# Records Disposal Schedule - Context Statement

**PIRSA, Agriculture Food and Wine and Agribusiness and Regions**

**History and Background**

The first Minister of Agriculture was appointed in 1875 and subsequently a Royal Commission appointed in 1875 “ to enquire into the best means of providing for agricultural and technical education “[[1]](#footnote-2) recommended the establishment of a Department of Agriculture to collect and disseminate information to people in agricultural, pastoral and horticultural pursuits.

John D. Custance came to South Australia in June 1881 as its first Professor of Agriculture, having received scientific training in England. He moved to the newly-acquired farming property at Roseworthy, a few miles north of the thriving town of Gawler in early 1882.[[2]](#footnote-3) By 1883 the College was generally referred to as part of the Department of Agriculture.[[3]](#footnote-4) This became Australia’s first Agricultural College in 1884 and admitted its first students in the following year. It also had oversight of the experimental station at Millicent and another at Bundaleer.[[4]](#footnote-5)

By 1887, three departments (Stock and Brands, Agriculture, Woods and Forests) had evolved within the Department of Crown Lands and Immigration with administrative responsibilities relating to agriculture and rural affairs.[[5]](#footnote-6) The Central Agricultural Bureau was established in 1888 to advise the Minister and to encourage improved practices by farmers. It was also known as Agricultural Bureau and the Central Bureau of Agriculture.

General re-organisation of departments concerned with agricultural matters was brought about by the Jenkins administration upon assuming office in 1901. Foremost among these changes was the creation in 1902 of a new Department of Agriculture and abolition of the Central Bureau of Agriculture, Dairy Board and Council of the Agricultural College in the same year.[[6]](#footnote-7)

In 1902, the SA Department of Agriculture was formed and undertook research through experimental farms, extension work and regulatory activity to protect the State’s agriculture industries. The Department of Agriculture and Intelligence was created pursuant to abolition of the Department of Agriculture in September 1906. Functions of the new department were essentially those of its predecessor.[[7]](#footnote-8) For a couple of years, the department was called the ‘Department of Agriculture and Intelligence’, explained by Director Angus in his report for 1906-07 that the ‘intelligence’ essentially referred to the Departmental library and its role as a source of information.[[8]](#footnote-9)

The next 50 years saw the modest growth in the Department with an emphasis on pest and disease control, improved productivity and soil conservation. [[9]](#footnote-10)

The post-war demand for foodstuffs and fibres and the need to apply new technology available after World War II resulted in the State Government providing greatly increased funds to expand the services of the Department. The advent of the Commonwealth Dairy Industry Extension Grant in 1947 and later the Commonwealth Extension Services Grant (CESG) in 1952 together with funds available from Industry Research Funds, e.g. Wheat Industry Research Funds and Wool Industry Research Funds enabled a very rapid build-up of staff during the 1950s, 1960s and into the 1970s.

The State’s Ligurian Bee Stud Farm was established on Kangaroo Island in 1943-44 to ensure the preservation of what was believed to be the only pure strain in the world. By the 1950’s the significance of the Ligurian bee colonies on Kangaroo Island as the only pure population of this bee strain in the world was recognised and steps taken to protect it from genetic contamination. This led to a substantial international trade in Ligurian queen bees.

In January 1947, the first fruit fly outbreak was detected in suburban Adelaide. From 1959 the State’s defences against the introduction of both Mediterranean and Queensland fruit fly species were strengthened by establishing road blocks at Yamba, Pinnaroo, Oodlawirra and Ceduna. Regional advisory centres were being developed at Cleve, Murray Bridge, Naracoorte and Nuriootpa. In 1962 the need for more extensive research facilities was resolved with the SA Government’s decision to transfer an old mental hospital dairy farm at Northfield to the Department of Agriculture. This paved the way for a major development of laboratories, experimental fields and other specialised facilities.[[10]](#footnote-11)

In 1948, the SA Government purchased 465 hectares of land and the homestead known as the Struan Estate, located in Struan, South Australia. Approximately half of the land was assigned to the Department of Agriculture as an outstation of Kybybolite with the goal of carrying out animal husbandry research.

Since 1971, there has been a dedicated unit to provide and administer various types of support for the farming community and various Commonwealth-State agreements relating to the provision of financial assistance to the Rural Sector.

The Department of Lands initially established the Rural Industries Assistance Authority in response to the enactment of the *Rural Industry Assistance (Special Provisions) Act 1971* (Commonwealth). In September 1977, the Authority transferred to the Department of Agriculture and was renamed the Rural Assistance Branch.

During the three years ending in 1973 the Department received from sources other than the State Government an average of 25% of its total funds for boosting particular extension or research projects. This was spent in the ratio of about 1.7 to 1 between the research and the extension areas. [[11]](#footnote-12)

SAGRIC International Pty Ltd (1979-2000) previously Salger Pty Ltd, was created to deliver agricultural development services and projects in overseas countries, and the Rural Affairs Unit assisted farmers with difficult adjustment decisions.

