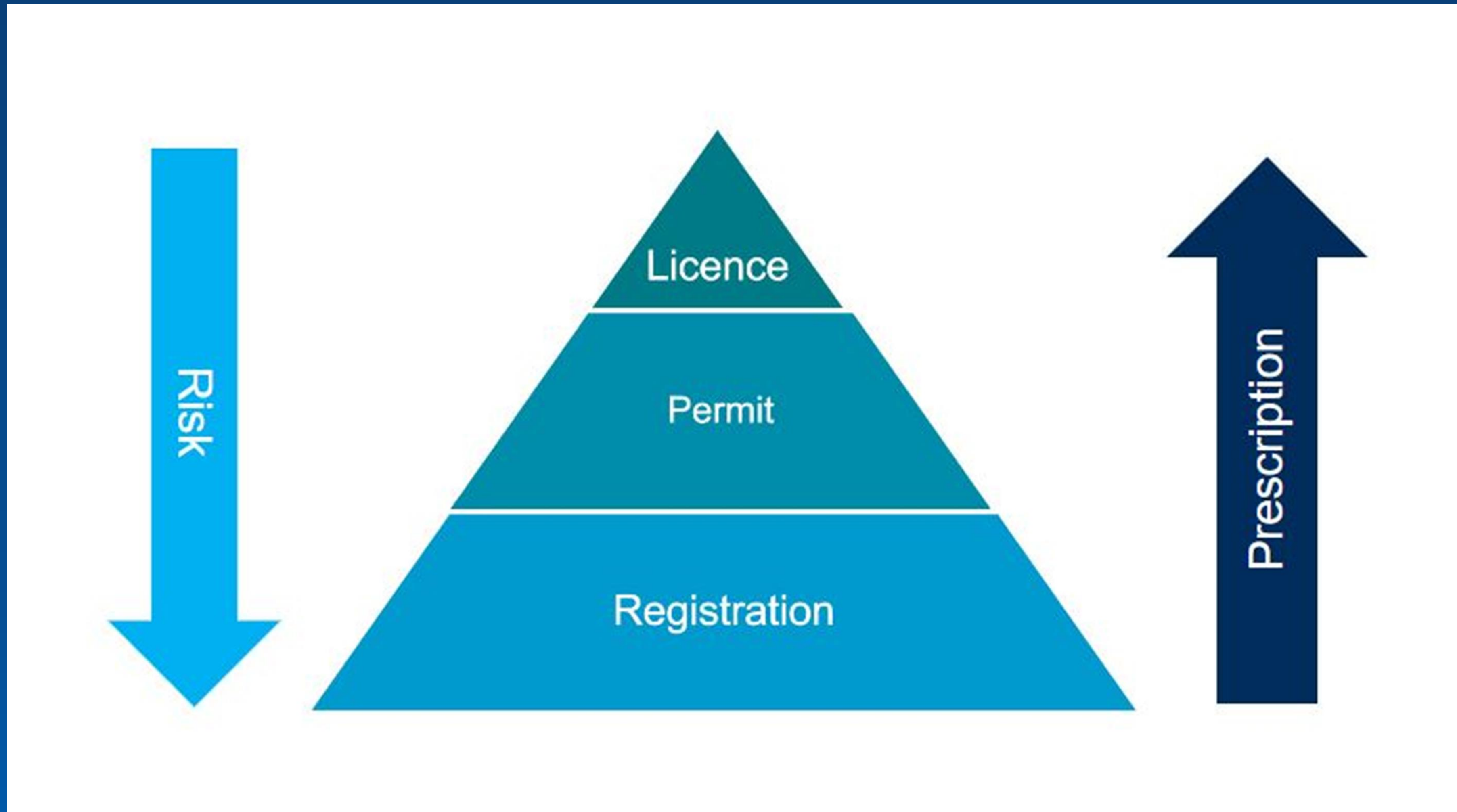


North Metro has 4 OPLEs



Permissions

Permissions



Permissions

Development and Operating Licenses:

- higher risk activities
- context-specific assessment required
- tailored conditions



Permits:

- medium Risk activities
- generic assessment sufficient
- standard conditions

Registration:

- lower or uncertain/inherent risk activities
- automatically granted
- standard conditions

Useful Links

Charter of consultation (Publication 1928) - <https://www.epa.vic.gov.au/about-epa/publications/1928>

Compliance and enforcement policy (Publication 1798.2) - <https://www.epa.vic.gov.au/about-epa/publications/1798-2>

Your third-party civil remedies (EPA website) - <https://www.epa.vic.gov.au/about-epa/laws/laws-to-protect-the-environment-and-human-health/your-third-party-civil-remedies>

Report litter and pollution (EPA website) - <https://www.epa.vic.gov.au/report-pollution>

Engage Vic Webpage - https://engage.vic.gov.au/project?sort=-created_at&q=EPA

Useful Links

Permissioning decisions register - <https://www.epa.vic.gov.au/about-epa/public-registers/permissions?dutyHolder=recycal&status=Issued>

GardenSafe citizen science program - <https://www.epa.vic.gov.au/for-community/get-involved/citizen-science-program/gardensafe>

Questions?



Thank you

Environment Protection Authority Victoria

1300 372 842

contact@epa.vic.gov.au

200 Victoria Street, Carlton VIC 3001

epa.vic.gov.au



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