



Setting the Scene

Partnership planning for the
COVID-19 pandemic recovery



We're all
in this
together.



28 May 2020

Contents

From the Western Australian Premier	3	Taking a different approach to recovery	9
From the State Recovery Controller	4	Reviewing what has been done so far	10
At a glance	5	Key State Government responses date	11
Phases of recovery	6	Setting the timeline for recovery planning	13
Recovery areas	7	Getting the best ideas to inform recovery	14
Guiding principles	8		

Acknowledgement of Country:

The Government of Western Australia acknowledges the traditional custodians throughout Western Australia and their continuing connection to the land, waters and community. We pay our respects to all members of Aboriginal communities and their cultures; and to Elders past, present and emerging.

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From the Western Australian Premier

I am pleased to outline the Government's overall approach to recovery from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

The pandemic has wide-ranging impacts on every aspect of life as we know it. It has halted most parts of the global economy, restricted the everyday activities of people and had a profound effect on the most vulnerable.

At its core, this is a public health emergency. It is unlikely that COVID-19 will end suddenly. The reality is that we need to learn to live with COVID-19 and, in doing so, respond quickly and effectively to outbreaks or surges of the virus.

When COVID-19 took hold, the Government acted swiftly and decisively to protect Western Australians. Along with other states and territories, we enacted social distancing, isolation and travel restrictions. Western Australia also did more. We did not allow cruise ships to offload passengers, we closed our State borders and we instituted regional borders.

They were tough calls to make – but essential. Western Australia is now in a better position than just about anywhere else in the world thanks to our geography, our world-leading resources sector, and the early and decisive actions taken to date. There have been, and continue to be, very low levels of community transmission of the virus.

We are now at the point of being able to slowly and carefully lift restrictions in line with expert health advice. This is the roadmap we are embarking on.

I know that Western Australians are thankful that this State has not experienced anything like the deaths and cases in other states and countries.

At the same time, I know the impact on our State is enormous in many other ways. What began as a health crisis has moved on to impact the economy and the community.

The challenge of recovery is now before us. It will be hard. It will take time. It will involve everyone working together. Our recovery is one of shared responsibility where the public, private and not-for profit sectors come together, with the State's varied and diverse communities, as partners.

I want every Western Australian to know how we are going about this challenge and the part they can play – indeed need to play.



Mark McGowan
Mark McGowan
Premier of WA

From the State Recovery Controller

I am very mindful of the responsibility I have as the State Recovery Controller to provide Western Australians with a way towards recovery that is doable, practical and realistic.

The first step is to establish the overall direction for recovery to shape the decisions we make, the actions we take and the outcomes we aspire to achieve.

It is important for everyone to be unified behind this vision and common goal for recovery in Western Australia.

It is equally important for us to have an underlying set of principles that underpins our beliefs about and commitment to how we go about the recovery effort.

Setting the Scene provides the high level overview of recovery and lays out how planning and implementation will evolve over time.

It is bound together through a partnership approach. The very best resources we have across this State – the people, the skills, the expertise and the hard work of Western Australians in business, industry, not for profits, unions, the public sector, local governments and the community – will be brought together.

Supported by scenario planning and regular assessment of impacts, our plan for recovery will necessarily change over time. It will be flexible and iterative to reflect the dynamic circumstances that confront and challenge us almost daily.

While we know many of the impacts of this crisis to date, others are yet to be identified or become evident.

With the overall direction set, a range of opportunities will be provided to stakeholders to harness their insights and ideas as well as understand their challenges and issues.

Together these will inform the State recovery plan for both the short and longer terms.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sharyn O'Neill".

Sharyn O'Neill
State Recovery Controller

At a glance

Vision

Western Australia gets back on the road to becoming a thriving and innovative community to live, work, visit and do business in.

Goal

Return Western Australia to a proper level of functioning following the COVID-19 pandemic, alongside opportunities for enhancement where they lead to increased resilience, efficiencies and effectiveness.



Objectives

- Reboot our economy to get back onto the pre-pandemic growth trajectory as quickly as possible.
- Regroup our community at a personal, family and social level so people feel healthy and have the confidence to lead active lives.
- Rethink our future to lead us to the next normal.

Phases of recovery

1. Controlled reopening and relaxation

This phase is about cautious relaxing and/or lifting of the specific restrictions that have been brought about through the *Emergency Management Act 2005*.