The Department of Agriculture and Fisheries was formed by the amalgamation of the Fisheries Department and the Department of Agriculture on 2 October 1975. The Director of Agriculture became Director of Agriculture and Fisheries.[[12]](#footnote-13) This arrangement lasted four years.

In the late 1970s the Department of Agriculture’s services were regionalised to improve responsiveness to local needs. The first Region in the South East was commissioned in July 1977 with the last Region (Central) to be implemented during 1981. There were a total of five regional centres established (South East, Murray Lands, West Coast, Mid North, Central).

On 8th October 1992, the Department of Agriculture was merged with other government agencies servicing primary industries to create The Department for Primary Industries South Australia (DPI). This department was more commonly referred to as Primary Industries South Australia (PISA). The proclamation abolished the Department of Lands, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Fisheries and the Department of Woods and Forests.

The Department's goal was to assist in the achievement of prosperity for primary industries in South Australia. It was structured into the following nine program areas: Field Crops; Fisheries; Forestry; Horticulture; Livestock; Rural Finance and Development; Sustainable Resources; Strategic Services and Corporate Services.[[13]](#footnote-14) The October 1992 change included formation of a specialised research arm, the South Australian Research and Development Institute (SARDI).[[14]](#footnote-15)

In the departmental restructure of October 1997 forestry functions were transferred from the Department for Primary Industries to the Department for Administrative and Information Services.[[15]](#footnote-16) Some parts of the sustainable resources program were transferred to the Department of Environment & Natural Resources (and successor agencies), although PISA and later PIRSA retained close ties to natural resource programs and maintained its own sustainable resources function focusing on drought program initiatives and the sustainability of primary industry until 2002.

From 1997 to 2011 the organisation was known as The Department of Primary Industries and Resources South Australia (PIRSA) which was an amalgamation of the former departments of Mines and Energy, Primary Industries, Office of Energy Policy and the Rural Communities Office, and had a focus on agriculture and fisheries (primary industries) and minerals, energy and petroleum (resources).

On July 1st, 1998 PIRSA launched Rural Solutions, a key business unit providing specialised consultancy services in agriculture, agribusiness, and natural resource management through its network of 25 country service centres.

In the 1999/2000 financial year, The Office of Regional Development was established, incorporating PIRSA’s Rural Communities Office and its Ruralink programs. Investment attraction activities from PIRSA transferred to the Department of Industry and Trade and the Sustainable Resources Groundwater Program transferred to the Department for Water Resources.[[16]](#footnote-17)

In early 2002, additional functions were transferred from the PIRSA Sustainable Resources Group to the new Department of Water, Land and Biodiversity Conservation (DWLBC). These functions included Pastoral Management, Water Management, Animal and Plant Control, Land Management and Revegetation, Strategic and Environmental Services (excluding Policy, Planning and Environmental Services and Landcare and Landcare education).

Programs and activities retained by PIRSA include FarmBis, Exceptional Circumstances, Rural Communities, Rural Affairs, Advisory Board of Agriculture, Marine Habitat (administered under Fisheries Acts), and Strategic and Environmental Services Policy.[[17]](#footnote-18)

During the 2002-2003 financial years, Energy SA merged with Mineral Resources and Petroleum Groups to form the new Minerals and Energy Division.[[18]](#footnote-19)

In 2003-2004, PIRSA’s composition was extended to include the Commercial Projects team and several energy staff from the Department of Business, Manufacturing and Trade. This capability enabled PIRSA to provide industry development services to wine, resources and energy sectors beyond the farm gate, fishery or mining operation and along the total value chain.[[19]](#footnote-20)

From 1 July 2005, the vision of agency integration between planning, economic development and sustainability was achieved with the inclusion of Planning SA, Office of Local Government, Office of the North, Office for the Southern Suburbs, Office of the North West, Office of the Murray Mallee and Office of the Upper Spencer Gulf, Flinders Ranges and Outback. During 2005, Energy SA also moved from PIRSA to the Department for Transport Energy and Infrastructure.[[20]](#footnote-21).

The Office of Volunteers transferred to PIRSA on 1 April 2006.

Effective from 1 July 2006, following a state election, the forest policy function of ForestrySA (now a corporation) was transferred back to PIRSA. Within PIRSA, Forestry portfolio functions include:

* support to SA Forest Industry Advisory Board
* plantations compliance with conditions of sale
* policy and ministerial support
* ForestrySA Community Service Obligation Management
* Forestry investment

In 2008 Planning SA was established as a separate administrative unit of the Public Service and Office of Local Government, Office of the North, Office for the Southern Suburbs, Office of the North West, Office of the Murray Mallee, Office of the Upper Spencer Gulf, Flinders Ranges and Outback were transferred from PIRSA to the newly formed Planning SA on 1 July 2008.[[21]](#footnote-22)

Biosecurity SA was established on 1 July 2010 as a division through the amalgamation of the biosecurity functions of PIRSA and the former Department of Water, Land and Biodiversity Conservation. This integration, bringing together animal health, plant health, food safety, emergency management, rural chemical, marine pests, NRM biosecurity, weeds, and vertebrate animal pests, enhances the State’s ability to strategically and effectively respond to animal, plant and marine pests and diseases.[[22]](#footnote-23)

In 2010, The Olympic Dam Task Force, facilitating BHP Billiton’s proposed expansion of the Olympic Dam mine and leading negotiations on a new indenture, was incorporated into PIRSA.

