



2 | GOVERNANCE

Governance

Good governance helps an organisation to achieve its outcomes and obligations through sound planning, decision-making and risk management.

The agency's governance framework is geared towards the efficient use of resources, compliance with statutory and other external requirements and continuous improvement to achieve sound administrative and financial management practice.

The main components are:

- providing effective leadership and communication
- maintaining appropriate accountability structures
- identifying and planning strategies for delivering the agency's outputs and across Government responsibilities
- monitoring the delivery of outputs and across Government responsibilities
- monitoring the effectiveness of the agency's use of resources, based on budgeting, financial and other reporting mechanisms
- providing timely and informative internal reporting on financial, human resource and procurement matters.

Primary responsibility for the management, strategic leadership and decision-making rests with the agency's Executive Leadership Team (ELT) which replaced the former Board of Management. The ELT has focused on:

- developing a whole of agency, participatory and inclusive leadership style for the organisation
- identifying and managing critical issues facing the agency
- expanding the ELT to include Regional Directors to give the regional focus required to implement the housing and local government reforms in remote communities
- conducting workshops with senior managers of the agency to commence the required organisational redesign and change management plan to deliver services to the community in the future as the agency transitions from a key focus on local government reform to remote housing and infrastructure reforms
- employing innovative recruitment practices to employ the right people to support change in remote communities and in regional offices, including the targeting and recruiting of Indigenous employees as part of the remote housing and infrastructure reforms.

