



**Louise Anderson**  
**Chief Executive Officer**

Court Services Victoria (CSV)

Louise joined CSV in April 2019 and is responsible for management of its support services and functions in accordance with the strategy, plan, procedures and functions of the Courts Council. Louise has extensive experience in courts administration across both the Commonwealth and State level, having worked previously at the Family Court of Australia and Federal Circuit Court as Acting Chief Executive Officer, and as the Chief Executive Officer at the Supreme Court of Victoria. Louise was also CEO and Registrar of the Social Security Appeals Tribunal and was appointed as the Federal Court of Australia's inaugural Native Title Registrar.



**Kym Arthur**  
**Director, Office of the Secretary**

Department of Health

Kym has extensive experience in using storytelling to influence change at both personal and organisational levels. She has worked in social welfare, using storytelling to guide people experiencing challenging circumstances and brings this skill to the public service to help navigate complex organisational change and enhance culture. In her previous role at Family Safety Victoria, Kym helped establish the Victim Survivor's Advisory Council (VSAC) to give people with lived experience of family violence a voice and ensure they are consulted in the family violence reform program. Kym lectures in Storytelling and Leadership in the Masters of Communication at RMIT, helping leaders use adaptive leadership and storytelling to communicate vision, inspire change within organisations and motivate for innovation.



**Antoinette Battista**  
**Executive Director, People and Culture**

Department of Transport

With an HR career spanning 20 years in the public sector, Antoinette has extensive experience as a strategic leader. She has worked in public transport in government departments for the past 15 years. Antoinette has experience in leading strategic and operational people and culture functions and multidisciplinary teams, spanning all functions of HR. She has extensive experience in leading multiple large change programs arising from machinery of government changes, restructuring and culture change and has extensive experience in leading organisational development initiatives and programs to drive engagement, positive workplace cultures and performance.



**Nicole Brady**  
**Deputy Secretary, Public Health, Policy and Strategy,  
COVID-19 Response**

Department of Health

Nicole joined the leadership team of the Health Department's COVID-19 response in April 2020. She was responsible for leading teams of public health and policy professionals in the development of Chief Health Officer directions. The role required fast-paced collaboration and engagement with experts across her own Department, as well as throughout government and beyond. In 2022 she has led the team charged with designing a new legal framework for Chief Health Officer advice to be more transparent and the Victorian pandemic response to be more accountable. This led to a transition to Public Health Orders decided and signed by the Health Minister, based on Chief Health Officer advice.



**Naomi Bromley**  
**Deputy Secretary, Vaccination, COVID-19 Response**

Department of Health

Naomi has held senior executive roles in Victoria and led program evaluation, model of care and health service design work across Australia for close to two decades. Naomi is currently Deputy Secretary with the Victorian Department of Health and played a significant role in the planning and delivery of the state's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. She contributed to the rapid establishment of state-wide COVID-19 testing and outbreak engagement efforts and has led the design and delivery of the Victorian implementation of the COVID-19 Vaccination Program. Naomi is passionate about high performing primary and community care, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health and equity-based health service planning.



**Sherri Bruinhout**  
**Executive Director, Homelessness and Housing Support**

Homes Victoria

Sherri is Executive Director of Homelessness and Housing Support at the Victorian Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH). She has worked for over 20 years in government and non-government settings, contributing to homelessness, affordable housing and community inclusion sectors. Sherri's DFFH portfolio is responsible for the Homelessness and Accommodation Support team, which includes program strategy and policy of homelessness support services and supported residential services across metropolitan Melbourne and greater Victoria.



**Lisa Buckingham**  
*Nominated for:* **Chief Executive Officer, Jobs Victoria**  
*Role at time of Awards:* **Deputy Secretary, Jobs Victoria, Secure Work and Inclusion**

Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions

Lisa has more than 20 years' experience across the Victorian and Commonwealth Public Services in a range of sectors including defence, industrial relations, human services, health, and public sector and place-based reform. In March 2020, Lisa was appointed General Manager of Working for Victoria – a \$500m job creation fund established to support Victorians who lost their jobs, including as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. This led to her appointment as CEO of Jobs Victoria. Prior to this, Lisa was the inaugural CEO for Jobsbank, a not-for-profit organisation established in 2019 to support inclusive employment practices in Victoria.



**Amanda Cameron**  
**Chief Operating Officer**

Barwon Health

Amanda is a passionate and committed health professional with a proven track record in leadership. Her extensive career is marked by achievements both at the bedside and in leadership roles, with an intense focus on quality and safety in the delivery of care to the Barwon South West community. Amanda's stewardship and leadership throughout the pandemic has resulted in an organisation that continued to provide safe quality care to its community and is well positioned to meet the community needs into the future. Amanda takes a respectful, considered and innovative approach to leadership, with a focus on evolving care, taking advantage of the latest research to support the health of the community.



**Emma Cassar**  
**Commissioner & State Controller**

COVID-19 Quarantine Victoria

Emma has more than 20 years' experience in the justice sector with roles spanning government, private and non-profit organisations. Emma holds a Doctorate in Forensic Psychology and commenced as a forensic psychologist with Corrections Victoria (CV) in 1999. She held a number of prison General Manager and senior executive roles within CV before becoming CEO of non-profit Open Family Australia in 2010 and State Director for Mission Australia from 2011 to 2013. She then moved into the private sector as Business Development Director of Serco Australia, followed by several years at KPMG as a Partner. Emma returned to CV in June 2018 as Commissioner. In July 2020, Emma took on the role as the Deputy State Controller for the COVID-19 Accommodation program. At the end of 2020, Emma was appointed COVID-19 Quarantine Victoria Commissioner.



**Emma Catford**  
**Deputy Secretary, Policy, Strategy and Corporate Services**

COVID-19 Quarantine Victoria

For 20 years, Emma has had a distinguished career in the Victorian Public Service delivering a range of policy and operational functions. She has extensive experience in the development and delivery of complex and high-profile government programs, including in the courts, corrections and emergency management portfolios. Since the beginning of 2021, Emma has held the role of Deputy Secretary, Policy, Strategy and Corporate Services within COVID-19 Quarantine Victoria (CQV). Emma played a critical role in the establishment of CQV and leading the implementation of the hotel quarantine system in Victoria.