The Department of Primary Industries and Regions South Australia (PIRSA) was formed on 21 October 2011, following a substantial portfolio change on the appointment of a new Premier. PIRSA has a strong focus on recognising the important role of local production in regional and rural South Australian and arising from that, the contribution of primary industries to the State's sustainable economic future. [[23]](#footnote-24) Machinery of Government changes announced in October saw the Minerals and Energy Division transferred to the new Department of Manufacturing, Innovation, Trade, Resources and Energy (DMITRE) and the Regional Development Group transferred to PIRSA from the then Department of Trade and Economic Development (DTED).[[24]](#footnote-25)

The Department of Planning and Local Government (transferred to an administrative unit within Premier & Cabinet in 2008) was abolished on 30 June 2013 and in August the Outback Communities Authority and the Local Government Grants Commission were transferred to PIRSA.[[25]](#footnote-26) In 2013, PIRSA also concluded its role in retaining a staff member to provide Executive Officer functions for the Agricultural Bureau.

As of May 2014, the structure of PIRSA consists of 6 business divisions: Agribusiness & Regions, Biosecurity SA, Corporate, Fisheries & Aquaculture, Rural Solutions and SARDI.

### Agribusiness & Regions History and Background

The Agribusiness & Regions division was formed in 2013 when PIRSA amalgamated the Agriculture, Food, Wine and Forestry Division with the Regional Development and Strategy and Policy Business Groups. In August 2013, staff supporting the Outback Communities Authority and the Local Government Grants Commission also joined the Agribusiness & Regions Division.

The functions supported or inherited by the current Agribusiness & Regions related groups can be traced through history back to 1902, when the SA Department of Agriculture was formed for the purpose of research through experimental farms, extension work and regulatory activity to protect the State’s agriculture industries. Agribusiness & Regions has inherited and continues to perform many of the original advisory, community, regional development, financial assistance and policy activities from the Department of Agriculture.

During 1902-1909, Farming experiment stations were established at Loxton, Kybybolite, Murray Bridge (reclaimed swamp lands) and Parafield, with orchards at Hackney, Blackwood, Kybybolite and Mylor (demonstration orchard linked to Botanic Gardens).The experiment station in the Murray Mallee (Veitch’s Well) and the Turretfield Dairy Stud Farm at Rosedale in the Lower North were acquired in 1908-09. These stations were created to conduct experiments in applied research and support the extension services of the department. The stations were a location where the advisory or research officers could demonstrate techniques or research outcomes to farmers or the public.

In 1917-18, the first advisory officers located in country districts were appointed. They were titled “Orchard Instructors and Inspectors” combining extension work with regulatory duties. There were five of them at this time, servicing the South East, Southern District (Fleurieu Peninsula), Mt Lofty Ranges, Northern Adelaide Plains, and Northern Districts (Barossa and Clare Valleys and Wirrabara). The dairy industry started to get the same sort of service in 1925-26 when five District Dairy Instructors were appointed.[[26]](#footnote-27) The main function of a district office was to provide an advisory and diagnostic service to farmers and growers in the area. These Instructors were later renamed to Advisors.

The first Government provision for specific financial assistance to rural producers came in 1920-21 when a Loans to Producers Board was established. Its purpose was to make loans at concessional rates to land holders and producer cooperatives for the purchase of equipment for product processing or the construction/installation of storage facilities and irrigation systems.[[27]](#footnote-28)

The transition from war to peace between 1939 and 1945 brought many changes within the department. In 1949 the department comprised of specialised branches - agriculture, horticulture, dairy, soil conservation, animal health, and general inspection. It was supported by a library and administrative and accounting units. Research Centres were either the province of a branch (e.g. Horticulture) or the Chief Experimentalist for general farming investigations.

During 1949, a new agreement between the SA Government and The University of Adelaide, was created, which better defined research and advisory responsibilities of the Waite Institute and Department of Agriculture. It set out for the first time the concepts of basic research (being delivered by the Waite Institute and C.S.I.R.O.), and applied research (aimed at solving defined field problems), and closely linking these to advisory programs for farmers (i.e. extension work being delivered by the Department).[[28]](#footnote-29)

Of considerable significance to the administration of the Department was the consolidation of virtually the whole of head office, between July 1950 and May 1951 at a single site in 133 Gawler Place – Agriculture Building, an office converted from Simpson’s old factory. This building also accommodated the Woods and Forests Department, the Fisheries and Game Department and a number of other government organisations.[[29]](#footnote-30)

A Rural Youth Council was established in 1951, with representatives of the Education Department, the banking sector and the rural media joining Department of Agriculture staff. This council planned the launching of the Rural Youth Movement with a network of branches throughout the State. The first branches were formed in 1951-52, and by 1956 there were 87 Branches.

