

Annual report 2022–23 Other requirements/Appendices



Our staff meet with our Aboriginal Water and Environment Advisory Group and the Committee of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Water Interests

Acknowledgement and reconciliation

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land upon which we live and work throughout Western Australia and pay our respects to their Elders past and present.

We recognise the practice of intergenerational care for Country and its relevance to our work as water and environmental managers.

We seek to listen, learn and genuinely engage and build strong partnerships. We aim to provide sustainable opportunities for Aboriginal people within our workforce and through our business.

Working with the community, we move forward with a shared commitment to protect and conserve Country for future generations. We recognise Country is a term used by Aboriginal people to describe the lands, waterways and seas to which they are intrinsically linked, and to which their wellbeing, law, place, custom, language, spiritual belief, cultural practice, material sustenance, family and identity belong.

Better together!



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Other requirements

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Other legal requirements

Expenditure on advertising, market research, polling, and direct mail

In accordance with section 175ZE of the *Electoral Act 1907*, the department incurred the below expenditure in advertising, market research, polling, direct mail, and media advertising. Total expenditure for 2022–23 was \$1,620,958.13 (excluding GST).

Expenditure	Total	Expenditure paid to	Amount
Advertising agencies	Nil		Nil
Market research organisations	Nil		Nil
Polling organisations	Nil		Nil
Direct mail organisations	Nil		Nil
		Carat	\$1,259,792.47
		LinkedIn	\$2,292.46
		Facebook	\$39,259.88
		Google	\$125,855.48
Media advertising		Initiative Media Australia	\$132,734.25
organisations	\$1,620,958.13	Independent and general media	\$12,585.88
		Department of the Premier and Cabinet	\$12,117.71
		National Retail Association	\$36,320.00
		TOTAL	\$1,620,958.13

Unauthorised use of purchasing cards

In 2022–23 there were 33 instances where a State Government purchasing card was used for personal use. The aggregate amount of personal use expenditure was \$1,032.39. All expenditure was recovered by 30 June 2023. No disciplinary actions were instigated by the notifiable authority during the reporting period.

Act of grace payments

No act of grace payments were made in 2022-23.

Disclosures

Public sector standards and ethical codes

In accordance with section 21 of the *Public Sector Management Act 1994*, the department complies with standards of merit, equity, and probity in relation to human resources activities. No breaches of the Western Australian Public Sector Standards in Human Resources (Employment Standard, Grievance Standard or Discipline Standard) were lodged in 2022–23.





Recordkeeping

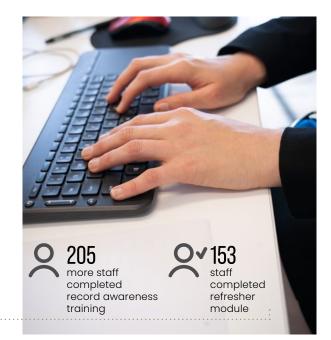
We are committed to continuously improving our recordkeeping culture, tools, and practices to ensure compliance with the *State Records Act 2000* and best business outcomes for the department. In line with the State Records Commission Standard 2, Principle 6, the following information is provided.

Our recordkeeping manual covers the broad range of recordkeeping requirements necessary to ensure staff create, manage, and maintain departmental records (regardless of format) to support business needs and ensure the



department and its staff meet the legislative requirements in our Recordkeeping Plan. In 2022–23 record awareness training across the
department was completed by 205 staff, resulting in 1,062 department employees successfully completing this training to date.

These figures include regional staff and staff of the Office of the Appeals Convenor. A records awareness refresher training module is available. Once users have successfully completed recordkeeping awareness training, they will be required to complete the refresher module every two years. To date, 153 staff have completed this training.



Disclosures

Government policy requirements

Substantive equality

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Our whole-of-department commitment to substantive equity is built into the way we deliver water and environmental management. All processes associated with our management tasks and planning practices are developed with diverse input from the community and stakeholders. This development process features broad public invitations across multiple platforms to comment on draft documents.