**Melanie Chisholm**  
**Executive Director, Engagement and Partnerships**

Department of Health

Melanie is a qualified public health professional and leader, with almost 20 years' experience across Australia and the UK driving improvements in population health and reducing public health inequities. She has worked in acute care, primary care, not for profits and government. She is focused on applying evidence informed and strategic approaches to policy and program design, values-based commissioning, and evaluation of health services to realise health outcomes. Most recently, Melanie has played a central role in the design, delivery, and iterative evaluation of the COVID-19 Vaccination program across Victoria – the largest, most complex, and high-profile public health program in Australia, which successfully achieved its target of 80% double dose.



**Susan Clifford APM**  
**Deputy Secretary and Deputy State Controller**

Department of Justice and Community Safety

Throughout her public sector career spanning 37 years, Susan has demonstrated a deep commitment to supporting the Victorian community, particularly during periods of great challenge and reform. Her commitment was fostered during her long and distinguished career with Victoria Police, her appointment as the inaugural CEO of Family Safety Victoria, and her subsequent appointment within the Department of Justice and Community Safety (DJSC), to the Executive Director, North-West Metropolitan Region. In 2020, Susan was selected to lead, develop and implement the Department's response to the COVID 19 pandemic and was appointed to the role of Deputy Secretary/Deputy State Controller, Industry Engagement and Enforcement.



**Simone Corin**  
**Executive Director, Children and Families**

Department of Families, Fairness and Housing

Simone is responsible for the development of legislation, policy and program initiatives that support vulnerable children and families, including those involved in the statutory child protection and care systems. Simone has over twelve years of experience in the Victorian public service, including community services policy related to children and families; health policy; performance accountability; driving continuous improvement in community services and significant service system reform. Simone also has a wealth of experience in health care delivery and executive leadership in health services in clinical and quality governance, risk management and pharmacy.



**Kelly Crosthwaite**  
**Executive Director, People and Culture**

Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning

Kelly is responsible for coordinating the needs of over 5,500 staff in DELWP, across 80+ locations, within a complex and varied portfolio. She is a member of the cross-government HR Directors Committee and has led the coordination of staff wellbeing activities through the COVID response in 2020, as well as staff wellbeing efforts across the emergency sector for the 2019 bushfires. Prior to this, Kelly was the DELWP Regional Director for greater Melbourne and led a program of service delivery covering bushfire management, coastal infrastructure, public land administration, biodiversity and compliance. Kelly has worked across four jurisdictions in natural resource management, and holds Law & Environmental Science degrees, as well as post-graduate qualifications in both law and fisheries management.



**Dannii de Kretser**  
**Associate Deputy Secretary, Youth Justice**

Department of Justice and Community Safety

Dannii is passionate about improving the lives of service users, with 20 years of public sector experience in social services leading significant change. She enjoys working with others and her teams to get to the root cause of an issue, and to come up with the best solution. Dannii's career has ranged from high level policy and strategy roles, to leading new investment priorities, through to implementing planning, reporting and information systems. This is matched with a deep understanding of operations and the importance of high-quality support for people who need public services.



**Joanne de Morton**  
**Chief Executive Officer**

Service Victoria

Joanne's passion for understanding the 'voice of the customer' helped grow Service Victoria from a technology start-up to an award-winning digital platform, which has now become the one place to go for government services in Victoria. Under Joanne's leadership, Service Victoria played a crucial role supporting the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The mobile app was the most downloaded app in Australia in 2021 and it was used by more than 4.3 million Victorians to check-in, giving contact tracers real-time information and helping stop the spread of the virus. Prior to founding Service Victoria, Jo was deputy secretary at DPC, interim CEO of IBAC, and held senior roles at the Department of Primary Industries.



**Fiona Delahunt**  
**Executive Director, Planning Performance and Insights**

Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning

Fiona has an extensive public sector career across a range of portfolios and executive roles, including economic regulation, housing, technology, environment, and planning. Fiona is recognised for her outstanding leadership in strategy, major policy and system reform and driving improvement to service delivery. Her focus has always been on people leadership and empowering teams to work collaboratively with stakeholders to deliver. She is recognised for her ability to both develop and deliver major policy initiatives and achieve organisational transformation. In her current role, Fiona's responsibilities include land use and population research, policy coordination and legislation, entity governance, housing, technology, performance monitoring and insights and a major digital planning reform program.



**Elly Gay**  
**Executive Director, Operational Policy, School Engagement and Compliance Division**

Department of Education and Training

Elly has worked in various roles in public education for nearly 20 years. She now leads a team that supports operational policy awareness, regulatory compliance, and administrative burden reduction for government school leaders. Elly is passionate about the transformative power of education. Her previous roles working as a government school teacher and, for most of her career, as a lawyer within the Department, have shaped her dedication to supporting front line staff in schools. She thrives on building high performing, caring and positive team cultures with a shared vision and sense of purpose.



**Kerryn Ellis**  
**Chief Executive Officer**

South Gippsland Shire Council

Kerryn is a passionate public sector leader with over 25 years' experience, who is energised by working with communities in a context of rapid change. Kerryn enjoys building high performing, ethical and agile organisations with values-based leadership working in partnership to deliver great outcomes with the community. Prior to her current role, Kerryn held the positions of Director, Corporate Services at Victoria's Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission, as well as a range of senior positions at City of Greater Bendigo, Knox City Council, City of Melbourne and Bayside City Council. Kerryn holds a Bachelor of Arts, a Master of Commerce and a Graduate Diploma of Public Policy and Management, and completed the LGPro Emerging Leaders Program in 2005, and the Executive Leadership Program in 2016. Kerryn is a current board member of LGPro.



