



# ANNUAL REPORT

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2017 – 18



# Communication objective

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This annual report provides information about The Public Trustee's financial and corporate performance for 2017–18. It has been prepared in accordance with the *Financial Accountability Act 2009*.



The Public Trustee is committed to providing accessible services to Queenslanders from all culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. If you have difficulty in understanding this annual report, you can contact us on 1300 360 044 and we will arrange an interpreter to effectively communicate the report to you.

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An electronic copy of The Public Trustee's Annual Report 2017–18 is available online at [www.pt.qld.gov.au](http://www.pt.qld.gov.au). You can also contact us to request a copy by calling 1300 360 044 or emailing [governance@pt.qld.gov.au](mailto:governance@pt.qld.gov.au)

A number of annual reporting requirements are also addressed through publication of information on the Queensland Open Data website at [data.qld.gov.au](http://data.qld.gov.au).

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# Letter of Compliance

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444 Queen Street Brisbane Qld 4000  
GPO Box 1449 Brisbane Qld 4001



27 August 2018

The Honourable Yvette D'Ath MP  
Attorney-General and Minister for Justice  
Leader of the House  
GPO Box 149  
BRISBANE QLD 4001

Dear Attorney-General

I am pleased to submit for presentation to the Parliament the Public Trustee's Annual Report 2017-18 and financial statements.

I certify that this Annual Report complies with:

- the prescribed requirements of the *Financial Accountability Act 2009* and the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2009*; and
- the detailed requirements set out in the *Annual report requirements for Queensland Government Agencies*.

A checklist outlining the annual reporting requirements can be found at the end of the annual report.

Yours faithfully

Peter Carne  
**The Public Trustee of Queensland**

# From the CEO

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This past year has been an exciting and productive time for the Public Trustee. The population of our great State has climbed to over 5 million people, and I am seeing an increasing demand for our core services. The increase is due in part to the effect of the Baby Boomer generation reaching retirement age - this generation controls much larger and more complex asset structures than any previous generation, and is expected to live longer.

These factors will continue to drive an increase in clients requiring assistance in managing their financial affairs and deceased estates to be administered. The Public Trustee is focused on delivering quality frontline services that respond to these changing client and community needs. Our Strategic Plan articulates our purpose: to lead the evolution and delivery of trustee, estate and administration services that make a positive difference in the lives of Queenslanders.

To support the delivery of these services, in 2017–18 we implemented a range of key strategic and operational initiatives which are detailed in this report. We commenced an organisation-wide business transformation to deliver organisational capability, process and technology changes aligned with our strategic objectives and to support future business needs. In particular, we have initiated digitisation projects which will deliver organisational efficiencies and sustainable improvement in business processes. Increased digital capabilities will also enhance our clients' experience, as we make it easier, faster and more efficient for people to access our information and services whether that is online, over the phone, or in person.

Nearly half of our staff are based outside of Brisbane, and in the 2017–18 financial year we invested in upgrades to regional offices aimed at enhancing the accessibility and effectiveness of our regional and remote service delivery.

We held our annual Wills Week from 31 July to 6 August 2017, promoting awareness in the community of the importance for every Queenslanders over 18 to have a valid Will. A Will is the most effective way for a person to ensure there is a smooth transfer of their assets to their relatives or other beneficiaries on their death. A large number of Queenslanders either do not have a Will or their Will does not meet their current needs or circumstances. The Public Trustee has provided a Will preparation service to the people of Queensland since 1916. This service is provided free of charge regardless of whether or not we are appointed executor of the Will. In 2017–18, we made 28,272 Wills for Queenslanders and there are now over 1 million Wills safeguarded in our state of the art Wills bunker.

In February this year, we launched our Client Service Charter – our public commitment to clients about the experience they will receive from us. I am pleased to say I see that commitment brought to life in our offices and client service centres across the State by dedicated staff supporting each other and our clients with professionalism, empathy and respect.

The Public Trustee supports some of the most vulnerable members of the community. Members of our Executive Management Team and I took part in the Vinnies CEO Sleepout in June this year, to better understand the daily struggle of thousands of Queenslanders currently experiencing homelessness. Together we raised over \$14,000 which will go towards providing food, electricity and accommodation to over 116,000 people in need.

The progressive rollout of the National Disability Insurance Scheme continues to be a priority for the Public Trustee. We have worked closely with our clients, other Queensland Government agencies, the National Disability Insurance Agency and important stakeholders to ensure that all clients who are eligible for services are registered for the Scheme. Implementing a range of supports, including dedicated resources and training, we have been able to facilitate the enrolment of approximately

5,051 clients in completed regions and are currently managing registration for the final two phasing regions.

Some of the Public Trustee's clients may also be eligible to apply for redress under the National Redress Scheme for Institutional Child Sexual Abuse, and in the coming year we will work with other agencies to determine how we may assist our clients in accessing the Scheme.

An enduring priority for the Public Trustee is to fulfil our Community Service Obligations (CSOs). We deliver a wide variety of CSOs, including:

- financial administration for adults with impaired decision-making capacity where the cost of providing that service cannot be paid for in full from the adult's own funds
- our free Will-making service
- community education and advice to courts and tribunals in areas where we have expertise, including adults with impaired capacity, deceased estates, attorneys and enduring powers of attorney, and trust administration
- funding to the Office of the Public Guardian (which protects the rights of adults with impaired capacity)
- financial assistance under the Civil Law Legal Aid Scheme to individuals who have civil actions (mostly personal injury cases) but not sufficient funds to pay for outlays involved in advancing litigation (for example, the cost of medical reports). We partner with Legal Aid to provide the Scheme.

We provided CSOs valued at more than \$35.6 M to the Queensland community in 2017–18, a demonstration of our commitment to making a positive difference in the lives of Queenslanders.

I am very proud of and thankful for the efforts of our staff, who contribute their ideas, skills and knowledge freely and openly. They are engaged, empowered and committed to putting our clients first. Led by our experienced Executive Management Team and supported by our robust governance frameworks, we are well placed to embrace the opportunities and address the challenges which will present themselves in the coming year.



Peter Carne  
**Chief Executive Officer and The Public Trustee of Queensland**

# Snapshot of the Public Trustee in 2017–18

 <p><b>\$2.7 B</b> total assets under management</p>	 <p><b>\$35.6 M</b> in CSOs at no cost to Government</p>	 <p>Strong operating surplus of <b>\$3.4 M</b></p>
 <p><b>28,272</b> free Wills made</p>	 <p><b>9,811</b> financial management clients<sup>1</sup></p>	 <p><b>5,051</b> clients registered for the NDIS</p>
 <p><b>4,540</b> trusts administered</p>	 <p><b>3,477</b> EPA documents made</p>	 <p><b>2,221</b> new deceased estates accepted for administration</p>
 <p><b>584</b> full time equivalent staff</p>	 <p><b>Over 110,000</b> calls answered by the Welcome Desk</p>	 <p><b>\$92 M</b> in property sales</p>

<sup>1</sup> Comprised of 9,048 adults with impaired decision-making capacity, 251 clients for whom we act as financial attorney and 512 prisoner estates.