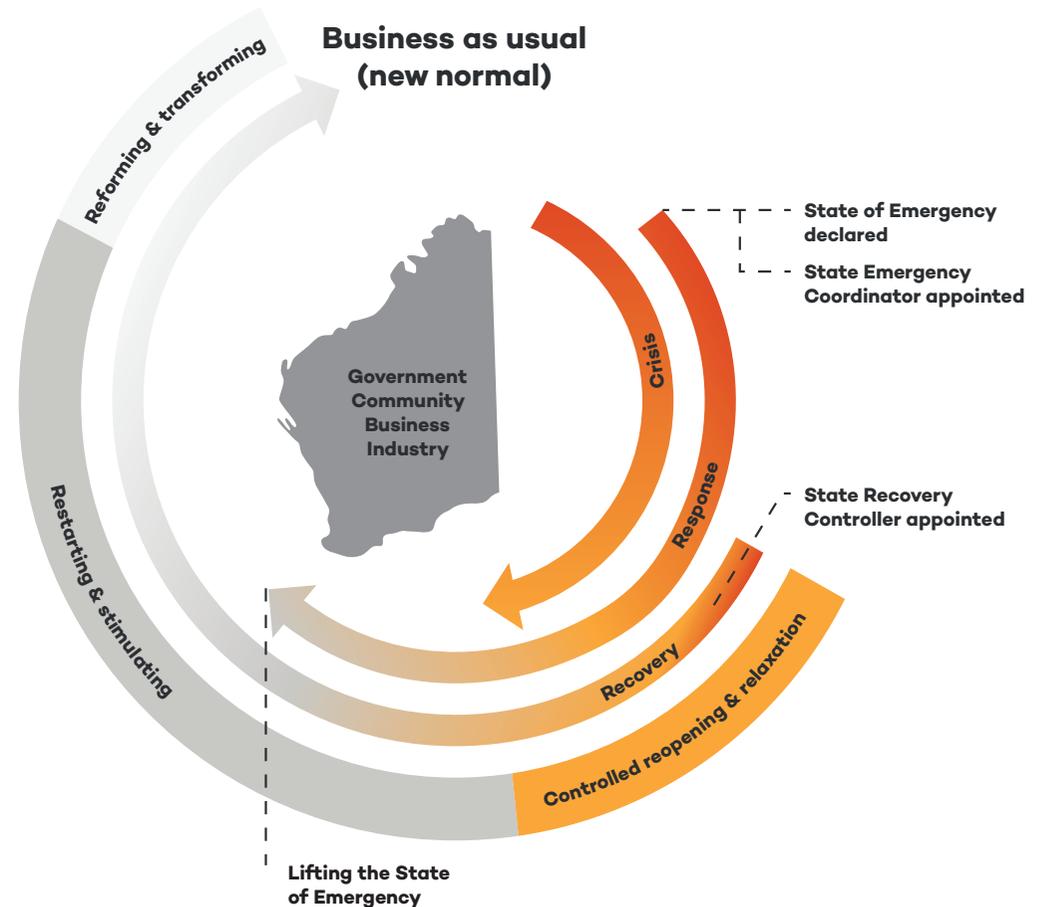
It includes reopening some aspects of the domestic economy and the community in a controlled manner that is monitored closely. All decisions are in line with the best health advice for Western Australia.

2. Careful restarting and stimulating

This phase is a progressive shift to stimulating business and the community to come out of hibernation, initially using the levers available to the Government. It includes bringing forward creative ideas and early wins for Western Australians.

3. Progressive reforming and transforming

The focus of this phase is on using the opportunities provided by the pandemic to bring forward more courageous ideas for change and improvement. Old rules and regulations are re-evaluated and technologies that worked well in the crisis become permanent options. It's about future-proofing Western Australia for resilience and sustainability.



Recovery areas

Health

Health is the key initial focus of recovery to ensure the community's physical and mental health while also strengthening the health system's capability and capacity. In addition, the system needs to be ready to respond to outbreaks or surges in COVID-19 cases.

Economic and infrastructure

Addressing the sustainability, competitiveness and viability of the economy supports recovery across all areas. A prosperous State for business, work and education increases employment, generates business diversity and fosters innovation. Stimulating and supporting infrastructure generates employment opportunities and avenues for industry engagement and investment.