**Abbey Hogan**  
**Solicitor for Public Prosecutions / CEO**

Office of Public Prosecutions

Abbey was appointed Victoria's Solicitor for Public Prosecutions in February 2020. Abbey brings to this role extensive experience in criminal prosecutions. She commenced her legal career at the OPP in 2003 and held the position of Manager of the Policy and Specialised Legal division from 2015. Abbey manages the staff and budget of the OPP and has responsibility for briefing counsel, including Crown Prosecutors, on behalf of the DPP to prosecute serious crime including homicides, culpable driving, drug trafficking, sex offences, organised crime, and serious assaults.



**Dr Jane Homewood**  
**Executive Director, Statutory Planning Services**

Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning

The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated the commitment, strength and extraordinary contribution DELWP planners made to support the construction industry and the construction and supply chain jobs that are so vital to Victorian workers, their families and the Victorian economy during the pandemic. With the authority and trust of the Minister for Planning, Secretary John Bradley and Dep Sec Julian Lyngcoln, we were able to adapt to rapidly changing circumstances and facilitate and approve to date 36 projects valued at \$1.9 billion. It is a privilege and pleasure to lead such committed and hardworking staff delivering great outcomes for Victoria.



**Paula Jeffs**  
**General Manager, People & Capability**

Melbourne Water

Paula's People & Capability career has been built over 25 years, in both ASX and Public Sector organisations across the finance, healthcare, pharmaceutical and utilities sectors. The roles she has been most passionate about have been in the Victorian Public Hospital system and her current one at Melbourne Water, which have both provided her the opportunity to contribute to high impact public programs that promote community health, life and liveability. Over COVID, Paula supported the creation of over 110 Jobs for Victoria, and commenced longitudinal research into the environmental and societal benefits of remote and blended working.



**Michelle Johnston**  
**Chief People, Culture and Strategy Officer**

Bendigo Kangan Institute

With close to 30 years of public sector experience in human resources, leadership, communication, culture, brand and program management, Michelle strategically leads the transformation of people, systems, and processes to turn around organisations, enabling the delivery of world-class client experiences and profitable growth. Michelle transfers her knowledge and enthusiasm to ensure leaders are able to create and change organisational culture to build high performing individuals, teams and organisations. Key to Michelle's achievements is a belief that, "Core to the success of any business are the people within it, exceptional client experience is achieved through highly engaged employees that are proud to advocate for their organisation."



**Annette Lancy**  
**Nominated for: Deputy Secretary, Readiness and Emergency Management**

*Role at time of Awards:* **Deputy Secretary**

Department of Families, Fairness and Housing

An economist and lawyer by training, Annette has over 15 years' experience working on complex system design and reform at both State and Federal level. She is passionate about improving government service systems and outcomes for the communities they serve. Most recently, Annette led the design and implementation of family violence reforms at Family Safety Victoria before returning to the Department in March 2020 to lead COVID-19 preparedness and response work for the community services portfolios.



**Allyson Lardner**  
**Deputy Chief Fire Officer – Bushfire and Emergency Management**

Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning

Allyson provides leadership to Forest Fire Management Victoria for preparedness, readiness and response to bushfire on public land across Victoria. She has been with the Victorian Government for 25 years and has worked in emergency management, land management and biodiversity programs. Allyson played a lead role in planning and determining how emergency responder agencies across Victoria would respond to the pandemic. This included how agencies would safely respond operationally whilst minimising the risk of infection, contracting or spreading coronavirus. Along with considerations of personnel safety, both physical and mental health, training, guidance and implementation.



**Deanne Leaver**  
**Executive Director, Asset Development and Infrastructure Advisory Services**

Department of Health

Deanne leads a multi-disciplinary team of delivering best-practice capital planning, environmental sustainability, property, medical equipment, engineering services, and asset management for health infrastructure. She specialises in identifying opportunities to deliver value through the development and implementation of project pipelines encompassing; billion-dollar precinct redevelopments, new hospitals and community facilities as well as balancing strategic, technical and operational advice and functions in a complex governance setting. Deanne is a board member of Mums Supporting Families in Need, a not-for-profit charitable organisation that distributes donated goods for babies, children and adults through other not-for-profit and welfare organisations.



**Dr Clare Looker**  
**Deputy Chief Health Officer**

Department of Health

Clare is a public health physician and has held a senior leadership role in the Department's COVID-19 response team since January 2020. She has provided public health leadership to the State's Case, Contact and Outbreak Management response first as a Deputy Public Health Commander before transitioning to her current role. Clare has broad skills in public health medicine, particularly in communicable diseases, environmental health and epidemiology. She has also worked in clinical medicine and as an epidemiologist at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. Clare is currently enjoying a period of maternity leave before returning to the department in July 2022.



**Vicky Mason**  
**Director, Health and Wellbeing**

Greater Bendigo City Council

Vicky is passionate about leading strategy and building collaborative partnerships to achieve healthy liveable communities. With postgraduate management and public health qualifications as well as being a GAICD, Leadership Victoria and XLPro graduate, she is committed to continuous learning to support her staff and the organisations and communities she works with. With extensive experience in executive roles across Local and State government, health and community services and the private sector, she is an innovative, adaptive, values-based leader. Vicky was the COVID-19 Pandemic Coordinator for the City of Greater Bendigo, leading their work in supporting staff and the wider community.



**Kate Matson**  
**Deputy Secretary, Intelligence, Case Contact & Outbreak Management, COVID-19**

Department of Health

Kate is a Deputy Secretary in the COVID-19 Public Health division at the Department of Health. Since joining the COVID response in July 2020, Kate has led teams responsible for testing delivery, community engagement, major events and compliance and enforcement. Kate's role currently oversees outbreak management, contact tracing and data and intelligence. Prior to joining the Victorian public service in 2016, Kate spent over a decade in the private sector, including seven years in New York as a financial consultant.



**Rachaele May**  
**Executive Director, Emergency Coordination and Resilience**

Department of Jobs, Precincts & Regions

Rachaele has extensive experience in emergency management, having worked previously as an Assistant Chief Fire Officer, led the Agriculture Victoria emergency management team and now leading emergency management functions across DJPR. Having started her career as a forester, Rachaele now coordinates across local government, agriculture, regional communities, business, tourism, and two critical infrastructure sectors: telecommunications and food and grocery supply. Rachaele played an integral role in leading DJPR's responsibilities for the 2019-20 Victorian fire season, the 2021 storm events, the COVID-19 regional response and continues this work in supporting the recovery of impacted communities and businesses.