In the early 1950’s, the departmental research centres were upgraded and their management more strongly directed to identifying and trying to solve local farming or horticultural problems. Milang Irrigation Centre was established in 1953, Kangaroo Island Research Centre at Parndana was established in 1959-61, and the Wanbi Research Centre was acquired as a base for soil conservation research in the Murray Mallee. Soon after, the Parafield Research Centre, located alongside its Poultry Research Station cousin, began to be redeveloped as a centre for plant introduction and the evaluation of new pasture species and cultivars.

The opening of the major new soldier settlement irrigation area at Loxton led to the establishment of a new horticultural Loxton Research Centre which eventually replaced the old Berri Experimental Orchard.[[30]](#footnote-31)

In the mid 1950’s, industry levies were further developed. Levies gathered from agricultural industries were matched with Commonwealth contributions to create and manage substantial funds for research and extension. Over a period, wheat, meat, dairy, tobacco and horticulture joined the wool industry in major funding arrangements throughout Australia. These levy schemes were aimed at accessing financial resources to provide research and support staff services for SA’s agricultural industries.

There was a major restructure within the department in 1954-55. The six established technical service-delivery branches were grouped into two divisions, each led by a Divisional Chief. The Division of Plant Industry comprised the Agronomy, Horticulture and Soil Conservation Branches. The Division of Animal Industry was made up of the Animal Health, Animal Husbandry and Dairy Branches. A Division of Extension Services and Information was also established and in 1956, the Department of Agriculture’s first agricultural economist, David Penny, was appointed.[[31]](#footnote-32)

By the end of 1959, the administrative structure of the Department had moved back to a branch structure and comprised of several sections including an accounts branch; a correspondence (registry) branch; the Chief Inspector’s Branch (covering apiaries, fertilizer and pesticide registration, chaff and hay, stock foods and margarine quotas); a typing pool; and a data processing branch. Clerical officers and short hand typists were deployed with each of the divisions and technical branches, meeting the bulk of those units’ needs.[[32]](#footnote-33)

Around 1962 the Extension Services and Information Division were downgraded to a Branch, providing services to the “operational” branches within the Animal and Plant Industry Divisions. The Extension Branch also included the increasingly important Farm Management Economics unit.[[33]](#footnote-34) By this time, there were 11 research centres operating across the state.

In 1965 a Research Centres Branch was created to provide Head Office based oversight of the country research centres. These were the centres dealing with issues affecting grazing animals (other than dairy cattle) and mixed cereal/livestock farming, i.e. Kybybolite, Struan, Turretfield, Parndana, Wanbi and Minnipa. It also secured a base for biometrical services for the whole Department.[[34]](#footnote-35)

Information regarding the structure of the Department of Agriculture is difficult to locate for the period between 1969 and 1972, and 1974-1987. In 1971, a major change to the organisational structure involved the formation of a group executive. Rather than having a line management responsibility, these positions were focussed on the following functions:

* oversight of all research and extension activities, including the management of departmental applications for grants to outside bodies
* regulatory activities and the Department’s relationships with primary producer representative groups and other relevant organisations
* service areas of administration, accounting, financial and human resources management, in particular the coordination of these areas with the department’s technical, scientific and regulatory operations.

In 1973, the department was based on Branches grouped under the responsibility of two Assistant Directors and the Director General of Agriculture. Branches were: Research, Extension, Animal Health, Livestock, Dairy, Agronomy, Soils, Horticulture, and an additional two branches relating to Finance and Administration. This was also the year that the current Director General, Marshall Irving produced a report that included proposing a new structure based on Regions and Divisions. This new structure proposed 6 divisions; Economics, Marketing & Farm Management, Information & Public Relations, Plant & Animal Industry, Research, Policy Coordination & development, Staff Development & Management Services.[[35]](#footnote-36)

Between 1975 and 1976 a Home Gardens Advisory Service within the Extension Branch was established, the publication of fact sheets on specific topics, as the principal printed medium for conveying advice to producers and other clients commenced and the publication of a high quality book entitled “Farming Systems in South Australia”, was published in English, French, Arabic and Chinese.

The Rural Industries Assistance Authority was transferred to the Department of Agriculture in September 1977 and was renamed the Rural Assistance Branch. During the 1970s and 1980s, this unit used grants and highly concessional, long-term loans as the preferred assistance vehicles and a new loan scheme was also introduced, aimed at supporting better performing farm businesses by offering competitive commercial rates. Around 1977, four Regional Research Liaison Committees, comprising departmental officers and representatives of relevant industry organisations, were also established with the stated objective of adjusting research and extension programs more closely to the day to day problems of agriculture in their region.