We aim to implement substantive equality measures across all operations and departmental



functions as well as make our services available to all in a form that meets diverse, individual, and cultural needs. Our equity and diversity panel provides oversight on developing and integrating substantive equality strategies into our overall equity framework.

We are committed to providing employment opportunities for Aboriginal people within the department and through our business. We are also strengthening sustainable relationships with Aboriginal communities and respect their knowledge and deep connection to Western Australia's land and waterways.

We continue to listen to, learn from, and build partnerships with Traditional Owners across the state. As part of our reconciliation commitment, we



incorporate and consider the social and cultural wellbeing as well as rights of Aboriginal people when working on Country with Traditional Owners. The department incorporates Acknowledgement of Country protocols into all official meetings and events to recognise Aboriginal peoples' spiritual and cultural connection to lands and waters.

Jawun executive experience

The department encourages staff to deepen their experience and understanding of the state's Aboriginal culture and communities, and continues to support employee participation in the Jawun program.

Jawun provides a professional development opportunity for government sector staff to go on secondment and contribute their skills to support Aboriginal economic development while learning about Aboriginal culture and history.

In 2022–23 two secondments were completed by departmental staff – partnering with the Murujuga

Overview



Aboriginal Corporation (MAC) in Dampier in the Pilbara, and the Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Cultural Centre (KALACC) at Fitzroy Crossing.

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One secondee joined MAC with a goal of ensuring all workplace health and safety (WHS) documents were fit for purpose across organisational operations. The secondee at KALACC focused on assessing its organisational capabilities and recommending new approaches to enhance governance and communications.

MAC, KALACC and both secondees spoke highly of the experience, with all parties gaining and sharing valuable skills and knowledge as a result of working together.

WA Multicultural Policy Framework

The department's inaugural *Multicultural* Plan 2020-22 concluded this financial year, delivering tangible actions against three key outcomes: a welcoming and inclusive workplace culture, culturally appropriate services that meet our clients' needs, and engagement with culturally diverse communities

Guided by the principles and desired outcomes established in the State Government's Western Australian Multicultural Policy Framework, our plan committed to actions spanning policy, programs, and services areas of our business seeking to promote economic, social, cultural, civic and political participation.

As of 30 June 2023, we were in the process of providing a full report on the outcomes of our first multicultural plan to the Office of Multicultural

Affairs. We were also working on our Multicultural Plan 2023-26.

Multicultural Policy Framework: Key achievements

Department-wide census

We worked closely with Edith Cowan University to run our first DWERversity census – helping us to better understand our diverse workforce's experience with inclusion. The results of this census were published in our 2020-21 annual report.

In 2023, our census program was replaced by the WA Public Sector Census. This inaugural census ran from 13 March to 12 April 2023, with 753 departmental employees participating (equating to 76 per cent of our staff). This is the largest response rate by our workforce to a survey to date. Detailed analysis of the department's data will be undertaken later in calendar year 2023.

Code of Conduct and Dignity at Work Policy

During financial year 2022–23, the department released a revised Code of Conduct and a new Dignity at Work Policy – helping create inclusive and safe workspaces across our business. These documents also form part of our onboarding and performance discussions for all staff and underpin our training and development activities.

Digital dashboard

Our diversity dashboard was released as part of our corporate reporting in May 2023 and provides a daily snapshot of how we are progressing against our diversity employment targets (as set out by the Public Sector Commission).

In financial year 2022–23, we reached our diversity target of 15.5 per cent - with the number of staff identifying as culturally and linguistically diverse increasing from 119 to 164.

VegetablesWA partnership

The department is committed to providing targeted information packages in languages for key groups. Through a joint project with VegetablesWA, we produced a Vietnamese translation of the Gnangara Groundwater Allocation Plan, as well as a letter for licensees, with the documents distributed by VegetablesWA to Vietnamese growers in the Gnangara area.