**Katrina McKenzie**  
**General Manager, City Economy and Activation**

City of Melbourne

Katrina joined City of Melbourne in 2015. Previously, Katrina held senior executive roles in federal, state and local governments. In her current role as General Manager – City Economy and Activation, Katrina's dynamic leadership has delivered extensive economic support in response to the effects COVID-19 has had on Melbourne's business community, creative industries, students, residents, visitors and workers. Katrina is leading a team positioning Melbourne as the destination of choice for business and enterprise. Katrina holds a degree in Applied Science, a Masters in Innovation and Service Management and is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.



**Laura Miller**  
**Director of Strategic Communications and Community Engagement**

Department of Families, Fairness and Housing

Laura is a respected leader with a focus on wellbeing and building the right culture for innovation and growth. With over 18 years leading high-performing teams, managing change and many a crisis, Laura brings proven executive and communications experience to all she does. Laura has successfully led strategic communication and complex reform across central agencies and numerous service delivery departments. Her experience from 2020 onwards responding to COVID-19, with colleagues and communities, has reinforced her commitment to ensuring mental health, wellbeing and inclusion are at the centre of all she does.





**Joanne Murdoch**

*Nominated for:* **General Manager, Customers and Community**, Barwon Water

*Role at time of Awards:* **Managing Director**

North East Water

With 20+ years' leadership experience in the water, local government and media sectors, Joanne commenced with North East Water as Managing Director in January 2022. Committed to providing exceptional customer service and value, Jo's leadership delivers real and tangible benefits for communities. Prior to joining North East Water, Jo was a General Manager at Barwon Water, Victoria's largest regional urban water corporation, responsible for critical strategic and service functions. Jo has also had senior roles with Yarra City, Kingston, and Whitehorse councils. Jo holds an MBA, a Graduate Certificate in International and Community Development and is IAP2 certified.



**Karyn Myers**

**Director, Operations Support and COVID-19 Response, Youth Justice**

Department of Justice and Community Safety

During her career, Karyn has worked in various public sector roles across portfolios of Disability, Child Protection and Youth Justice; and was awarded the Public Service Medal in 2020 for outstanding public service to Youth Justice Custodial Services. The highlight of her role as Director COVID-19 Response has been guiding and supporting youth justice staff who have shown such extraordinary resilience and commitment in their front-line COVID response. Their work with young people with COVID-19 or at risk of COVID-19, and their commitment to keeping each other safe from COVID-19, has been inspirational and a driving force behind Karyn's work.



**Vivienne Nguyen AM**  
**Chairperson**

Victorian Multicultural Commission

Vivienne has worked as a business executive and a community leader in corporate, community and government agencies applying her business knowledge, leadership and technical expertise to assist community organisations advance their social objectives. Viv has held roles at AustChoice Financial Services, AMP Asset Management and ANZ Banking Group where she led the global organisation's diversity strategy. Viv also led the peak representative organisation the Vietnamese Community in Australia Victorian Chapter from 2015-2019 where she led the Vietnamese Australian Museum Project and founded the Dual Identity Leadership Program. Viv was appointed as Chairperson of the VMC in August 2019.



**Michelle Osborne**

**Deputy State Controller, Operations**

COVID-19 Quarantine Victoria

Michelle has spent more than two decades in roles requiring complex program management, transformation and strategy, and risk management skills. At Consumer Affairs Victoria, Michelle held a number of roles, including Executive Director, Regulatory Services. In this role, Michelle was responsible for implementing a number of urgent and vital COVID mitigation policies, including rental dispute resolution and protection from eviction for renters. Michelle was then given responsibility for transitioning quarantine compliance and enforcement into DJCS in mid-2020, before joining CQV at its creation in December 2020. She has led quarantine operations since mid-2021, ensuring COVID-safe accommodation and related services for Victorians and overseas travellers.



**Elly Patira**  
**Deputy Secretary, First Peoples State Relations**

Department of Premier and Cabinet

Elly was appointed as Deputy Secretary, First Peoples – State Relations in April 2021. Elly is a lawyer and policy advisor with broad experience across constitutional, indigenous and minority rights law and policy, both domestically and internationally. She holds a BA and JD from the University of Melbourne and a Masters in International Human Rights Law from the University of Oxford. Elly has held various executive positions in the Aboriginal Affairs portfolio within DPC, and also previously worked as an academic, in the corporate sector, for Aboriginal organisations and as an advisor during the Fijian constitution-making process. As Deputy Secretary, Elly is responsible for an extensive program of priority work with First Peoples in the areas of treaty, truth and transitional justice, self-determination and cultural rights and protection.



**Helen Quiney**  
**Executive Director, Health, Safety and Wellbeing Division**

Department of Education and Training

As Executive Director of the newly established Employee, Health, Safety and Wellbeing Division, Helen has led high-performing teams to deliver physical and mental health supports, services and reforms for the state's public sector education workforce and the department's central and regionally based corporate staff. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Helen led the design and delivery of programs that were responsive to the needs of school staff and minimised the risk of transmission in schools. Previously, Helen has worked as a public sector lawyer as part of the Department's Legal Division, and prior to that, advising a range of public sector clients on employment and OHS matters.



**Jennifer Rebeiro**  
**Chief Information Officer**

Greater Western Water

Jennifer Rebeiro is the Chief Information Officer at Greater Western Water. Jennifer has led teams across a wide range of industries and functions, challenging and transforming each one to respond to the evolving business environment and changing community expectations. Jennifer was named as one of the Top 50 CIO's in Australia in 2021(#5) and 2020. Jennifer has managed a number of operational areas and projects ranging across a wide set of industries, from Banking and Finance, Transport, Manufacturing, Property Services, Telecommunications and Government.