In the early to mid-1980s, a structure based on regions was functioning across the state to manage the operations in country locations and by 1987 regional activities were tailored to local needs through a network of district officers and research centres. The divisions were located in Adelaide and provided specialist support to regional operations as well as having primary responsibility for policy development..[[36]](#footnote-37) The department consisted of 6 divisions; Plant Services, Animal Services, Policy & planning, Support Services, Regions and an International Division which also contained the Rural Assistance Branch.

The National Landcare Program also funded many of the projects relevant to the department’s focus. One such project entitled the ‘Murray Mallee Farm Management Project’ began in 1988, with the aim of increasing the adoption of conservation farming techniques and the recognition of farming to land capability. Activities involved working with eight case study farms to understand their economic performance and demonstration trials about no-till and conservation farming and aspects of the project included pioneering wind erosion research in the SA Mallee using a wind tunnel. The project resulted in substantial changes in land use, with a large percentage of northern Mallee farmers now practicing no-tillage techniques.

By 1989, the International Division had been renamed to Agricultural Development & Marketing, and a Chemistry Division was present.

Advisory services regarding the technical aspects of agriculture were well established by this time and major effort was focused on farm management and community support during the early 1990’s. Programs aimed at improving the economic efficiency of individual farms and the social well-being of the farming community were integrated with agricultural industries and across regional boundaries to focus on the economic and social aspects of farming.

During the 1990s, assistance was provided under the Commonwealth State Rural Adjustment Scheme agreement via:

* subsidy payments to farmers to provide interest rate relief on commercial farm debt and to improve productivity
* re-establishment grants to assist adjustment out of farming
* increased emphasis on grants to farmers for farm financial and management advice and education and training
* increased linkages with other Rural programs such as National LandCare Program and the Natural Heritage Trust through regional strategies
* Exceptional circumstances interest rate relief for areas declared to be experiencing hardship as a result of adverse seasonal conditions/industry downturn.

In acknowledgement of this change in role, the Branch was renamed the Rural Finance & Development Division (RF&D) in 1990.

The concept of regionalisation was disbanded in 1992 when the Department for Primary Industries South Australia (PISA) was created and a new structure was established. Under the structure developed in 1993 for Primary Industries SA, staff and operations from the former Department of Agriculture were managed by a Director of Agriculture and team of General Managers (Horticulture, Livestock, Agronomy, and Sustainable Resources). Under this set up district offices and research centres were aligned with an appropriate General Manager. During this time, the South Australian Research and Development Institute (SARDI) was formed and research activities were progressively transferred to SARDI, however the concept of applied research was maintained and continued within district offices and research centres.

Following an independent review of operations in 1994, the lending program was limited to issuing new loans under the State funded Rural Industries Assistance Development Fund (RIADF) and Loans to Cooperatives schemes, and managing the existing loan portfolio to completion. RF&D also administered the State funded Young Farmers Incentive Scheme, an interest rate subsidy to encourage young farmers to start a career in farming. Industry planning processes were also introduced as part of strategic planning by the organisation to establish opportunities and priority areas, and assist industry in capturing opportunities.

From 1995 to1999 the Agricultural Industries Group was responsible for managing government resources and services that supported the development of agriculture in this State. This was achieved through advice to industry and Government, industry planning, policy development, compliance and resource protection programs and projects that improved competitiveness, self-reliance and maximised returns.

Programs of the group were Grape and Citrus Industries and Plant Health; Field Crop Industries and Seed Services; Sheep Industries; Fruit, Vegetable and Ornamental Industries; Cattle and Intensive Animal Industries; and Animal Health and Meat Hygiene. These programs developed and enhanced the agricultural resource base and protected productive and natural resources from pests and disease or other threats. Planning and Industry Development services delivered specialist economic and market analysis services to support staff and industry and included analysis of primary production and trade to assist trade and market development, rural partnership programs involving communities and different levels of government working together for strategic rural development.

In 1995/96 Sustainable Resources (encompassing the management of soil, water flora and fauna to promote efficient and sustainable use of natural resources) was assigned its own General Manager reporting directly to the Chief Executive (PISA).

In 1996/97 Planning and Industry Development was allocated its own General Manager to support all of PISA with marketing, media, graphic design, sociology, international business development, investment, business analysis and strategic planning. RF&D also provided interest rate subsidies to farm and small businesses located in northern pastoral areas affected by floods in 1997.

Following the mid-term review of the Rural Adjustment Scheme conducted by the Commonwealth Government in 1997, the nature of Commonwealth-State assistance changed to emphasise farmer development and self-reliance through training and education, enhanced farm management deposits and regional support via the Rural Partnership Programs.

Interest Rate Subsidies to develop farm businesses were no longer considered as the appropriate method of delivering government structural adjustment support, however remained a key element of the Exceptional Circumstances program. Rural finance and development activities continued to deliver financial assistance to farming and farm related communities through rural finance and development schemes and address the broader economic social and adjustment needs of primary producers, rural women, farm families and their communities.

Commencing in 1998, RF&D administered the Eyre Peninsula Regional Strategy which included grants to exit the industry and interest rate subsidies to enhance farm productivity.