Management Environment

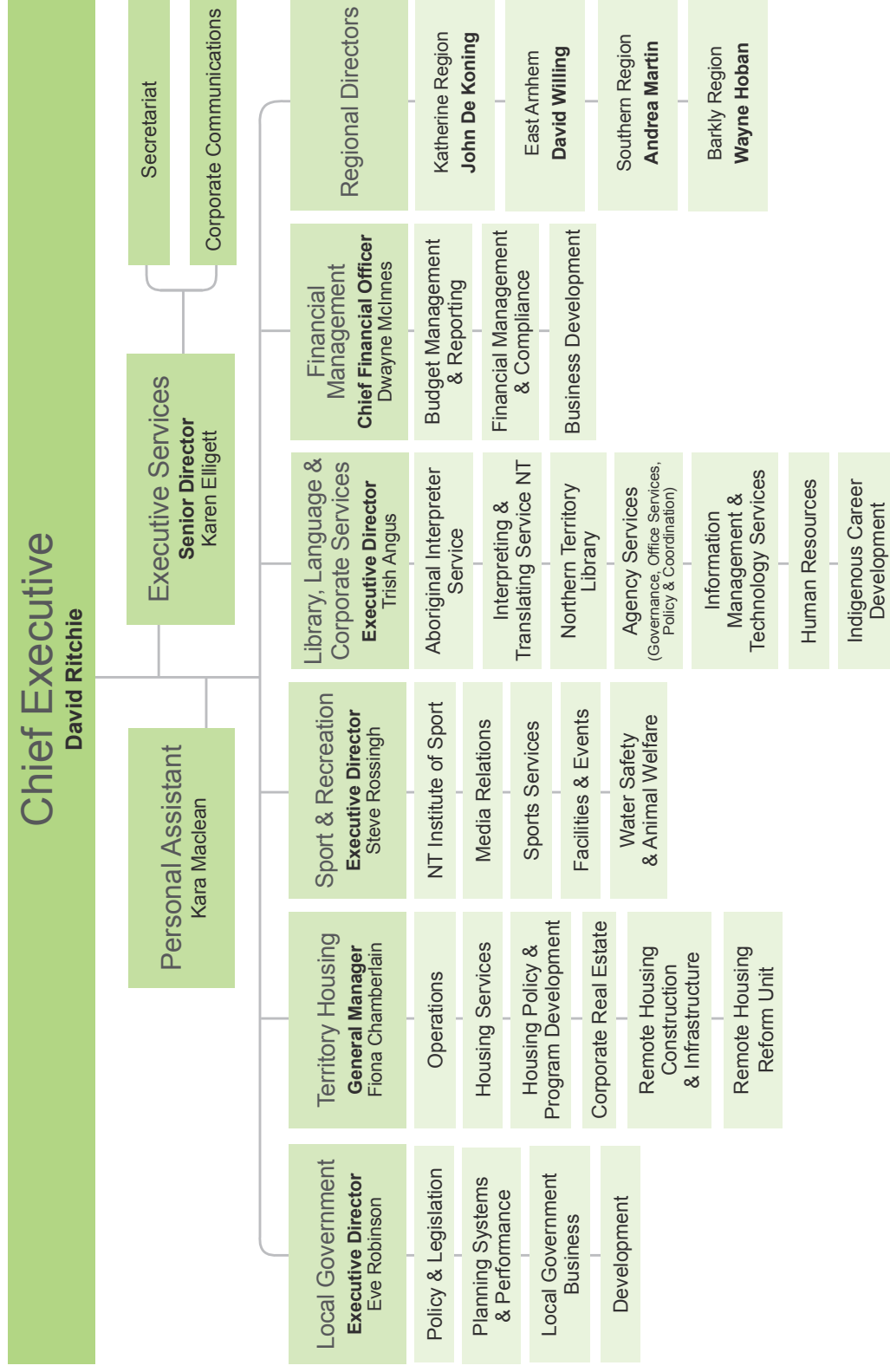
Operational Structure

The agency's operations (operational structure) and delivery of services (outputs) contribute to the achievement of planned outcomes as indicated below. The operational structure includes Corporate Services and Regional Services, which service all areas in the agency.

Outcomes	Operational Structure	Outputs
Effective, legitimate and sustainable local government	Local Government	- Local Government
Opportunities to participate in sport and recreation	Sport and Recreation	- Sports Development - Northern Territory Institute of Sport - Facilities and Fixtures - Water Safety and Animal Welfare
Equitable and appropriate services for all Territorians	Community Services	- Northern Territory Library - Interpreter and Translator Services
Access to affordable and appropriate housing for all Territorians	Housing and Infrastructure	- Public Housing - Remote Housing Reform - Strategic Indigenous Housing Infrastructure Program - Indigenous Essential Services
	Territory Housing	- Public Housing - Government Employee Housing - Remote and Community Housing - Home Ownership
	Corporate Services	- Across all outputs

Organisational Structure

The diagram below shows the agency's high-level management and operational structure at 30 June 2008. Further information about the agency's operational and output structure is in the Introduction and Overview section of this report.



Corporate Governance

Corporate Governance refers to the processes by which organisations are directed, controlled and held to account. Corporate Governance encompasses authority, accountability, stewardship, leadership, direction and control exercised in the organisation.

Public Sector Governance has a very broad coverage, including how an organisation is managed, its corporate and other structures, its culture, its policies and strategies and the way it deals with its various stakeholders. The concept encompasses the manner in which public sector organisations acquit their responsibilities of stewardship by being open, accountable and prudent in decision-making, in providing policy advice, and managing and delivering programs.

The Corporate Governance Unit plays the key coordinating role for the agency in assisting with the Chief Executive's responsibilities for audit, review, program evaluation, risk management, performance management, corporate governance and strategic and business planning.

Responsibilities of the Corporate Governance Unit include:

- providing central coordination of strategic and business planning
- providing executive support to the Audit Committee
- development, review and reporting of Output Performance Management Framework
- developing, maintaining and/or promulgating Corporate Governance Policies and Procedures
- overseeing internal and external corporate reporting
- reviewing or evaluating governance arrangements.

During 2007-08, the following audits and reviews were conducted:

External Audits:

- Territory Housing Interim Audit
- Territory Housing Financial Statement
- Local Government Financial Assistance Financial Statement
- Jabiru Town Development Authority Financial Statement
- NT Grants Commission Financial Statement
- Commonwealth State Housing Agreement (CSHA) Financial Statements
- Internal Audit Function.