**Angela Skandarajah**  
**Chief Executive Officer**

Development Victoria

With over 25 years' experience in the real estate sector, Angela has broad based expertise in property development, urban renewal and infrastructure projects. She previously headed up MinterEllison's National Real Estate, Environment and Planning team and has been a long term contributor to various industry bodies. Since joining Development Victoria in 2017, she has been part of the leadership of the organisation in various roles and was appointed CEO in February 2019. Angela is passionate about creating a learning environment at DV, where people are encouraged to develop and maximise their potential, whilst achieving great outcomes for the community.



**Bella Stagoll**  
**Executive Director, Integrity, Assurance and Executive Services Division**

Department of Education and Training

Bella has successfully led a broad range of corporate functions through the challenges of the pandemic, including Integrity, Assurance, Cabinet and Parliament, Ministerial Services, Privacy, Freedom of Information and Records Management, continuing to deliver responsive and high quality services to the department and more than 1,500 government schools. She also leads the department's COVID-19 response for the corporate workforce. Bella acted as Executive Director, Employee Health, Safety and Wellbeing in the early stages of the pandemic, leading a rapid pivot to respond to emerging risks to support school and corporate operations. Bella first joined the department in 2016 to lead implementation of its Integrity Reform Program.



**Holly Stanton**  
**Director, Digital Channels and Brand**

Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions

With a career spanning publishing, public broadcasting, and the public sector in Australia and the UK, Holly is a communications leader and digital innovator. Holly is respected for her commitment to service excellence and better outcomes for Victorians, plus her integrity and warmth. Her people-centred approach to creating a positive, inclusive, and high-performing work culture is why she and her digital, brand and creative teams are highly regarded for their expertise and leadership. Holly is grateful for the many generous and inspiring public sector women who've been mentors and colleagues throughout her career.



**Penelope Steuart**  
**Executive Director, Hume Moreland Area**

Department of Families, Fairness and Housing

Penelope has enjoyed a varied career for over 30 years in the public sector. Working across health and community service systems, and currently as a leader in operational service delivery, Penelope has a strong commitment to social justice, and in championing ways to improve outcomes for individuals, families and communities. She has extensive experience in leading the development and delivery of programs, services and strategies, including place-based responses. Penelope maintains that valuing and building team effort is central to achieving great outcomes, which has been even more important during the COVID pandemic.



**Professor Rhonda Stuart**  
**Director, South East Public Health Unit; Director, Infection Prevention & Epidemiology & Infectious Diseases Physician, Monash Infectious Diseases, Monash Health; Adjunct Clinical Professor, Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Service**

Monash Health

Rhonda is an Infectious Diseases physician at Monash Health and Adjunct Clinical Professor at Monash University. She is the Medical Director of Infection Prevention and Epidemiology at Monash Health, Director of the newly established South East Local Public Health Unit (SEPHU) and the Clinical lead for the Monash Health Hub Covid -19 vaccination program. Since 2020, she has been actively involved in the COVID-19 pandemic response and is an advisor to State and National committees on COVID while also having a significant media presence.



**Helen Sui**  
**Chief Executive Officer**

Moonee Valley City Council

Helen is currently the Chief Executive Officer at Moonee Valley City Council, and has held senior leadership roles in both the Local Government and the State Government over the past 15 years. Helen is known for valuing, developing and engaging staff to deliver positive community outcomes. During the pandemic, Helen led the Moonee Valley team in providing close to 1,000 culturally appropriate meals and other essential supplies to the vulnerable community members in isolation. Helen was a Finalist for the 2015 Telstra Business Women's Awards and was also selected and served as a Judge for the 2020 Telstra Business Women's Awards.



**Kylie Trott**  
**Executive Director Operations**

Parks Victoria

Kylie is passionate about park management and believes that everyone should have the opportunity to spend time immersed in nature. The wellbeing benefits of being connected with nature was demonstrated during Melbourne's lockdowns as community connection with parks and open space increased significantly. Kylie built her career in park management in local government, and for the past 17 years in the management of Victoria's 4.1 million hectares of national parks, reserves, local ports and waterways with Parks Victoria. As Executive Director Operations, Kylie is accountable for the operational management of the park estate, partnering with Traditional Owners, and caring for country through delivery of conservation programs; and connecting people and nature through a range of visitor facilities and experiences.



**Krista Vanderheide**  
**Nominated for: Executive Director, COVID-19  
Pandemic Legislation**

**Role at time of Awards: Director, Mental Health and  
AOD Policy and Strategy**

Department of Health

Krista is a policy professional who has worked for the Commonwealth Government and, for the past eight years, across the VPS. She is passionate about social policy and her career highlights include preparing Government for the release of the interim Mental Health Royal Commission report and leading the development of the Pandemic Management Bill as part of Victoria's COVID-19 response. She recently took an executive role in the Department of Health leading the Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drugs Strategy and Policy team.



**Julie Walsh**  
**Deputy Secretary, System Support and Improvement,  
COVID-19 Response**

Department of Health

Julie is a highly regarded and transformative leader with deep experience across the private and public sector. Her distinct ability to deliver strong commercial outcomes within unpredictable environments has been recognised through her Executive roles at Victoria Police, DTF and PwC. More recently, Julie has been a leader within the Department of Health's COVID-19 Response, where she has led and contributed to whole-of-Response functions across policy, strategy, outbreak management, corporate and governance. Julie's focus is on bringing together diverse views to solve complex problems and create lasting impact, ensuring the citizen and customer remain at the heart of all decision making.



**Ruth Ward**  
**Director, Public Affairs**

Department of Families, Fairness and Housing

A former print journalist, Ruth has nearly 20 years' experience in managing media and high-risk issues within the public service - she is a skilled and highly regarded public affairs practitioner. Her reputational management abilities along with her issues management skills make her invaluable on the public affairs front, her candour and directness make her a sought-after leader and her empathy and warmth is at the forefront of all she does. Her experience in successfully setting up a remote media operation and public affairs team in response to COVID-19 and the establishment of a new department through 2020 and 2021 have cemented her belief that people and human kindness should be at the core of everything we do.



