



STRATEGIC PLAN

TOWARDS 2033



local councils working together to protect the health of the community



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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

The Eastern Health Authority (EHA) has a long and proud history of protecting the health, safety and wellbeing of communities in Adelaide's eastern and inner northern suburbs.

Our history stretches back to 1899 with East Torrens Council Board providing the first vehicle for councils in our region to work together to help protect public health. 125 years later, while the health risks may have changed, we continue to collaborate in serving a population of around 170,000 people across five council areas.

The services that EHA provides are not always immediately visible, but are vital in keeping people safe and healthy, and businesses thriving. Our work is diverse and ranges from inspecting restaurants to vaccinating children, monitoring water quality in public swimming pools, mosquito management and regulating practices in the personal services industry. The services we provide occur across the spectrum of proactive to reactive action, and community education is a strong feature at every point.

EHA's success is built on our singular and dedicated focus on public and environmental health, specialist and passionate staff, strong and open relationships with our Constituent Councils, and our ability to effectively advocate on public health matters as a united regional voice. The approach represents outstanding value for money for ratepayers and means our communities enjoy the highest standards of environmental health services.

The communities we serve continue to change, and with this change comes new risks to public health, and opportunities to innovate. We know that climate change and more extreme weather events will exacerbate some of our existing public health risks, while population growth and change will bring more people, businesses and events to our region, and this will increase demand for our services. Technology continues to provide opportunities to improve how we work.

It is with these changes in mind that EHA has developed a new Strategic Plan, *Towards 2033*. This plan aims to provide a clear roadmap for how EHA will build on its long history and operational success, while also navigating future changes. Our priorities are to:

- 1 Deliver great public and environmental health services
- 2 Grow our immunisation programs
- 3 Strengthen food safety practices across our region
- 4 Govern well and demonstrate leadership with the public health sector.

We look forward to working with our Constituent Councils and communities to achieve these priorities so that we do our part to help ensure communities and businesses in our region continue to flourish.

Cr Peter Cornish

Chairperson, Eastern Health Authority

ABOUT EHA

EHA is a regional subsidiary established under the *Local Government Act 1999* with the core purpose of “providing public and environmental health services to its Constituent Councils”, who currently comprise:

- City of Burnside
- Campbelltown City Council
- City of Norwood Payneham and St Peters
- City of Prospect
- Town of Walkerville.

Guided by the functions and powers outlined in the EHA Charter, EHA provides centralised service delivery and operates as the “combined environmental health department” of each council in the region.



The services provided by EHA continue to evolve, but generally focus on:

- Inspection and regulation of food premises
- Immunisation
- Hygiene and sanitation control
- Monitoring and regulation of communicable and infectious disease
- Licencing and monitoring of Supported Residential Facilities (SRFs).

In addition, EHA plays an important leadership and coordination role within the broader public health sector in South Australia, providing a united voice for its Constituent Councils and representing their interests as a trusted adviser and partner on public health matters.

EHA’s services are delivered by a small and highly skilled staff team, and overseen by a Board of Management comprised of two representatives from each of the Constituent Councils. EHA is funded by contributions from Constituent Council, service delivery income, and grant revenue.