By 1999, Agricultural Industries had become the Food & Fibre Group. This group included the former Fisheries, Aquaculture and Rural Solutions Divisions. A new Group – Food for the Future (a joint initiative with the Department of Industry and Trade) was established to meet the Premier’s Food for the Future initiatives. This group delivered market awareness programs for growers and buyers of fresh and processed food, and the development of a scorecard reflecting up-to-date information to measure our achievements in growing the food industry in South Australia. Food & Fibre was created to align agricultural, fisheries and aquaculture services to meet food for the future objectives.

Between 2000 and 2010 RF&D continued to administer a number of new programs that included two regional programs for the pastoral, northern cropping and Riverland in the early part of the decade. The programs supported on-farm development and business planning, all with viability and sustainability outcomes. Another key program during this decade was the national FarmBis grant program which supported training activities to improve farmer business management skills.

PIRSA's Agriculture Food and Fisheries Division (AFF) existed from 2002 – 2004. It was formed as a result of bringing together the former Food and Fibre Group, environment and planning functions of the former Sustainable Resources Group and some of the functions formerly performed within the PIRSA Corporate division. The new elements covered rural chemicals, land use planning, environmental management systems (EMS), Murray Darling Basin Commission (MDBC) and water policy, marine habitat and exotic incursion response, rural communities and drought policy/exceptional circumstances (EC).

In 2002 RF&D administered a Drought Relief Assistance scheme supporting the Central North East pastoral and Murray Mallee areas affected by drought. The group also administered financial assistance programs for other State government agencies including the Branched Broomrape and Lower Murray Reclaimed IrrigationAreas grants schemes; and loans and grants under the South East Confined Aquifer Wells Rehabilitation scheme.

Agriculture Food & Fisheries also took on additional across government policy responsibilities in Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO's), food safety and organic farming. Existing responsibilities within the Food and Fibre group (1999 – 2002) were retained with the exception of Rural Solutions which was elevated to a Division. The Food for the Future Group became a program within Food South Australia (Later Food SA) . Drought support for pastoral areas commenced in 2003 and continued until 2011.

New structural arrangements in July 2004 realised changes to PIRSA’s functional services and redesigned accountability. Support for the wine industry was aligned with agricultural services into the Agriculture and Wine Division (2004-2007) and the creation of two new divisions, the Aquaculture Division and Fisheries Division, removed these functions from the former Agriculture, Food and Fisheries Division.

Between 2005 and 2007 Natural Disaster recovery grants to farm businesses affected by natural disaster events were provided. These included:

* bushfire on Lower Eyre Peninsula (2005)
* flooding of Gawler River(2005) and
* Renmark storm event (2007).

In 2006 the Lower Eyre Peninsula bushfire re-establishment program was implemented to assist farmers and landholders recover and re-establish after the 2005 bushfire.

In 2005, a review of RF&D was undertaken, driven by the emerging demand within the agency for prudential services. The review confirmed there was a need to provide PIRSA with a prudential capability. The review recommended an organisational restructure and name change to Prudential & Rural Financial Services (PRFS). PRFS continues to provide administration of various grants and loan assistance programs to the rural sector for both Commonwealth Department of Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry and PIRSA.

PRFS also administered the Energy Efficiency Program for Low Income Households, an interest free loan scheme to assist with the purchase of energy efficient goods which commenced in 2006.

From 2007 to 2010, the division was known as Agriculture Food and Wine. This name change occurred when the Agriculture and Wine Division and Food SA merged on 1 July 2007 and included responsibility for the Food for the Future Program and the Premiers Food Council. During this time period (2009) the compliance and regulatory activities relating to animal health, plant health & plant health policy, food and seafood safety and rural & farm chemicals were transferred to a new division called Biosecurity SA. Industry Development and Renewal and Commercial Investment Groups became separate divisions.

Between 2007 and 2012, PRFS played a key role in the State Drought response program which included most of the State being declared eligible for financial support under the Exceptional Circumstances program (funded 90/10).

The State Drought response also included grants for community activities to support morale and wellbeing, and farm debt mediation grants. Grants were also available under the Planning for Recovery (P4R) program which funded business planning and on-farm development activities.

PRFS also undertook an administrative role in 2009 and 2010 to ensure the critical survival needs of irrigated perennial crops were met, by aiding access to additional water allocation. (Critical Water Allocation scheme & Irrigated Industry Support program). A Locust Rebate scheme was also made available in 2010 to assist landowners control locust hopper bands in the Riverland, Mallee and Mid North regions.

The Agriculture Food Wine & Forestry Division was formed in 2010 when the Forestry Division joined Agriculture, Food and Wine to create a greater focus on land use, productivity and industry development. At this time a new grouping of Strategy, Policy and People (SP&P) was created bringing together the Chief Executive’s Office, Policy and Planning, Investment and Strategic Projects, Industry, Regional and Community Engagement, People, Learning and Culture (formerly Human Resources) and Strategic Communications.