**Fiona Weigall**  
**General Manager, Assets & Environment**

East Gippsland Shire Council

Fiona is East Gippsland Shire Council's General Manager Assets and Environment, overseeing a large and diverse portfolio of services focused on planning, developing, managing and maintaining the shire's assets. Her directorate comprises of over 300 staff. Fiona has overseen a range of initiatives related to both bushfire recovery and delivering essential services during a pandemic. Her energy and commitment have ensured that the diverse team she manages continued to perform and innovate during these challenging times. Fiona embraces change and is outcomes-focused, ensuring that community benefit is at the core of her team's work.



**Christabelle Adjoyan**  
**Director, Commissioner & Logistics – COVID  
Vaccination Program**

Department of Health

Christabelle has worked as a senior leader on the COVID-19 response since March 2020, leading teams responsible for communications, health service planning, community engagement and vaccination. As Director in the COVID-19 Vaccination Program, Christabelle is responsible for overseeing the state-wide commissioning and logistics plan for Victoria's vaccination program. Christabelle has a long and extensive career in the public sector, including roles leading health and social policy reform in the Commonwealth and Victorian public service. Christabelle has a Master of Public Administration through the University of Melbourne and is a member of IPAA's Women's Network Advisory Committee.



**Melissa Beukes**  
**Director, Strategic and Portfolio Communications**

Department of Health

Melissa Beukes is a respected leader with more than 16 years' experience working in local and state government, after kick-starting her career at an international PR agency. She has a reputation for driving strategic communications on complex reforms, an ability to build relationships to get the right outcomes and leading with empathy to create high-performing teams with a strong culture. For the past two years, Melissa has successfully led strategic communications and campaigns at the Department of Health, playing a pivotal role in helping the community understand what to do and how to protect themselves and others during COVID-19. It reinforced her commitment to working in an area with purpose where you can have positive impact on the community.



**Alisha Bedggood**  
**Manager, Health Safety & Wellbeing**

Central Highlands Water

Alisha has been working in Health, Safety and Wellbeing fields for 17 years after a period of working as a nurse. Her career has included leadership roles in the public sector across healthcare and water for the past 10 years. Alisha has represented both sectors in state-wide steering groups, tackling common health and safety risks to people. During the past 2 years she has performed a key leadership role in Central Highlands Water's response to the global pandemic. Alisha is a proud wife and mum of 3 children balancing career, family life and role modelling women in leadership.



**Kate Cini**  
**Director, Quarantine Arrivals**

COVID-19 Quarantine Victoria

Kate is the Director, Quarantine Arrivals, and has led teams remotely, in Hotels and Airports to safely return travellers home during the pandemic response. With more than 20 years' in the VPS, Kate has extensive public experience from policy to operations in major events, food industry development, innovation systems and international trade. As a leader, she develops creative, collaborative work environments to empower her teams. When asked to describe herself, Kate doesn't hesitate to say that first and foremost, she is a mother of two who inspire her to make the most of life.



### **Mardi Cuthbert**

*Nominated for:* **Head of Pandemic Response**  
*Role at time of Awards:* **Head of Facilities and Infrastructure**

City of Casey

A qualified civil engineer, Mardi is currently the Head of Facilities and Infrastructure at City of Casey, overseeing a large team and contract model for buildings, facilities, roads, drainage, fleet and plant maintenance. Most recently, Mardi stepped up to the role of Head of Pandemic Response leading and coordinating the internal and external response to COVID-19 in the organisation and broader community.



### **Urgé Dinegde**

**Program and Practice Leader, Cultural Engagement Program**

Department of Families, Fairness and Housing

Urgé is a highly accomplished leader with over 12 years of experience in the VPS and the non-government sector. Urgé is a board director, small business owner and founder of a NFP organisation. Urgé has a strong track record in innovative program design, implementation, evaluation, and cultural transformation: an enthusiastic change agent and reformer with an exceptional ability to influence and communicate to solve complex problems. Urgé holds an MBA and a BA in Health Science, and BA in Social Work. Urgé has a strong focus on building capability to drive service excellence and achieves this by promoting a positive and collaborative culture.



### **Deb Fankhauser**

**General Manager, People and Stakeholders**

Lower Murray Urban and Rural Water Corporation

Deb's professional Human Resources (HR) experience spans over 25 years' across government, not for profit and private sectors including Health, Education and Training and Aboriginal Services. Her technical expertise is in leadership and talent Management, culture change, performance management, pandemic management and workforce design. Deb has led HR at Lower Murray Water since 2016 in various roles, currently General Manager People and Stakeholder responsible for HR, Safety, Customer Service, Communication, Engagement and Stakeholder Management. Deb is committed to raising the visibility and profile of women in the water sector through her participation in the 2022 Insight Executive Leadership for Women in Water Program.



### **Mandy Griffiths**

**Director, Priority Cohorts, COVID-19 Communications and Engagement**

Department of Families, Fairness and Housing

With a background in strategic communication, social media, content creation and issues management within a PR agency, Mandy joined Multicultural Affairs at the Department of Premier and Cabinet (now Department of Families, Fairness and Housing) in 2018. When the pandemic began in March 2020, Mandy was a founding member of the DPC COVID Communications team, before leading the communications response for multicultural communities when the CALD Communities Taskforce was formed in August 2020. In that time, the CALD communications team has created new channels of communication and new ways of working to improve access to information for all Victorians.



**Penny Guadagnuolo**  
**Director, Recovery and Reform, Tourism and Events  
Strategy and Reform**

Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions

Penny leads a team within the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions focussed on helping Victoria's tourism industry to recover from the devastating impacts of bushfires and COVID. Penny has made change and created real opportunities for economic development in Victoria throughout her career. Previously, Penny worked for the Hon Martin Pakula MP as his deputy Chief of Staff looking after his trade, tourism and major events and industry support and recovery portfolios and has worked on large scale infrastructure projects such as the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre.



**Rebecca Haig**  
**Nominated for: Director, Early Childhood COVID-19  
Coordination**

**Role at time of Awards: Executive Director, School  
Operations and Statewide Division**

Department of Education and Training

Motivated by the best interests of young children and their families, Bec led the Department of Education and Training COVID early childhood operational response. Coming from a strong background in working with families, services, local government, and with regional teams, the role required stewardship in a fast-paced authorising environment. This included building and interpreting policy and directions that ensured continuity of learning for children and development of readily available resources and information to support the tireless and dedicated efforts of Victorian early childhood teachers, educator and staff.