Inclusive access

The ongoing delivery of our *Disability access and inclusion plan* demonstrates the department's commitment to an inclusive public service. The five-year plan, due for renewal after calendar year 2023, recognises the rights of all employees to access services, information, and facilities, and to participate in community consultation. It helps us to meet – and surpass – obligations under the *Disability Services Act 1993*, the *Equal Opportunity Act 1984*, and the Commonwealth *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*.

Over the year our workforce diversity continued to grow, with the number of people with disability increasing from 31 to 42 – representing 4 per cent of our workforce.

Inclusive access highlights

In 2022–23 the department undertook significant work across platforms and services, including:

Website migration

Migrated all digital content to the <u>www.wa.gov.au</u> platform – enhancing accessibility of our information and creating an inclusive digital environment.

New office

Facilities upgrades and office refits at our Prime House head office and new regional office in Bunbury to ensure accessibility, including additional elevators, wider walkways, adjustable desks, and accessible parking.

New Code of Conduct

Published our revised Code of Conduct and a new Dignity at Work Policy – helping create inclusive and safe workspaces across our business.







Occupational health, safety, and injury management

As a department, we take the health and safety of our staff seriously and we are committed to ensuring a safe and healthy workplace. Our Health and Safety Committee meets quarterly and regularly consults with regional offices through health and safety subcommittees comprising health and safety representatives, employee representatives, and management representatives.

These groups focus on resolving systemic safety issues and continuously improving our occupational safety and health systems, processes, and performance. Our Health and Safety Committee is also responsible for safety risk and hazard identification and awareness. This includes ensuring that our department-wide workplace health and safety (WHS) action plan is implemented and meets its targets.

The committees, which include employee representatives, are integral to effective WHS consultation within our department. The locations and details of our health and safety representatives, as well as associated documents and forms, are available to all staff through our intranet.

In 2022–23, we launched our <u>Thrive at work:</u> <u>Wellbeing strategy 2023–26</u>. Supported by our senior executive team, the strategy addresses three key WHS areas comprising imbalanced job design, dignity at work, and job uncertainty.

Manager and supervisor training in occupational health and safety, and injury management

In 2022–23 the department continued to provide onsite training for managers and employees. The high volume of managers trained in financial year 2021–22 meant training during 2022–23 was conducted on a case-by-case basis, with specific focus on issues associated with business units. About 50 managers were assisted under this training model.

All managers and employees are required to undertake WHS training every two years; this training is easily accessible through the department's online learning system.

Throughout the financial year, we continued to train our health and safety representatives to ensure efficient safety standards and appointed additional WHS representatives to work closely with management teams. These voluntary roles include work site inspections for potential hazards, incident investigation, and communications with department staff.

Mechanisms for consultation with employees

Our primary mechanism for consultation with employees is through our health and safety committees and representatives. We also have an incident management reporting system in place which clearly articulates notification protocols and escalation points. Our online platforms are further means to ensure effective, timely and inclusive engagement with our staff, to ask for their feedback on department policy and procedures, and to update and announce events occurring in our safety and wellbeing areas.

Commitment to return employees back to work after injury

Our comprehensive workers' compensation and injury management policy aligns with State Government guidelines, helping injured employees to return to work as soon as medically appropriate. This system ensures we can intervene promptly and effectively in injury management, enabling injured employees to remain at work or return to work at the earliest possible time. This system and our return-to-work programs are compliant with the requirements of the *Workers' Compensation and Injury Management Act 1981* and have been reviewed and approved by RiskCover, our department's insurer.

Disclosures

► Performance

Ensuring the health and safety of our workforce is paramount; our responsibilities are primarily set out under the Public Sector Commissioner's Circular <u>Code of Practice: Occupational Safety and</u> <u>Health in the Western Australian Public Sector</u>, as well as the requirements of the Work Health Safety Act 2020 and the Workers' Compensation and Injury Management Act 1981. We comply with the code and the requirements of the Acts. Our performance against targets set in the code is demonstrated in the table below.