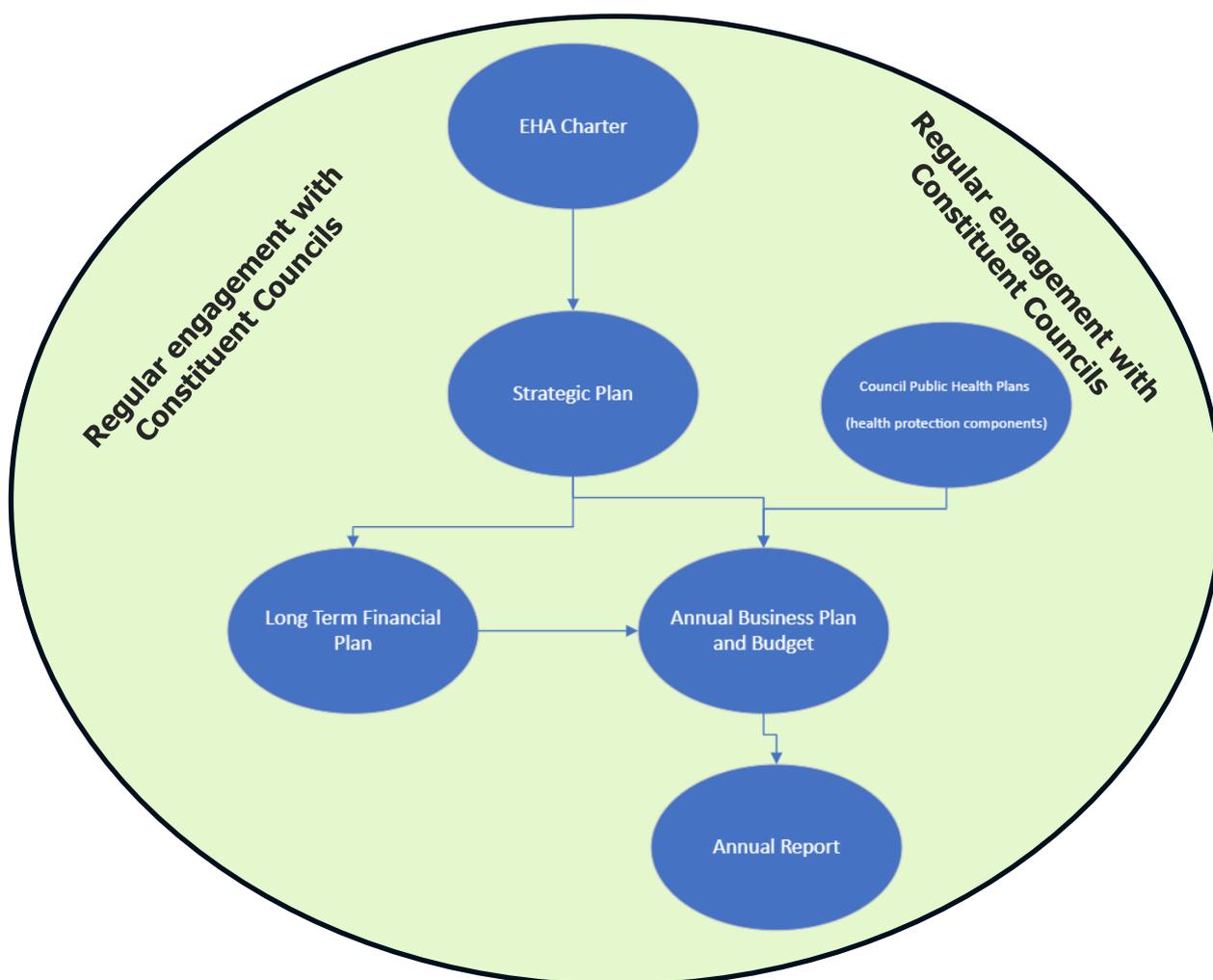
ABOUT THE STRATEGIC PLAN

Our Strategic Plan outlines EHA’s vision and mission, what we will do to achieve this and how we will track our progress.

The Plan does not detail everything EHA is involved in, rather it identifies the strategic outcomes that EHA will seek to achieve. These outcomes will be used to help steer our operational service delivery, inform the types of new opportunities that we will pursue, and how we allocate and prioritise resources.

The Strategic Plan has been guided by the purposes of EHA detailed in the EHA Charter, and directly informs our annual business plan and budgets, and reviews of our Long Term Financial Plan. Our Annual Business Plans are also influenced by the health protection elements of the public health plans of our Constituent Councils. Our progress in achieving the outcomes sought by our strategic and business plans is monitored through our annual reporting, and quarterly updates provided to Constituent Councils, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: EHA’s integrated planning and reporting framework.



This Strategic Plan was developed through detailed analysis of our internal and external environment, and input from our Board, staff and Constituent Councils through workshops and surveys.

CONTEXT FOR THE PLAN

Strategic Context

As a regional subsidiary, EHA's strategic context is shaped by the aspirations and directions established by each of its Constituent Councils. While these vary from council to council, and change over time, consistent aspirations shared by our Constituent Councils include:

- Strong communities – improving the health, wellbeing and social connectedness of our residents.
- Sustainable environment – a green urban environment, with easy access to nature and biodiversity and demonstrating leadership in water, waste and climate change responses.
- Prosperous economy – a growing, competitive and diverse regional economy, and a great place to do business.
- Quality built environment – spaces and places where people want to live, work, play and move through, underpinned by quality infrastructure.