**Daneeta Hennessy**  
**Principal Epidemiologist Data and Analytics (Public  
Health Surveillance)**

Department of Health

Daneeta is a communicable diseases epidemiologist and biostatistician in the Health Protection Branch of the Department of Health. She has a particular interest in the use of genomics and data linkage to enhance public health surveillance systems. When the first cases of SARS-CoV-2 infection were detected in Victoria in January 2020, Daneeta was one of the small group of epidemiologists and public health officers deployed to develop a system to capture and report on information about cases and contacts to inform the public health response, and she went on to lead the expanded COVID Surveillance team.



**Michelle Hogan**  
**Director, Portfolio Communications,  
Communications Division**

Department of Education and Training

Michelle has more than 20 years' experience in marketing and communications. As Director of Portfolio Communications, Michelle leads a large team of strategists, communications advisers and campaign managers. She is passionate about strategy, audience-centric communications and building strong relationships with her team, peers and stakeholders alike. Over the past two years, she has stepped into various leadership roles, including COVID-19 communications response for the Department and acting Executive Director for the Communications Division. Today, she is back with her branch, leading the planning and delivery of high-quality communications across the education sector.





**Kate Houlden**

*Nominated for:* **Manager, Project Delivery and Partnerships**, Greater Western Water

*Role at time of Awards:* **Senior Project Director**

Development Victoria

Kate is a model for women in construction, leading critical infrastructure delivery that sees beyond the role of infrastructure as 'projects and assets' to a system that serves people and enhances community. In navigating the challenges of the pandemic, Kate has drawn on her strategic, agile and influential leadership capability to care for people, manage risk and embrace new ways of working to ensure ongoing, safe delivery of critical services to the community. Kate is a chartered Engineer with degrees in Civil Engineering, Business Administration and a Master of Construction Law.



**Ashling James**

*Nominated for:* **Director, Business Programs**

*Role at time of Awards:* **Director, Strategy, Performance & Insights**

Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions

Ashling is a resilient leader who excels at bringing people together to deliver under pressure. As Director, Business Programs in the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions, she delivered a series of programs that helped Victorian workers and businesses impacted by COVID. Over a decade in the public service, Ashling has worked to build a strong, vibrant and internationally connected Victorian economy, including in industry development roles and as Global Victoria's Middle East trade specialist. She is an alumnus of the Asialink Leaders Program.



**Carol Kmon**

*Nominated for:* **Director, Stakeholder Engagement and Intergovernmental Strategy**

*Role at time of Awards:* **Director, Public Intoxication Reform**

Department of Justice and Community Safety

Carol is the founding Director of the Stakeholder Engagement Branch in the Department of Justice and Community Safety. Carol has a background in policy across the Victorian Public Service and has led engagement for highly complex human rights and equal opportunity reforms that draw significant media attention and community interest. Carol is committed to ensuring true community participation in policy development and centring the voices of those most impacted.



**Nicolle Korp**

*Nominated for:* **Program Lead, COVID Response**

*Role at time of Awards:* **Director, Office of the Deputy Secretary, Corporate Services**

Department of Environment, Land and Planning

Nicolle has 20 years' experience with the Victorian Public Sector, particularly in business management and corporate services. Nicolle has been instrumental in the Department's response to the global pandemic by ensuring the ongoing safety and wellbeing of staff, enabling the continued delivery of services to the community. Nicolle is an authentic, calm and considered leader, with experience in leading fast paced, complex programs.



**Belinda Lord**  
**Director, Operations Directorate**

COVID-19 Quarantine Victoria

Belinda's public sector employment history comprises senior operational and project management roles within Corrections Victoria and the Community Safety Building Authority. Recent notable career highlights include design, development and operational commissioning work on the Ravenhall Prison Project, Women's Prison System Reform Project, and Chisholm Road Prison Project (Western Plains Correctional Centre). In her current role, Belinda has been actively involved in the development and delivery of CQV's operating model. She is currently responsible for leading and supporting a team of 50 staff across six key program portfolios, including operational policy and procedural development, reviews and investigations, resident experience, compliance, quality performance and continuous improvement.



**Jennifer Martinez**  
**Program Manager**

Environment Protection Authority (EPA) Victoria

In the lead up to and immediately following commencement of the Environment Protection Act 2017 in July 2021, Jennifer led a team tasked with transitioning Victoria's Big Build projects to the new legislation with minimal disruption. This encompassed permissions and approvals, targeted advice and guidance, and new statutory instruments. In her substantive position with the Major Projects advisory, Jen coordinates EPA's involvement in key transport, energy, and mining projects across Victoria, providing science, permissioning and policy advice across the design, environmental evaluation, and construction of such projects. Jen has worked for EPA since 2018 and brings over 20 years of environmental and construction experience from Victoria and overseas.



**Lynden Mullen**  
**Director, Strategic Policy**

Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning

Lynden is a proud public servant with over 10 years experience in a diverse range of policy roles for the Australian and Victorian Governments. She enjoys problem solving, providing advice and coaching staff to deliver high quality outcomes through Government's Budget and Cabinet processes. Lynden's professional experience includes leadership positions in the Victorian Government's COVID-19 response, including as Director, Directions Policy at the Department of Health; and strategic policy and coordination positions at the Department of Premier and Cabinet and DELWP. Lynden has a Master of Public Policy, Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Laws.



**Blaga Naumoski**  
**Executive Manager, Governance, Communications and Engagement**

Nillumbik Shire Council

With over 17 years' experience in the local and state government sectors, Blaga brings a strong background in corporate governance, compliance and public policy. She joined Nillumbik Shire Council in February 2018 and is currently the Executive Manager Governance, Communications and Engagement. Prior to Nillumbik, she held a management role at Darebin City Council. Blaga's leadership is characterised by a continuous improvement focus, leading and developing good governance practices to promote transparency, accountability and compliance, all with the aim of affecting a positive impact on the broader community. Blaga has been a regular panellist at cross-sectoral leadership forums.