Social

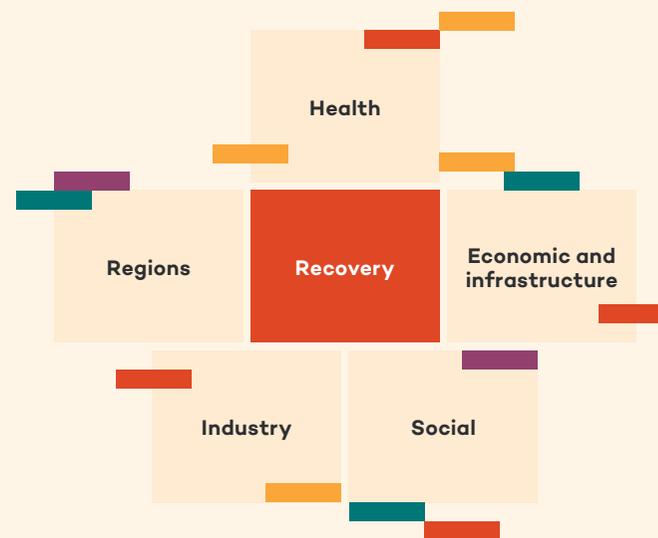
Effective social recovery is the foundation for enabling recovery in all aspects of the community and is essential for future community sustainability. Restoring community cohesion and resilience improve quality of life and the social fabric of Western Australia, with a particular focus on vulnerable people. Active engagement in arts, culture, education, sport and recreation builds community strength.

Industry

Restoring the confidence of business and industry supports economic recovery and growth and also allows for adaptations to the changed and changing environment. It provides the platform for new and emerging industry diversification while harnessing the State's rich innovative and research community.

Regions

A dedicated regional focus across all areas of recovery is needed to revitalise the regions through business development, community resilience initiatives, local engagement and leveraging opportunities for diverse industry and local jobs.



Supported by the Western Australian public sector

Guiding principles

Our principles are adapted from the National Principles for Disaster Recovery to reflect the unique context generated through the COVID-19 pandemic in this State.

Understand the context

We shape our recovery planning based on understanding the impacts of the pandemic, articulating these impacts and updating them regularly as they change and/or emerge.

Recognise complexity

We take an iterative and dynamic approach to recovery planning and implementation, and measure success along the way.

Use community-led approaches

We partner with the community through business, industry, the not for profit sector, unions, the public sector and local government to shape plans and actions.

Coordinate all activities

We coordinate work through the five recovery areas and their interdependencies, and in partnership with our stakeholders.

Communicate effectively

We run a multi-faceted communications campaign to keep the community informed and bring them along the journey of recovery.



Taking a different approach to recovery

The scale, complexity and duration of the COVID-19 pandemic calls for a different approach to recovery.

Our disaster response and recovery experiences in Western Australia to date have been, in the vast majority of instances, localised natural disasters. We are using our learnings from these experiences to shape the action we need to take now.

The impact of the pandemic across virtually every facet of the community, industry and government; and the intersection of response and recovery are unlike anything we have experienced in this State, and indeed internationally.

Western Australia's recovery effort will be **State-led with partnership at its heart**. Government, business, industry, not for profits and unions will work together towards the goal of returning Western Australia to a proper level of functioning following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Partnership across the **three levels of government** – national, state and local – will also drive recovery.

The Australian Government plays a significant role in the recovery process and there is the potential for the National Cabinet to guide a collective approach across Australia.

There is also its core role in setting macroeconomic policy and managing social security and other associated payments to Australians.

Local government will play its role in community recovery, on the ground in every part of the State.

Recovery will be directed through the **five areas** of health, economic and infrastructure, social, industry and regions. Each area will have a clear focus with articulated impacts and actions, and consideration of interdependencies.

The public sector will bring its **policy expertise** to the table to support recovery.

Health, economic and social modelling, which has been so important in the response to date and the roadmap for lifting restrictions, will continue to inform policy and strategy.

The perspectives of stakeholders will be sought on issues, challenges and ideas to complement the policy work to be done.

Community sentiment, how people are behaving, the kinds of information they are seeking and their concerns are already being gathered through research, surveys and feedback commissioned by the Government and others. These will continue during recovery planning and implementation, adding to the rich array of views to guide strategy and action.