These aspirations provide the broad strategic context for this Plan, with EHA playing an important role in supporting goals around improved health and wellbeing, and a prosperous economy.

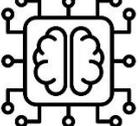


Regulatory Context

The delivery of public and environmental health services is highly regulated, and EHA’s service delivery is bound by seven different pieces of legislation, and numerous supporting regulations, standards, codes and guidelines. These are summarised in Appendix One. EHA cannot operate or deliver services outside of the guardrails and directions provided by this strong regulatory context.

External Influences

There are many political, economic, social, technological, environmental or legal changes that will impact EHA in the years ahead. The following table summarises the key shifts that are expected to have a bearing on EHA over the ten year life of this plan.

 <p>Climate change</p>	<p>Climate change will generate more emergencies, extreme weather events and heatwaves, and increase the spread of vector borne diseases.</p> <p>Extreme weather can result in blackouts, which in turn can generate additional food safety risks. Heatwaves can trigger additional food safety risks, and drive an increased use of public swimming pools, which require active management. An increase in vector borne disease can result in additional mosquito management work to prevent the spread of communicable disease.</p>
 <p>Population growth</p>	<p>Our region is growing and EHA’s services will need to expand in step with this growth. Population growth is expected to be associated with the establishment of new food, beauty and home-based business, and events where food is served. These changes are expected to impact the number of, and nature of, EHA’s regulatory functions.</p>
 <p>Community changes</p>	<p>Our communities are always changing, which impacts attitudes and expectations towards our services. Changes in the community attitudes and sentiments are particularly important for EHA given the strong focus on community education through all of our service delivery.</p> <p>A particular trend to monitor is the rise of community members displaying a distrust in public authorities, science and regulatory activities.</p>
 <p>Housing</p>	<p>There is current shortage of housing across the country, and our region is not immune. A shortage of housing may cause a rise in substandard housing that pose public health risks.</p> <p>There is also an increasing trend of instances of hoarding and squalor, which require a nuanced and person-centred response that can be resource intensive to administer.</p>
 <p>Technological change</p>	<p>Technological change is continually providing new ways to drive efficiencies and improve our service delivery. Technological improvements in areas such as artificial intelligence may help us improve how we manage our information, monitor disease outbreaks, analyse data and undertake risk assessments.</p>

 <p>Regulatory change</p>	<p>EHA's work is highly regulated, and thus regulatory change can result in new responsibilities, or new approaches to better manage risk. It is foreseeable that there may be changes to the regulation of the beauty industry over the life of this plan.</p>
 <p>Workforce</p>	<p>There is a shortage of environmental health professionals across the state. Our ability to deliver for our Constituent Councils and their communities depends upon attracting and retaining the right staff.</p>

VISION AND MISSION

Vision

To protect and enhance the health, safety and wellbeing of our region.

Mission

To be a trusted leader in providing evidence-based services, advice and advocacy on public health protection on behalf of our Constituent Councils.



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Priority One: Deliver great public and environmental health services

EHA exists to protect and maintain health of the community, and reduce the incidence and spread of communicable disease.

A key way we do this is through the delivery of regulatory environmental health services that ensure appropriate hygiene and sanitation standards are met at:

- Public swimming pools and spas
- Cooling towers and warm water systems
- Personal care and body art businesses
- Onsite wastewater management systems
- Properties impacted by hoarding and squalor
- Supported residential facilities.

Beyond these, EHA has a more general role to respond to enquiries and complaints in the community that may give rise to a public health risk, or represent an opportunity to promote safer approaches.

Across all our work, we adopt an “education before enforcement” approach as we know that effective and sustained behaviour change depends on people fully understanding health risks, and what they can do in response. Given this, we place a strong focus on supporting households, businesses and other organisations with information, advice and resources.

We also achieve our public and environmental health goals by working in partnership with other organisations through inter-agency working groups and other coordination committees, recognising there are wide ranging benefits from sharing information and coordinating efforts with others.

Strategic Outcomes:

- 1.1 The health and safety of our communities is strengthened through our environmental health services.
- 1.2 Residents and businesses take action to reduce public health risks because of our proactive communications and education.
- 1.3 Actively engaging with other organisations results in wider and more effective efforts to manage public health risks across the region.
- 1.4 Resilience to climate and emergency risks across our region is strengthened through the delivery of our public and environmental health services.