Measures	Results 2020–21	Results 2021–22	Results 2022–23	Targets	Comments towards targets
Number of fatalities	0	0	0	0	The department had 0 fatalities
Lost time injuries and disease incidence rate	0.3	0.1	0.2	0	While the number of lost time injuries is low, we are continuously reviewing better and more efficient ways of managing risk and injuries in the workplace to reach our target of zero time lost to injuries.
Lost time injury and severity rate	0	0.1	0	0	Severe claims are measured against those which have lost 60 days or more.
Percentage of injured workers returned to work within 13 weeks	100%	99.9%	100%	100%	Injured employees must return to work in some capacity before 13 weeks, with restrictions on work in the original area of employment or other meaningful work.
Percentage of injured workers returned to work within 26 weeks	100%	100%	100%	100%	We have put strategies in place to ensure all claimants return to work within 13 weeks, as guided by the clinical advice.
Percentage of managers trained in occupational safety, health and injury management responsibilities, including refresher training within three years	Online training modules for managers 75%	Online training modules for managers 92%	Online training modules for managers 90%	100%	We will continue to provide injury management training, with all managers required to complete this. Refresher training will occur for online modules every two years.

Priorities

Disclosures

Complaints procedure

Feedback on our service delivery is welcome and is used to improve our current offerings and ensure we consistently deliver the highest quality of service that meets the needs of our stakeholders and customers.

Our <u>service charter</u> guides our relationship with everyone we work with. We have a dedicated <u>feedback and complaints portal</u> where stakeholders and customers are encouraged to bring matters to the department's attention so we can action, track, and monitor trends.

In line with our service charter, we received 22 complaints via our online complaints and feedback mechanism from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023.

The complaints received ranged from:

- not relating to the department's service delivery
- providing direct feedback to faults in the department's website
- Water Online, Pollution Watch, and EPA submissions requiring redirection
- various operational matters including air pollution data and regulatory functions, including sprinkler rosters.

These submissions were actioned and closed. In the timeframe recorded, no items are yet to be finalised.

This data does not include complaints managed under statutory processes within the department's remit, such as noise, dust, and littering complaints.



Freedom of information

It is our commitment to make information available to the public as soon as possible and at the lowest possible cost.

In accordance with section 10 of the *Freedom* of *Information Act 1992* (FOI Act), a person has a right to be given access to documents of an agency subject to, and in accordance with, the FOI Act.

For the 2022–23 period, we received 299 FOI applications. Seven of these applications progressed to an internal review and four were reviewed externally by the Office of the Information Commissioner.

This financial year:

- the average time taken to process FOI applications was 41 days (the mandatory requirement under the FOI Act is 45 days)
- we received five applications for personal information
- we received 294 applications for non-personal information
- in addition to the 299 FOI applications received by the department, we handled a further 46 consultations from other agencies.

Home



Woola Awards 2023

On 23 June 2023, the department held its third annual Woola Awards – coinciding with the United Nations Public Service Day. Woola – the Noongar word for 'shout of praise' – sets the tone for this event, with individuals and teams from across our organisation celebrated for their contributions. Awards are presented across three categories, comprising:

- Significant Achievement Award
- Aboriginal Empowerment Award
- Recognition of Service Award.









This year, 147 staff members were recognised for their continuous service in the public sector, while the remaining awards highlighted outstanding contributions at work and for living our values. The awards were presented by our Ministers, Hon Simone McGurk MLA and Hon Reece Whitby MLA. The 2023 Significant Achievement Award was presented to our Kimberley Floods Recovery Program Team, acknowledging its tireless efforts to support those communities impacted by this devastating natural disaster.