Given the complexity of the recovery effort, an iterative and dynamic approach to planning and implementation will be essential to allow for evolution over time as recovery progresses.

Reviewing what has been done so far

A four phase roadmap for easing COVID-19 pandemic restrictions started in late April 2020 to get Western Australians back to work safely and begin the process of re-starting the State's economy.

The Government has already invested more than \$1.8 billion in stimulus and relief to support households and businesses. This includes payroll tax relief for small and medium sized businesses, waiving licence fees for the most affected occupations and sectors, assistance with utility bills, and land tax grants for landlords who provide rent relief to significantly impacted tenants. Further measures will be considered as the roadmap is rolled out.

The **WA roadmap** is one part of the State's plan for recovery, with a particular focus on easing the restrictions in a safe and measured way.

The first phase was in place from 27 April 2020, and the second from Monday 18 May 2020. The third will be finalised in the coming days based on expert health advice, social and economic modelling and taking into account the infection rates across WA.

It is expected this phase will be implemented as soon as possible. The fourth stage will be assessed and finalised in due course. Western Australia's hard border with the rest of Australia is expected to be the final restriction lifted.

This **staged approach** allows for careful monitoring of COVID-19 in WA, and easing restrictions in a way that supports our economy, with the smallest risk to the community's health.

The roadmap has been developed specifically to help get some businesses going, while maintaining strict health guidelines. It allows for health experts to review the impact of the changes before moving to the next phase of restrictions being lifted.



To date, the Government has invested \$1.8 billion in stimulus and relief to support households and businesses.

Key State Government responses date

Health

- \$1 billion (\$500 million for health and frontline) economic and health relief package
- \$266.7 million to support young Aboriginal Western Australians
- \$15 million for vital equipment and additional ventilated beds
- \$3 million funding for COVID-19 related health and medical research
- \$1.7 million funding for local supplier of hand sanitiser
- Funding of Telethon Kids Institute study to track impact of COVID-19 in schools
- Partnership with HBF and resources sector for up to \$6 million for COVID-19 research
- Guardianship and Administration Bill to trial new treatments for COVID-19
- Drive-through influenza immunisation clinic for people aged 65 years and over
- \$400,000 to expand influenza vaccination program for primary school aged children
- Fast-tracked funding for infectious disease training for disability and aged care workers
- Free-to-access palliative care support line through fast-tracked investment

Economic and infrastructure

- \$1.8 billion stimulus and relief package for businesses and households
- \$402 million to freeze household fees and charges until 1 July 2021
- \$154.5 million relief package for tenants, landlords and construction industry
- Fast tracked \$150 million housing investment package for local tradies and builders
- \$107 million in grants to businesses with payrolls between \$1 and 4 million
- \$100 million short-term lending facility for local government and universities
- \$25 million rent waiver for small businesses and not-for-profits in Government-owned buildings
- \$9 million to support the taxi and on-demand transport industry
- Major reforms to simplify planning system introduced to Parliament
- New Procurement Bill to make it easier for business to work with Government
- Legislation to enable local governments to reduce red tape and help businesses and households

- Legislation to exempt businesses from payroll tax on JobKeeper wage subsidy
- New powers under Local Government Act to assist residential and small business ratepayers
- Streamlined tender process for transport construction projects up to a value of \$20 million
- Fast-tracking of Government payments to suppliers for invoices of under \$1 million
- Six-month moratorium on evictions for households and certain commercial tenancies.
- Deferral of payroll tax payments until July 2020 for businesses

Social

- \$159 million Lotterywest funding to assist community services
- \$91 million for Police for emergency response
- \$30 million in grants for residential tenants in financial hardship
- \$8.5 million increase to funding for local community groups
- \$6.9 million reduction of electricity bills for around 2,800 charities
- New laws to support commercial and residential tenants and landlords
- Legal Aid funding increased help to Western Australians
- Electronic restraining order applications for family and domestic violence
- Energy Assistance Payment doubled for vulnerable Western Australians
- New Alcohol Think Again education campaign against alcohol related harm
- New Think Mental Health's Be Positive. Be Connected. Be Active campaign
- Payments under government contracts with community services assured until 30 June 2020