**Rebecca Quinn**  
**Director, People and Culture**

Parks Victoria

For almost 20 years, Rebecca has had a passion for enhancing the employee experience through resilient organisational cultures across the for-purpose sector. Rebecca has been Parks Victoria's Director of People and Culture since 2016 and has established a contemporary human resource service delivery model to ensure an engaged, safe and inclusive organisational culture so that Parks Victoria can respond to community's needs. From 2020, Rebecca led Parks Victoria's workforce response to the pandemic, which included establishing a successful hybrid working model and embedding a culture of wellbeing so that employees and leaders could thrive while dealing with uncertainty.



**Maya Ramakrishnan**  
**Director, Social Housing Reform, Homes Victoria**

Department of Families, Fairness and Housing

Maya is Director of the Social Housing Reform policy unit at Homes Victoria, leading work on long term strategy, policy and legislative reform. During COVID-19, her team led policy design of the Big Housing Build, a record investment of \$5.3 billion to build more than 12,000 new social and affordable housing dwellings. Maya has previously held executive positions at the Department of Treasury and Finance, Family Safety Victoria and Department of Premier and Cabinet. Prior to the VPS, she worked in financial markets, in Australia and the U.S. Maya holds a PhD in mathematics from The University of Melbourne.



**Aparna Rvaichandran**  
**Manager, Engagement, Rapid Response  
Engagement, COVID-19 Response**

Department of Health

Aparna is a stakeholder engagement and communications specialist with a 13-year career spanning Australia, Asia and Europe. She has been a German language translator and interpreter with Robert Bosch GmbH, and headed Partnerships for an Indian National Award winning not-for-profit enabling sports excellence. She is co-editor and co-author of the book 'Go! India's Sporting Transformation'. She moved to Australia in 2019, and has worked with the COVID-19 Response in the Rapid Response Engagement team since November 2020. In that time, she co-designed and co-delivered programs helping at-risk cohorts across Victoria to get tested early, isolate effectively, and access supports.



**Tammy Smith**  
**Nominated for: Director, Business, Strategy and  
Performance**

*Role at time of Awards:* **Chief Executive Officer**

Yarriambiack Shire Council

Tammy has completed a Masters of Commerce, Bachelors Degree in Business Administration and is a graduate of the Institute of Public Accountants Program. Tammy is a member of the Australian Human Resource Institute and a Graduate of AICD. Tammy worked in the Water Sector, prior to moving across into Local Government in 2019. In March 2020, Tammy took on the role of Director Business Strategy and Performance at Yarriambiack Shire Council, undertaking their business transformation program. Tammy has since been appointed as the CEO of Yarriambiack Shire Council.



**Alicia Stark**  
**Director, Engagement & Partnerships – COVID  
Vaccination Program**

Department of Health

Alicia is currently the Director of Engagement and Partnerships within the Victorian Vaccination Program. She has a professional background in public health. She has over 12 years of experience within the health sector working across areas such as regulation, policy, mental health, and education before joining the Victorian Department of Health's COVID response in 2020. Alicia is motivated by creating consumer-driven pathways to accessing health services, including for people with complex needs, people who are housebound, communities with barriers to access and industry groups.



**Dr Claire Tobin**  
**A/Executive Director, Wellbeing, Health and  
Engagement Division**

Department of Education and Training

Claire is a public service executive with over a decade of experience contributing to improved child health and wellbeing outcomes, bridging research, policy and practice. In early 2020, Claire was the Department of Education and Training's Principal Health Adviser, where she provided expert advice to inform, oversee and implement child health policy, programs, services and increasingly, public health emergency responses. Claire led the health policy response for education as Deputy Commander COVID-19 and also oversees the COVID-19 vaccination rollout in Victorian schools. Claire is a Doctor of Public Health and is passionate about prevention and promoting health.



**Sasha Torsi**  
**Director, Strategic Communications & Protocol**

Department of Premier and Cabinet

Sasha is the Director, Strategic Communications & Protocol at the Department of Premier and Cabinet where she oversees the internal communications, communications strategy, media and protocol and event teams. Sasha reports to the Chief Communications Officer, providing expert corporate affairs support and communications advice to senior stakeholders in DPC and across the Victorian Government relating to wide ranging strategic and operational matters. Prior to joining DPC, Sasha had a range of leadership roles within the Victorian Public Sector, including at Solar Victoria, Department of Health and Human Services and Sustainability Victoria.



**Zione Walker-Nthenda**  
**Director, Paving the Way Forward, North Melbourne  
and Flemington**

Department of Families, Fairness and Housing

Zione is a lawyer, social entrepreneur and Executive within the Victoria Public Service. She is the co-founder of Incubate Foundation and founder of Community Builders Lab. Zione has experience in systemic, structural and organisational change. She has worked at Victoria Police, Womens Legal Service, Victoria Legal Aid, the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service and now works as a Director within the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing. Zione describes herself as a global citizen, having attended schools in Hong Kong, England, Japan, Russia, Nigeria and Australia.



**Nicole Whitelaw**  
**Director, Communication Services**

Department of Justice and Community Safety

Nicole is an experienced people leader and communications professional who has worked in public service management roles for nearly 20 years. A trusted adviser and problem solver, she has led teams through periods of pace and great change, and takes a “people-first” approach by prioritising the health and wellbeing of her team. Nicole is currently Director Communication Services at the Department of Justice and Community Safety with accountability for communication strategy, internal communications, online engagement, digital and social media, and videography – helping to create awareness and engage the community about the department’s policies, programs, legislation and services.



**Stacy Williams**  
**Director, Community Wellbeing**

Gannawarra Shire Council

Stacy is an experienced Local Government leader and is currently the Director of Community Wellbeing at Gannawarra Shire Council in Victoria’s North. Passionate about rural communities, Stacy has over 16 years’ experience in rural Victorian Local Government having previously held a variety of roles at Campaspe Shire Council. In addition to her primary role, Stacy is currently a Board Director at Echuca Regional Health and has previously held board positions with community not-for-profit organisations. Stacy holds a Bachelor of Social Work and Graduate Certificate in Business.