We are committed to ensuring our employees feel valued as we know this directly impacts the level of service then delivered to our stakeholders, business units, and the community. We congratulate all nominees and winners of this year's awards and look forward to the 2024 ceremony.

Appendices

Appendix A: Legislation

Legislation administered by the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation as at 30 June 2023

Carbon Rights Act 2003 Contaminated Sites Act 2003 Country Areas Water Supply Act 1947 Environmental Protection Act 1986 Environmental Protection Amendment Act 2020 Environmental Protection (Landfill) Levy Act 1998

Litter Act 1979 (the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation is the agency principally assisting the Minister for Environment in the administration of this Act assisted by the Keep Australia Beautiful Council [Western Australia])

Metropolitan Arterial Drainage Act 1982

Metropolitan Water Authority Act 1982

Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Act 1909

National Environmental Protection Council (Western Australia) Act 1996

Plumbers Licensing Act 1995 (except Part 5A which is administered by the Minister for Commerce principally assisted by the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety) – alternative citations are Water Services Coordination Act 1995 and Water Licensing Act 1995

Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914

Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Act 2007 (the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation is the agency principally assisting the Minister for Environment in the administration of this Act assisted by the Waste Authority)

Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Levy Act 2007 (the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation is the agency principally assisting the Minister for Environment in the administration of this Act assisted by the Waste Authority)

Water Agencies (Powers) Act 1984

Water Agencies Restructure (Transitional and Consequential Provisions) Act 1995

Water Corporations Act 1995

Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards Act 2006

Water Resources Legislation Amendment Act 2007

Water Services Act 2012

Water Services Coordination Act 1995

Water Services Licensing Act 1995 (also called *Plumbers Licensing Act 1995*) (except Part 5A, which the Department of Commerce administers)

Disclosures

Waterways Conservation Act 1976

Regulations administered by the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation as at 30 June 2023

Clean Air (Determination of Air Impurities in Gases Discharged to the Atmosphere) Regulations 1983

Contaminated Sites Regulations 2006

Country Areas Water Supply (Clearing Licence) Regulations 1981

Environmental Protection (Abattoirs) Regulations 2001

Environmental Protection (Abrasive Blasting) Regulations 1998

Environmental Protection (Bilateral Agreements) Regulations 2021

Environmental Protection (Clearing of Native Vegetation) Regulations 2004

Environmental Protection (Concrete Batching and Cement Product Manufacturing) Regulations 1998

Environmental Protection (Controlled Waste) Regulations 2004

Environmental Protection (Cost Recovery) Regulations 2021

Environmental Protection (Fibre Reinforced Plastics) Regulations 1998

Environmental Protection (Goldfields Residential Areas) (Sulfur Dioxide) Regulations 2003

Environmental Protection (Kwinana) (Atmospheric Wastes) Regulations 1992

Environmental Protection (Metal Coating) Regulations 2001

Environmental Protection (NEPM-NPI) Regulations 1998

Environmental Protection (NEPM-UPM) Regulations 2013

Environmental Protection (Noise) Regulations 1997

Environmental Protection (Packaged Fertiliser) Regulations 2010

Environmental Protection (Petrol) Regulations 1999

Environmental Protection (Plastic Bag) Regulations 2018

Environmental Protection (Prohibited Plastics and Balloons) Regulations 2018

Environmental Protection (Recovery of Vapours from the Transfer of Organic Liquids) Regulations 1995

Environmental Protection (Rural Landfill) Regulations 2002

Environmental Protection (Solid Fuel Burning Appliances and Firewood Supply) Regulations 1998

Environmental Protection (Unauthorised Discharges) Regulations 2004

Environmental Protection Regulations 1987

Litter Regulations 1981

Noise Abatement (Noise Labelling of Equipment) Regulations (No. 2) 1985

Plumbers Licensing and Plumbing Standards Regulations 2000

Rights in Water and Irrigation Regulations 2000

Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Amendment Regulations 2019

Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery (Container Deposit Scheme) Regulations 2019

Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Levy Regulations 2008

Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Regulations 2008

Water Agencies (Entry Warrant) Regulations 1985

Water Agencies (Infringements) Regulations 1994

Water Corporations (Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2013

Water Services Regulations 2013

Water Services Coordination Regulations 1996

Water Services (Water Corporations Charges) Regulations 2014

Waterways Conservation Regulations 1981

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Other subsidiary legislation affecting our activities

For all other subsidiary legislation including bylaws, notices, declarations, proclamations, approvals, exemptions, orders, policy, pollution control areas, vesting orders, irrigation districts, standards and guidelines, please visit www.legislation.wa.gov.au.

Other key legislation affecting our activities

In the performance of our functions, the department complied with the following laws:

Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972 Auditor General Act 2006 Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992 Corruption and Crime Commission Act 2003 Disability Services Act 1993 Equal Opportunity Act 1984 Financial Management Act 2006 Freedom of Information Act 1992 Government Employees Housing Act 1964 Industrial Relations Act 1979 National Environmental Protection Council Act 1997 (Commonwealth) Long Service Leave Act 1958 Minimum Conditions of Employment Act 1993 Native Title Act 1993 (Commonwealth) Procurement Act 2020 Public Interest Disclosure Act 2003 Public Sector Management Act 1994

Salaries and Allowances Act 1975 State Records Act 2000 Workers' Compensation and Injury Management Act 1981 Work Health and Safety Act 2020

Appendice

Appendix B: Shortened forms

Term	Definition
AAQ NEPM	National Environment Protection (Ambient Air Quality) Measure
AWEAG	Aboriginal Water and Environment Advisory Group
BoM	Bureau of Meteorology
C&D	Construction and demolition
CAWI	Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Water Interests
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
DMIRS	Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety
DPIRD	Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development
DPLH	Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage
EPA	Environmental Protection Authority
EP Act	Environmental Protection Act 1986
EV	Electric vehicle
E-waste	Electronic waste
FOGO	Food organics and garden organics
HHW	Household hazardous waste
KPI	Key performance indicator
FOI	Freedom of information
JTSI	Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation

Term	Definition
KABC	Keep Australia Beautiful Council
KALACC	Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Cultural Centre
KTLA	Karajarri Traditional Lands Association
LGA	Local government authority
MAR	Mandatory Auditor Report
MAC	Murujuga Aboriginal Corporation
OAG	Office of the Auditor General
RIWI Act	Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914
SERS	Sectoral Emissions Reduction Strategies
SGIP	State Groundwater Investigations Program
RAP	Reconciliation Action Plan
RtR	Road to Reuse
UHI	Urban heat island
WARR Act	Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Act 2007
WHS	Work Health Safety
WIR	Water Information Reporting
YOUNG	Youth Outreach, Understanding, and Networking Group

Disclosures



Contact us

Regional offices

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Kwinana Peel region

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Kalgoorlie regional office

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Disclosures



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Overview

Appendices



Feedback form

Your feedback on our 2022–23 annual report would be greatly appreciated. We will use your comments to help improve the clarity and presentation of our publications. Thank you for your input.

• Did the report help you understand the department, its purpose, services and performance?

not	at	all	
not	ωı	un	

not really somewhat

yes absolutely

absolutely

• Did you find the design and presentation functional and effective?

not at all	not really	somewhat	yes	absolutely

• Was the report clear, concise and easy to read?

not at all	not really	somewhat	yes
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• Did you find the structural format of the report simple and logical?

not at all	not really	somewhat	yes	absolutely
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Please return completed feedback forms to: Corporate Communications

Email: <u>dwer.publishing@dwer.wa.gov.au</u>

or

Mail to: Department of Water and Environmental Regulation Locked Bag 10, Joondalup DC WA 6919

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South Coast region

Esperance regional office

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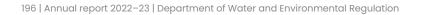
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Disclosures







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