Industry

- Fast tracking tender process for road projects worth \$2.37 billion to create 13,000 jobs
- \$24.5 million for construction industry to maintain apprentices and trainees
- \$14.4 million tourism support package
- \$12.85 million to subsidise regional airfares and tourism marketing support
- \$12 million in fast tracked community sport grants
- \$3.8 million resources export hubs
- \$1.3 million to waive and defer several fees for fishing, aquaculture, pearling and tour operators
- Streamlined tender process for transport construction projects up to a value of \$20 million
- Royalty rates for construction and industrial minerals fixed for five years
- Exemption from exploration expenditure considered for tenement holders
- Reduction of Mines Safety Levy by 20 per cent from 1 July 2020
- 50 per cent discount in port dues for bulk vessels bunkering with LNG at Pilbara ports
- Collaborative Research Grants to improve defence industry

Regions

- \$2.1 million three-year investment to maintain Regional Arts WA grant funding
- \$1.3 million support package for the rock lobster industry
- Regional Economic Development Grants for projects to sustain jobs and build resilience
- Telehealth facilities to support chemotherapy patients in restricted Kimberley region
- 'Here for WA' campaign to connect job seekers with opportunities across regional WA
- \$235,000 for grants to regional chambers of commerce
- \$3 million to secure Regional Express (Rex) services
- Multimillion dollar investment in Esperance training and jobs

Setting the timeline for recovery planning

Planning in line with the three phases of recovery will be brought together based on research, scenario planning, impact assessments, modelling and engagement opportunities.

Controlled reopening and relaxation

The focus of the WA roadmap is on lifting the restrictions put in place for the pandemic crisis. The roadmap is stepped out over four time periods, starting in April 2020. A range of factors is considered before decisions are made to lift further restrictions.

Careful restarting and stimulating

Parts of the WA roadmap involve careful restarting through increased business activity along with less restrictive social and community settings.

In the restart phase, the State recovery plan for the immediate future from July to December 2020 will be developed and released.

To get to this point, specific detail about the impacts of the pandemic will be scoped and a draft State-level impact statement will be used as the basis for engagement. Following this, the statement will be finalised and inform the State recovery plan.

At the same time, any actions that can be taken safely to speed up recovery and confidence will be implemented.

Progressive reforming and transforming

The reform phase will focus on the development of a revised State recovery plan for the longer term horizon of 12 months – the calendar year of 2021. The impact statement will be assessed where required, particularly as more impacts emerge and become evident. Engagement will help shape an updated State-level impact statement. From this, a revised State recovery plan will be developed and released. Monitoring, modelling, research and community sentiment – along with expert health, economic and social advice – will all play their part in recovery planning for reform and transformation.



Getting the best ideas to inform recovery

Recovery from this pandemic is an enormous challenge which is why we need the very best information and ideas.

The Government is setting up a State Recovery Advisory Group to provide strategic advice to steer and support recovery efforts. The group of high profile and credentialed leaders will be convened for a series of facilitated workshops at key points in the recovery planning process.

To inform the State-level impact statement and State recovery plan, a series of roundtables and forums will be led by Ministers to get a greater understanding of the issues and challenges for business, industry and community leaders.

Advisory groups, peak bodies and other existing mechanisms will be used as much as possible to ensure expediency and avoid unnecessary bureaucracy.

The roundtables and forums will also seek ideas and innovations, solutions and adaptations that can lead Western Australia to a strong post-COVID position.

Each recovery area has been assigned a head of a government department to shape and coordinate work. These lead heads will gather information and intelligence through networks and processes both inside and outside of government.

Local government has a legislated role in local community recovery. Through established instruments for consultation and feedback, the network of councils across the State is well positioned to link with their communities.

The online community called [iThink](#) (WA Public Sector) has been used recently to bring forward ideas about responses to the pandemic. It has now been reshaped as an avenue for recovery with challenges for ideas to be set at intervals to reflect the recovery phases.

All Western Australians can use this community to post ideas and view the ideas of others. Ideas will be used in recovery planning.

Surveys, research and social listening are already being used to keep abreast of community sentiment, concerns and behaviours. These will continue to be run so the perspectives and experiences of the community are heard and can be included in recovery activities.

As recovery progresses, other opportunities will be provided for ideas to be generated so Western Australia's recovery is focused and relevant.



Reboot our economy
Regroup our community
Rethink our future

**We're all
in this
*together.***

