

## Offshore Electricity Infrastructure Act 2021– Registrar’s report

The *Offshore Electricity Infrastructure Act 2021* (OEI Act) commenced on 2 June 2022 and provides the legislative framework for licensing and regulating offshore renewable energy infrastructure and electricity transmission infrastructure in Commonwealth waters. The OEI Act establishes the Offshore Infrastructure Registrar.

The registrar’s principal function relates to administration of the licensing scheme, including managing the assessment process, providing advice and recommendations to the Minister for Climate Change and Energy on applications, overseeing compliance and administration, and maintaining a register of licences.

Under section 153 of the OEI Act, the registrar is a Senior Executive Service employee in any department of state of the Commonwealth who is appointed to the role by the Secretary of the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW). In December 2022, the General Manager of the NOPTA branch, who is a Senior Executive Service employee in the Department of Industry, Science and Resources, was appointed as the registrar.

The registrar is assisted by Australian Public Service employees in any department of state of the Commonwealth who are made available for the purpose by the Secretary of that department in accordance with section 158 of the OEI Act. The Secretary of the Department of Industry, Science and Resources has made NOPTA staff available to assist the registrar. The registrar operates on a cost recovery basis.

Under section 159 of the OEI Act, the registrar must, as soon as practicable after the end of each financial year, prepare and provide the Minister for Climate Change and Energy with a report on the registrar’s activities under the OEI Act during that year for presentation to parliament. This report should be included in the annual report of the registrar’s department. The following meets this requirement.

### Registrar’s activity report for 2022–23

In 2022–23, staff assisting the registrar:

- began assessing 37 feasibility licence applications received in relation to the invitation to apply for the Gippsland Declared Area OEI-01-2022, offshore Victoria, which closed on 27 April 2023
- assisted DCCEEW in drafting the *Offshore Electricity Infrastructure Regulations 2022*
- developed a range of regulatory guidance materials, forms and factsheets to assist eligible persons, and other stakeholders, to understand requirements and processes relating to feasibility licence applications under the OEI Act (in consultation with DCCEEW)
- held more than 65 meetings with industry and government stakeholders
- developed a governance protocol for the registrar to implement appropriate governance and oversight mechanisms between the department and DCCEEW in relation to the Registrar’s functions under the OEI Act (in consultation with DCCEEW)
- expanded functionality of the National Electronic Approvals Tracking System to include licences under the OEI Act and to allow for the electronic submission and tracking of feasibility licence applications
- launched a new dedicated website for the registrar
- provided input into a cost recovery implementation statement, which details how entities, including the registrar, will implement full cost recovery for the administration and regulation of OEI licences and offshore infrastructure activities under the OEI Act, the *Offshore Electricity Infrastructure (Regulatory Levies) Act 2021*, and associated regulations.