

**ACT**
Government

City and Environment

City and Environment Directorate

Regulatory Strategy 2026-2029

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Foreword

When we regulate, we seek to protect what matters – our people, our places, and our shared future. This Regulatory Strategy is a commitment to clarity on how the City and Environment Directorate (the Directorate) will achieve this for the community, those who we regulate, and those who regulate.

This Strategy sets out a unified, transparent approach to regulating across the Directorate; ensuring that our actions are consistent, risk-based, and focused on delivering real value to the community.

This directorate-wide framework replaces layers of overlapping approaches and processes with a clear, coherent way of working. For citizens and businesses, this means knowing what to expect when engaging with us. For our regulators, it means clearer responsibilities, connected ways of working and stronger career pathways.

This Strategy forms part of our strategic foundation. It will guide our decisions, shape our culture, and help us build a safer, fairer, and more liveable city.



Josh Rynehart
Head of Access Canberra
City and Environment Directorate

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of the Regulatory Strategy is to provide clarity and transparency about our conduct and approach to regulation across a broad range of functions and industries, supporting consistency and integrated activity, while uplifting regulatory capability and maturity.

The Strategy sets out the City and Environment Directorate's (the Directorate) commitment to better regulatory outcomes and continuous improvement in our practices throughout the regulatory lifecycle.



- For industry and the ACT Community, the Strategy gives transparency and certainty of our objectives and approach which helps to build credibility, trust, and confidence in government as a regulator.
- For the ACT Government and staff, the Strategy helps to develop a shared understanding, reinforce responsibilities and ensure consistency in regulatory posture and response approach.

Who we are

The City and Environment Directorate is the front door for ACT Government services. The Directorate has a wide range of regulatory responsibilities. Functions and responsibilities span across safety, economic, the built environment and infrastructure, waste and natural environmental regulatory domains. Statutory Offices/Authorities held within the Directorate are listed below.



1.3 Scope

The Regulatory Strategy applies to all regulators within the City and Environment Directorate.

This Strategy does not supersede legislation, Ministerial Statements of Expectation, or the Directorate's Strategic Plan, but works to complement and support achievement against these frameworks.

1.4 Whole of Government and Normative References

The Regulatory Strategy and subsequent Action Plans have been developed in line with guidance from the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) and Commonwealth best practice advice.

1.5 Document Framework

This framework is supported by documents identified within the document register at Section 3, Supporting Documents.

2.0 Regulatory Objectives and Principles

2.1 Vision

The City and Environment Directorate's vision is for a safe and liveable city with people and place at its heart. We are a best practice regulator that efficiently and effectively delivers regulatory value by upholding community protections, such as supporting sustainability and preventing environmental degradation and pollution, protecting the community and consumers from a range of harms, and maintaining the fair operation of markets to support a vibrant economy.

2.2 Mission

The City and Environment Directorate delivers regulatory value by taking an integrated, systems-based perspective to engaging and working collaboratively with stakeholders throughout the regulatory lifecycle. Through intelligence, we prioritise action that addresses the greatest risk of harm. We will monitor the effectiveness of our actions through reporting and evaluation with a commitment to continuous improvement.

City and Environment Directorate's regulatory objectives (Vision and Mission) are underpinned by three key outcomes:

- **Regulatory Stewardship:** All stakeholders take responsibility to make continuous and sustainable progress to improve our regulatory systems through engagement, review, monitoring and evaluation. Government, business and community stakeholders will be engaged in the regulatory systems that impact them.
- **Quality:** Ensuring the quality of new and existing legislation and regulatory practice by setting consistent principles, standards, processes and expectations that are tailored to a mature understanding of the risks in each regulatory system.
- **Capability:** Building the maturity and capability of new and existing legislation and regulatory practice by providing resources and support for easily tailored tools, education, cultural practices, and innovation.

2.3 Regulatory Principles

The Directorate's approach to regulating is integrated, proportionate, and focussed on addressing the greatest risks of harm. Its regulatory priorities are captured through the following regulatory principles:



- **Risk-based** – We apply a risk-based compliance approach to ensure that our actions are proportionate and resources are targeted to where the risks of harm, unsafe practices or misconduct are the greatest. The Directorate prioritises its actions based on a range of considerations, including the following:
 - Conduct that causes harm or risk to life, health or the environment.
 - Conduct that is systemic and is likely to have a detrimental effect on the community and/or the environment.
 - Conduct that demonstrates a blatant disregard for the law.
- **Integrated** – we take a systems-based approach, working with stakeholders to deliver regulatory outcomes.
- **Evidence-based** – We integrate research, best practice and gathered intelligence in our planning and to make informed decisions. The outcomes of our actions are evaluated and shared to inform improvements in regulatory systems.
- **Effective** - We successfully apply appropriate, well-designed tools which have been selected through sound governance processes and honed through evaluation.
- **Accountable** – We will explain our decisions whilst protecting the integrity of investigations. We balance confidentiality requirements and the need to inform businesses and the community about our regulatory actions.
- **Timely** – Our activities and decisions are implemented as efficiently as possible, with consideration to community and government expectations.
- **Transparent** – We will demonstrate impartiality and act with integrity and proactively control for potential conflict of interest. The community and those who the Directorate regulates will know what to expect when engaging with the organisation.