Reviews:

- Water Safety and Animal Welfare Programs
- National Indigenous Cadetship Program (NICP)
- Territory Housing Appeals Mechanism (THAM)
- Territory Tenancy Management System (TMS) Process and Procedures
- Information Technology Systems Architecture (NT Library)
- Services to Public Libraries in the Northern Territory
- Corporate Services
- Organisational Redesign.

Corporate Communications

Corporate Communications is responsible for providing support, advice and coordination on matters relating to media management, web management, brand management, sponsorship, strategic marketing and internal and external communications.

The Unit is responsible for ensuring a consistent marketing approach which aligns with the directions set by the Northern Territory Government. All publications/communication materials, including electronic (internet site), intended for external audiences undergo quality control and are cleared by Corporate Communications.

Corporate Communications manages all advertising (excluding recruitment advertising) on behalf of the agency. This includes negotiations with media outlets, placement, layout and scheduling.

The Unit works in collaboration with business areas to achieve successful project outcomes and to disseminate and communicate information to the agency's many clients, staff, the public, Government and stakeholders.

The Corporate Communications team managed a number of initiatives during 2007-08. Some of these activities included:

- Local Government Reform – continued to develop multimedia and communication materials to promote the Shires and reform benefits to Territorians.
- Aboriginal Interpreter Service – developed a suite of communication materials to promote their services.
- 20 year celebrations for Interpreting and Translating Service NT (ITSNT) – event to recognise the achievements and contribution of the service to Territorians.
- Developed a communication strategy to market the Northern Territory Library services to target audiences.
- Assisted ITSNT move to the department by developing communication materials (print and electronic) and corporate stationery.
- Show Circuit – Territory wide event with the display theme: *Creating Opportunities in the Bush*.
- Public Housing Garden Competition – annual event held in August to acknowledge public housing tenants who take pride in planting and maintaining their gardens.
- Water Safety Month – annual event held in September to promote water safety messages and conduct water safety activities.
- World Animal Day – annual event in October promoting animal welfare issues.
- Aged Tenants Christmas cakes and cards – annual event where our senior tenants are presented with Christmas cakes and cards.

Secretariat

The core function of this Unit is to provide secretariat services to the agency.

The Unit manages a broad range of databases, and facilitates across-agency input and workflow of Cabinet Submissions, Ministerials and Briefings as well as a range of other material.

The Secretariat is responsible for providing high level support services to Executive and ensures coordinated information flow between the agency, the Ministers' offices and across Government.

The agency is continually striving to enhance its communication services by revamping refreshing and improving the many ways in which information is facilitated internally and externally.

Information and Communication Technology

The Information Management Strategy 2004-2007 provided broad direction for the Information Management and Technology area. During 2007-08, the focus was on the implementation of Information and Communication Technology NT initiatives to support the Local Government and Remote Housing Reforms. The Information Management Strategy for 2008-10 will be developed during 2008-09.

A major focus in 2007-08 has been the implementation of ICT initiatives to support the Local Government Reform. These initiatives included:

- Implementation of the ShiresNet Program to establish a shared computing, telecommunications management infrastructure and services environment to be owned and operated by the eight new shires, and CouncilBiz subsidiary, from July 2008. The ShiresNet Program addressed the major communications and collaborative needs of the shire members, council management and services staff and community stakeholders across the Northern Territory.
- Implementation of the Business System (ShiresBiz Program) to support the eight new shires, and CouncilBiz subsidiary from July 2008.

Other initiatives in 2007-08 included:

- Redevelopment of the BushTel website using the content management system - MySource Matrix, with the NTG branding, in line with the Agency's intranet and internet websites. The site was also enhanced with improved maps and links to various other databases and websites to other NTG and Australian Government agencies.
- Enhancement of the Community Information Access System (CIAS) to deliver new reporting requirements of the Local Government Reform, and consolidation of datastores to provide central access to information from other agency systems.