Priority Two: Grow our immunisation programs

Immunisation is a safe and effective way of protecting people against harmful diseases that can cause serious health problems. EHA is a trusted partner in immunisation, and delivers programs that keep communities healthy, and contribute to the effective control of preventable disease.

We do this through a:

- School Immunisation Program delivered in partnership with SA Health and local high schools
- Public Immunisation Program delivered through clinics focused on babies and children, and other people who may require catch up vaccinations
- Workplace Immunisation Program, delivered on a fee-for-service basis.

EHA's success in delivery of immunisation is based on a strong commitment to clinical governance, our ability to deliver vaccines in a welcoming, non-medical environment, dedicated staff with singular focus on immunisation, and the availability and accessibility of our clinics.

Over the years, EHA has been able to build upon its capability in the delivery of immunisation services by expanding into Workplace Vaccination Programs and also by providing immunisation services to non-Constituent Councils. These opportunities, which help to diversify EHA's revenue base, are explored on a case by case basis having regard to EHA's operational capacity and careful consideration as to whether there is a net benefit to Constituent Councils.

Moving forward, EHA remains open to exploring opportunities to grow immunisation programs, especially through Workplace Programs, when there is a net benefit to Constituent Councils, and there is an opportunity to leverage our operational strengths to make a bigger contribution to the effective control of preventable disease.

All our immunisation programs are delivered with some form of State or Federal Government subsidy, and our delivery model represents great public value compared with vaccines delivered in a medical environment. Given this, it is important that we actively engage with our regulators and funders to ensure our service delivery is financially sustainable in the long term.

Strategic Outcomes:

- 2.1 The spread of preventable disease is reduced through effective immunisation programs that are delivered in accordance with legislation and standards.
- 2.2 Our immunisation programs are highly valued and trusted by the community because they are accessible, efficient and client-centric.
- 2.3 More people are immunised, and EHA's revenue streams are further diversified, through new immunisation programs and activities that deliver a net benefit to Constituent Councils.
- 2.4 Our immunisation funding models are sustainable in the long term through effective engagement and advocacy with funders and regulators.

Priority Three: Strengthen food safety practices across our region

EHA delivers a number of regulatory services to ensure food safety standards are achieved, including by:

- Maintaining a register of food businesses operating within EHA's jurisdiction
- Conducting routine inspections
- Undertaking enforcement action
- Implementing the voluntary Food Star Rating System.

Beyond these, EHA has a more general role to respond to food related enquiries and complaints that may give rise to a public health risk, or represent an opportunity to promote safe approaches. We also respond to food recalls, provide advice on development applications for food businesses and assess risks and conduct safety assessments for temporary food businesses and events.

Education is central to achieving effective food safety outcomes, and we know that investing in relationships is foundational to people understanding and complying with food safety standards.

To support this, EHA deliver a biannual food safety newsletter to food businesses, maintain a comprehensive range of resources to support food businesses and offer a food safety training program. From time to time, we also deliver food safety education projects in partnership with other organisations.

Strategic Outcomes:

- 3.1 Contribute to the control of preventable illness through the effective monitoring and enforcement of food safety standards in our region.
- 3.2 Food businesses take action to reduce food safety risks because of our proactive communication and education, and relationship building.

Priority Four: Govern well and demonstrate leadership within the public health sector

EHA's ability to provide quality public health services, advice and advocacy depends upon effective governance and organisational management, and our unique positioning that enables us to provide leadership to the public health sector.

Despite our modest size and resourcing, as a regional local government subsidiary EHA is committed to achieving best practice standards of governance. This happens through adherence with the EHA Charter and the many different legislative instruments under which we operate, and maintaining fit-for-purpose corporate processes in areas including finance, risk and work health and safety.

Effective governance is also supported by strong relationships with Constituent Councils seen through the mutual sharing of information, cross-promotion of services, and a shared commitment to deliver for the community. For its part, EHA regularly communicates the services, actions and outcomes of its work through quarterly reporting, and maintains connections with Elected Members, CEOs and operational staff of Constituent Council.

EHA's size, structure and sole focus on public health provides a unique opportunity to provide leadership within the public health sector through research projects and advocacy on policy reforms. Our ability to do so is founded in our significant on-ground experience as public health practitioners, influence we achieve as a strong united regional voice, and relationships across the local government and public health sectors.