During 2011-12 the Regional Development Group transferred to PIRSA from the then Department of Trade and Economic Development (DTED) and the Policy and Planning, Investment and Strategic Projects, Industry, Regional and Community Engagement aspects of SP&P were combined to form the Regions Strategy and Policy (RSP) Division within PIRSA.

The Regions, Strategy and Policy (RSP) Group consisted of two core units; Strategy and Policy, and Regional Development, to provide PIRSA with the capacity and strategic policy advice to help grow sustainable and competitive regions by working with the State’s regional communities, industry and businesses to enhance sustainable economic prosperity. The RSP Directorate works with SA’s regions to increase economic opportunity and to maximise the contribution of regions to the State’s economy; and build social capital, promote economic development initiatives and priorities and contribute to the funding of regional economic infrastructure.

In 2012 Regions, Strategy and Policy and Agriculture Food Wine & Forestry combined to form the Agribusiness & Regions Division. Responsibility for The Local Government Grants Commission and the Outback Communities Authority were also transferred to this Division in 2013. PRFS also commenced administration of the Farm Finance Concessional Loans Scheme in late 2013 on behalf of the Australian Government.

1. Insert information about when and how the agency was first established and summarise any significant administrative changes or developments affecting the agency prior to its current role and functions/s. This can be obtained from annual reports, government gazettes, agency registrations submitted to State Records, historical publications about the agency and/or the agency website.
2. Insert, as a footnote, sources used for completing the Agency History and Background.

### Agribusiness & Regions Role and Function

The aim of Agribusiness & Regions is to provide a more streamlined focus on primary industries business development through a case management structure, as well as providing Regional Managers as a focus point for government relating to primary industries.

Agribusiness & Regions Division consists of the Agribusiness Development, Regions and Strategic Industry Policy Groups. The division has a close association with Prudential Rural Finance Services (PRFS) who have managed and administer rural finance schemes over many decades, to support the farming community in South Australia during periods of drought, fires, and other natural disasters. This support by State and Commonwealth Governments has been in a range of forms, including financial, technical and business assistance to help farmers reposition their businesses during difficult times.

Since its creation in 1998, Rural Solutions has also been closely associated with supporting Agribusiness & Regions functions by delivering consultancy and complex project management services in primary industry development, natural resource management and community consultation.

This unification aims to grow the economic contribution of the agriculture, food, wine and forestry industries through the development and execution of a market-driven approach to industry. Strategies, policies and projects are developed and executed collaboratively with regions and industry and other government agencies to ensure the benefits are broadly implemented.[[37]](#footnote-38)

The division drives South Australian Government’s strategic priorities of Premium Food and Wine from Our Clean Environment and Growing Advanced Manufacturing and plays a key role in coordinating the development of policies, programs and regulatory reforms to promote investment in agribusiness, achieve the aim of increasing the productivity, sustainability and efficiency of our food systems and to grow the value chain of food supply in South Australia, as well as increasing recognition of the intrinsic value of our healthy, natural environment.

Account Managers support the grains, seafood, meat and livestock, wine, horticulture, food and forestry industries and five Regional Managers are based in the Eyre and Western areas, Murray Lands and Riverland, South East and Limestone Coast, Yorke and Mid North and Outer Adelaide Regions.

Regional Managers & associated staff work to support regional economic development by facilitating the creation of new regional employment and the attraction of new investment; facilitating activities that are strategically important for the state, our regions, and major industry sectors; and facilitating activities that directly support the government in delivering its seven priorities[[38]](#footnote-39). Regional engagement teams work with South Australia’s people, networks and organisations to promote South Australian rural women, women in agriculture and business and other rural or farming organisations.

The division also supports the sustainable development of an internationally competitive forest industry, regional development and the provision of services from the State Government forest estate; associated environmental matters as well as programs that deliver community benefits from forestry activities, including public activities and biodiversity management in the State’s forest estate[[39]](#footnote-40).

Rural Finance Schemes continue to play an important role in building the ongoing financial resilience of farm businesses. Schemes and assistance measures available vary over time but currently include the provision of short-term assistance in the form of concessional loans, funding for counsellors as part of the Rural Financial Counselling Service, and establishing a nationally consistent approach to farm debt mediation. In addition to this, rural finance schemes and programs are offered to assist farmers adapt and prepare for the impacts of climate variability and other challenges, and to ensure that governments and industry are acting proactively rather than reactively.[[40]](#footnote-41)

1. Insert information about the current role and function/s of the agency. This can be obtained from annual reports, strategic planning documents and agency promotional material and/or the agency website.
2. Insert, as a footnote, sources used for completing the Agency Role and Function.

### PIRSA Structure Description

As at 30 June 2013, PIRSA was organised as outlined below:

Agribusiness & Regions consists of the Agribusiness Development, Regions and Strategic Industry Policy groups. The division aims to grow the economic contribution of the agriculture, food, wine and forestry industries through the development and execution of a market-driven approach to industry. Strategies, policies and projects are developed and executed collaboratively with regions and industry and other government agencies to ensure the benefits are broadly implemented.