Future priorities include:

- Implementation of the ICT infrastructure and Business System for the Shires Community Services Delivery Centres (CSDC) as part of the Local Government Reform.
- Implementation of the Business System to support Territory Housing in managing remote community housing under the Remote Housing Reform program.
- Continuation of the Desktop Transformation project. This project will provide more efficient and robust file storage and desktop maintenance.

- Investigation of the feasibility of an across-agency Grants Management System, to support the complete grants management process, including application assessment and approvals, agreements, funds management, performance monitoring, acquittals and management reporting.
- Development of the agency's ICT Strategic Plan which will include the technology and systems to support the business requirements of the agency.
- Planning of the implementation of electronic document records management (EDRM) in the agency.

The agency is actively involved in the ICT strategic directions for the whole of the Northern Territory Government. This includes support of across government initiatives such as eGovernment, Enterprise Architecture, Remote Areas Telecommunications and Remote Workforce Development strategies.

Information Act

In response to the implementation of the *Information Act* in July 2003, the Department of Local Government, Housing and Sport developed a range of policies and procedures that enable interested people to access information held by the agency.

Territory Housing has an Informal Information Access Policy providing an avenue for individuals to access information about themselves without the need for a formal application. During the 2007-08 reporting period, Territory Housing responded to 75 informal information requests.

The Department responded to 10 information access requests in 2007-08. Five were for Government information and five were for personal information. Details are set out below.

<i>Applications under the Information Act</i>	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Accepted applications outstanding at start of year	0	1	4
Applications to access personal information	14	11	5
Applications to access government information	12	2	5
Accepted applications withdrawn	1	1	2
Unaccepted applications	7	1	0
Applications completed within 30 days	11	6	9
Applications completed in more than 30 days	6	2	3
Open Applications at end of year	1	4	0

The agency has also published a list of the information held and the most expedient methods of accessing that information. The listing and the agency's information access policy are available on our website at www.dlghs.nt.gov.au/corporate/freedom_of_information or by phoning (08) 8999 8490.

The contact details for the agency's Information Officer are:

Information Officer

Department of Local Government, Housing and Sport

GPO Box 4621

DARWIN NT 0801

Tel: +61 8 8999 8490

Fax: +61 8 8999 8497

Email: info@dlghs.nt.gov.au

Personal Information

The agency undertakes to protect the personal information it holds by collecting only the information that is necessary to perform its functions, holding the information for only the period of time required by business, legislative or historical reasons, and protecting such information from unauthorised disclosure or access.

All personal information is handled in accordance with the Information Privacy Principles set out in Schedule 2 of the *Information Act*.

The agency's privacy policy is available on the website at www.dlghs.nt.gov.au/corporate/freedom_of_information or by request from the agency.

No privacy breach notifications were reported in 2007-08.

Legislation and Policies

Under the current Administrative Arrangements Order, the agency is responsible for administering a range of Acts and subordinate legislation. For a full list of the legislation refer to Appendix 1.

The agency also has a statutory responsibility for certain statutory authorities and bodies as listed in Appendix 2.

External Relationships

To effectively advance the Government's priorities in community development, the agency maintains a large number of external relationships with stakeholders, clients, other agencies and associated bodies and organisations. Community partnerships have been built to ensure the community perspective is taken into account when progressing the agency's community development agenda.

Agreements

The agency is committed to achieving outcomes under a number of inter-government, local, national and international agreements. A complete list of agreements is at Appendix 3.

Boards and Committees

The agency is represented on a large number of national and Territory boards and committees, a full list of which is at Appendix 4.

Community Consultations

The department engages with the community sector through a number of agreements, boards and committees on a regular and ongoing basis. The agency also convenes consultative forums with the community in relation to particular issues as needed. Details of consultations conducted in 2007-08 are listed in Appendix 5.

Building Safer Communities

The agency's achievements against the Building Safer Communities framework are provided in Appendix 6.

Staff and Research Associates Publications

The agency's staff publish research material and present at national and international conferences. Details of Staff and Research Associates Publications are provided in Appendix 7.

Ombudsman Inquiries

There were 21 inquiries to the Ombudsman relating to the agency during 2007-08.