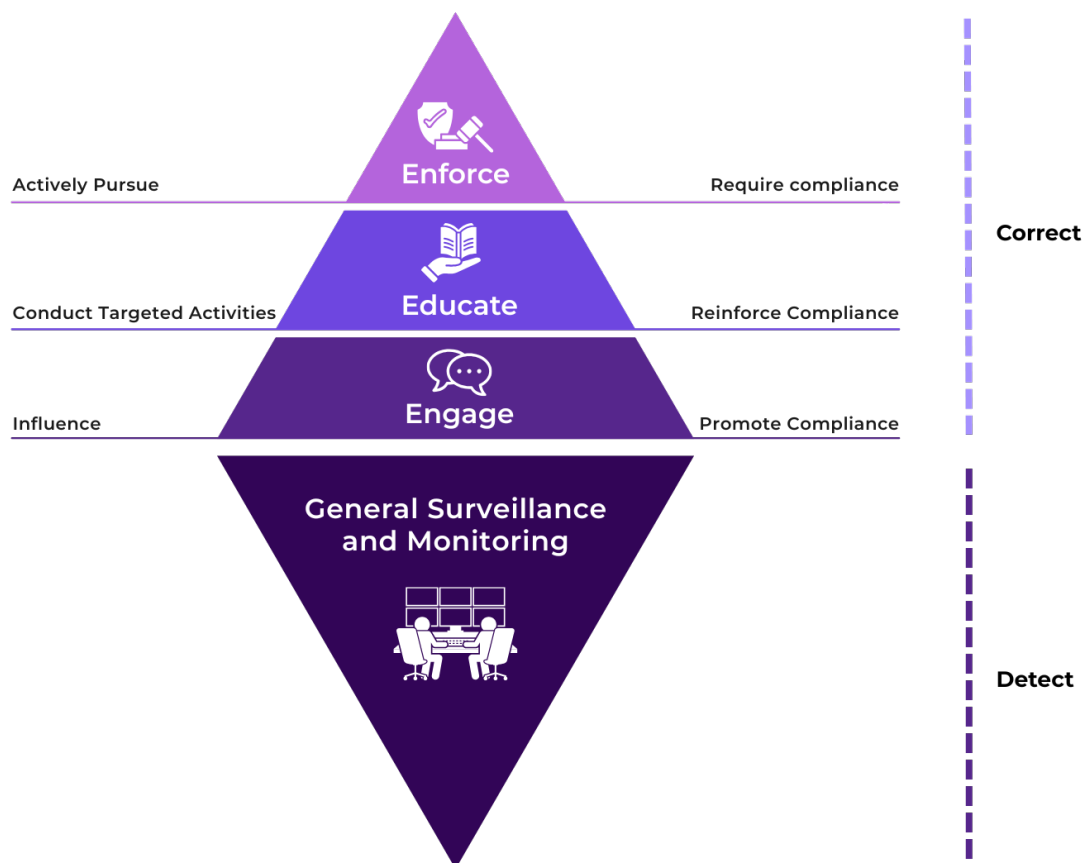
2.4 Regulatory Approach and Activities

Directorate regulators will use the response (or a combination of responses) suitable for the situation, depending on the activity being regulated, the risk of harm associated with the activity, the stakeholders involved, and the identified customer group. Outcomes and intelligence gathered and/or created at each stage of the diamond form part of the regulatory lifecycle, and will also be used to inform action across the regulatory response hierarchy.

The intent and desired outcome of regulatory activities differ depending on the identified response hierarchy (Figure 1).

Governance frameworks operate to support regulators to embody the regulatory principles in their approach and activities.

Figure 1: Regulatory Response Diamond.



Regulatory Strategy management within CED

2.5 Overview

The Regulatory Strategy sets the overarching ambition for the Directorate and the principles guiding its regulators as they carry out their responsibilities. Implementation actions and performance measures will be set out within subordinate documents.

2.6 Action Plans

Action Plans will be developed that sets out how the Directorate will achieve its regulatory objectives, deliver continuous improvement and develop its regulatory capability across three key focus areas:

- Regulatory Intelligence and Performance Monitoring: building systems, capability and developing intelligence to inform risk-based programming, resource allocation, regulatory decision making and evaluation of regulatory outcomes that feed into the regulatory lifecycle.
- Regulatory Governance: embedding frameworks and procedures supporting consistency and accountability at the appropriate level of decision making.
- Regulatory Practice and Culture: fostering relationships and integrated practices in support of delivering regulatory value and building capability across the lifecycle.

2.7 Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Head of Access Canberra	• Maintain and review the Regulatory Strategy and associated regulatory documentation • Escalate decisions or issues to the Deputy Director-General responsible for regulatory functions • Report to ELG on progress against Action Plans as required
Executive Leadership Group	• Authorise amendments to the Strategy

2.8 Monitoring and Evaluation

The City and Environment Directorate will adopt an evidence-based monitoring and evaluation framework to measure and report its regulatory maturity and achievement against this Strategy. The selection/development of this performance framework will be undertaken during implementation via the Action Plan.

3.0 Resources and Appendices

3.1 Supporting Documents

The Directorate's implementation of the Regulatory Strategy is articulated in the following suite of documents:

Document Title
Statements of Expectation and Intent
Regulatory Governance Framework
Regulatory Action Plan (Not yet created)

For more information please visit the [Access Canberra website](#).