Rural Solutions SA is a SA Government owned business that provides a broad range of consulting services across economic, political, environmental and social dimensions to agribusiness and environmental clients in local, regional and international markets.

Biosecurity SA manages the risks and potential harm to the economy, the environment and the community of pests and disease entering, emerging, establishing or spreading in Australia. It has a focus on animal health, plant health, natural resources management, Branched Broomrape, food safety, rural chemicals and emergency management programs.

Fisheries and Aquaculture develops and sets in place governance and procedures to regulate and facilitate the sustainable development of aquaculture and fisheries industries. The framework established by the SA Government and industry stakeholders ensures ecological sustainable development while providing certainty and opportunity for industry investment.

South Australian Research and Development Institute (SARDI) deliver robust scientific solutions for primary industries, and is the State Government’s principal research institute and research division of PIRSA. SARDI’s scientists work to create opportunities to position the State’s agriculture, food, aquatic and bioscience industries as internationally competitive and ecologically sustainable.

Strategy and Engagement drives and ensures the strategic positioning of the agency and its profile within the South Australian community, and leads and implements an Action Plan for the development of the State Government’s Premium Food and Wine from Our Clean Environment strategic priority. The directorate consists of three Groups, Premium Food and Wine from Our Clean Environment Project Team, Organisational Strategy and Development, and Strategic Communications and Engagement.

Corporate Services supports enables and connects the whole of the agency, supporting delivery on the State Government Strategic Priorities. Corporate Services also ensures the agency delivers on the South Australian Strategic Plan Targets: Regional support and asset management; financial and prudential management services; information and communication technology (ICT), and human resources management.[[41]](#footnote-42)Rural Financial Services has a direct reporting relationship with Corporate Services but works with and supports Agribusiness & Regions.

1. Insert information about the current structure of the agency. Information about the structure of the agency and its place in a broader Portfolio can be obtained from annual reports, strategic planning documents and agency promotional material and/or the agency website.
2. Include a copy of the current organisation chart as an appendix to the RDS.

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1. http://www.pir.sa.gov.au/aghistory/left\_nav/dept\_of\_agriculture\_as\_an\_organisation/structures/c19 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. http://www.pir.sa.gov.au/aghistory/left\_nav/dept\_of\_agriculture\_as\_an\_organisation/structures/c19 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. http://143.216.93.27/archivessrsa/t1tbmain.asp [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. http://www.pir.sa.gov.au/aghistory/left\_nav/dept\_of\_agriculture\_as\_an\_organisation/structures/c19 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. http://143.216.93.27/archivessrsa/t1tbmain.asp [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. http://143.216.93.27/archivessrsa/t1tbmain.asp [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
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9. [www.pir.sa.gov.au/aghistory](http://www.pir.sa.gov.au/aghistory) [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
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13. <http://www.archives.sa.gov.au/> GA606 Department for Primary Industries description [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
14. <http://www.pir.sa.gov.au/aghistory> [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
15. <http://www.archives.sa.gov.au/> GA799 ForestrySA description [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
16. PIRSA Annual Report 1999–2000 [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
17. PIRSA Annual Report 2001–02 [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
18. PIRSA Annual Report 2002–03 [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
19. PIRSA Annual Report 2003–2004 [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
20. PIRSA Annual Report 2004–05 [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
21. <http://www.archives.sa.gov.au/> GA2060 Department of Planning and Local Government description [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
22. PIRSA Annual Report 2010-2011 [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
23. PIRSA website: www.pir.sa.gov.au [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
24. PIRSA Annual Report 2011-12 [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
25. SA Government Gazette, 1 August 2013, pp.3297-3298. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
26. http://www.pir.sa.gov.au/aghistory/left\_nav/dept\_of\_agriculture\_as\_an\_organisation/structures/perkins [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
27. http://www.pir.sa.gov.au/aghistory/left\_nav/dept\_of\_agriculture\_as\_an\_organisation/structures/perkins [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
28. http://www.pir.sa.gov.au/aghistory/left\_nav/dept\_of\_agriculture\_as\_an\_organisation/structures/callaghan [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
29. http://www.pir.sa.gov.au/aghistory/left\_nav/dept\_of\_agriculture\_as\_an\_organisation/structures/callaghan [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
30. http://www.pir.sa.gov.au/aghistory/left\_nav/dept\_of\_agriculture\_as\_an\_organisation/structures/callaghan [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
31. http://www.pir.sa.gov.au/aghistory/left\_nav/dept\_of\_agriculture\_as\_an\_organisation/structures/callaghan [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
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35. A review of the Department of Agriculture in the Light of Changed and Changing Needs, Sir Allan R Callaghan CMG, December 1974 [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
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37. PIRSA Annual Report 2012-13 [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
38. http://www.pir.sa.gov.au/regions [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
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41. PIRSA Annual Report 2012-13 [↑](#footnote-ref-42)