As technology evolves, EHA will continue to invest in improvements in corporate systems and customer-facing processes to enable us to further streamline our processes and improve the customer experience.

Strategic Outcomes:

- 4.1 EHA is effectively governed in accordance with the EHA Charter and other legislation we operate under.
- 4.2 EHA is valued by its Constituent Councils as a result of regular and two-way communication.
- 4.3 EHA is known and trusted as a thought leader and effective advocate on public and environmental health matters.
- 4.4 Systems and technology allow us to innovate, work more efficiently and achieve stronger public health outcomes.
- 4.5 We provide a safe, healthy and rewarding work environment.

IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND REVIEW

Implementation

Implementation of this Strategic Plan will primarily occur through the EHA's Annual Business Plan and Budget processes, with the strategic outcomes of the Strategic Plan used to shape annual objectives, priorities and key performance indicators. The Strategic Plan will also influence periodic reviews to EHA's Long Term Financial Plan.

All reports to the EHA Board will include a reference to the relevant Strategic Outcome from the Strategic Plan.

Monitoring

EHA's Annual Business Plan is monitored through key performance indicators which are adopted annually by the Board. Progress towards these priorities and outcomes is regularly reported to the EHA Board, and annually to Constituent Councils through the Annual Report.

EHA also provides quarterly infographic updates to its Constituent Councils reporting key outcomes and achievements.

Review

This Strategic Plan has a ten year life (2024-2033) and will have a mid-term review in 2029, or as otherwise determined by the EHA Board.

APPENDIX ONE: PUBLIC HEALTH LEGISLATION, POLICES, STANDARDS, CODES AND GUIDELINES.

Source: Environmental Health Australia (SA Division)

Legislation	Regulations	Policies	Standards	Codes/Guidelines
Public Health Act, 2011	South Australian Public Health (General) Regulations 2013			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Standard for the Operation of Swimming Pools and Spas in South Australia - Guideline for the Inspection and Maintenance of Swimming Pools and Spa Pools in South Australia
	South Australian Public Health (Wastewater) Regulations 2013		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AS/NZS 1547 – Onsite domestic wastewater management - AS/NZS 3500 - Plumbing and Drainage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The On-site Wastewater Systems Code - Community Wastewater Management Code
	South Australian Public Health (Legionella) Regulations 2013		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AS/NZS 3666 – Air-handling and water systems of buildings – Microbial control Parts 1, 2 & 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Guidelines for the Control of Legionella in Manufactured Water Systems in South Australia
	South Australian Public Health (Notifiable and Controlled Notifiable Conditions) Regulations 2012			
		South Australian Public Health (Clandestine Drug Laboratories) Policy 2016		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Practice Guideline for the Management of Clandestine Drug Laboratories under the <i>South Australian Public Health Act, 2011</i> - Clandestine Drug Laboratory Remediation Guidelines
		South Australian Public Health (Severe Domestic Squalor) Policy 2013		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A Foot in the Door – Stepping towards solutions to resolve incidents of severe domestic squalor in South Australia
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Guidelines on the Safe and Hygienic Practice of Skin Penetration - Guideline on the Public Health Standards of Practice for Hairdressing

Legislation	Regulations	Policies	Standards	Codes/Guidelines
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Guidelines for the Management of Public Health and Safety at Events - Animal Contact Guidelines - Code of Practice for the Provision of Facilities for Sanitation and Personal Hygiene - Public Health Emergency Management Plan
	South Australian Public Health (Notifiable Contaminants) Regulations 2020			
Food Act, 2001	Food Regulations 2017		Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Food Safety Guidelines for Food Service to Vulnerable Persons - Gastroenteritis outbreak management guideline for South Australian residential environments - Guide to the Labelling of Packaged Food - Guideline sushi food handling practices - Compendium of Microbiological Criteria for Food (as published by Food Standards Australia)
Safe Drinking Water Act, 2011	Safe Drinking Water Regulations 2012			
Supported Residential Facilities Act 1992	Supported Residential Facilities Regulations 2009			
Environment Protection Act 1993	Environment Protection Regulations 2009	Environment Protection (Water Quality) Policy 2015		
Expiation of Offences Act 1996	Expiation of Offences Regulations 2011			
Local Government Act 1999				