

This paper summarises progress in the development and implementation of stormwater management plans (SMPs) across South Australia.

The preparation of SMPs by councils or groups of councils is a cornerstone of stormwater management arrangements in South Australia. The Stormwater Management Authority (SMA) approves SMPs pursuant to the *Local Government Act 1999* and provides funding to assist in their preparation. Councils can also apply to the SMA for grant funding to implement eligible works and measures identified in an approved SMP.

Status of SMP development

The SMA is required to publish a list of priority catchments for which SMPs should be prepared ([Stormwater Management Planning Priorities for South Australia 2022](#)), but the preparation of an SMP is voluntary. Since 2006, 37 SMPs have been approved across 24 local government areas (Figure 1), with almost three-quarters of these being for cities and towns in regional local government areas (Figure 2).

Status of SMP implementation

Monitoring the implementation status of SMPs only began in 2019. SMA staff have surveyed local government authorities on a rolling, biennial cycle to obtain status updates for approved SMPs.

Approximately 800 actions are identified in the 37 approved SMPs. Table 1 summarises progress against these actions.

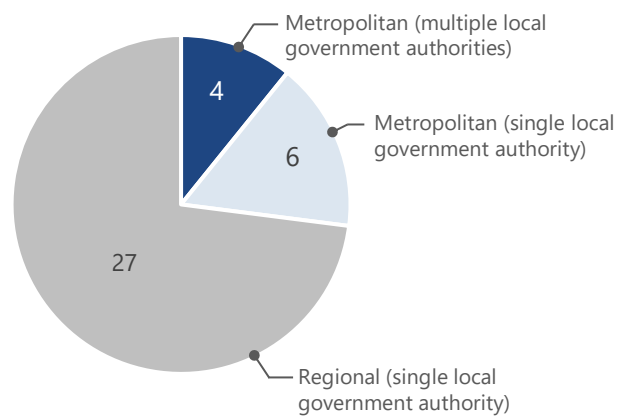


Figure 2: Number of metropolitan vs regional approved SMPs.

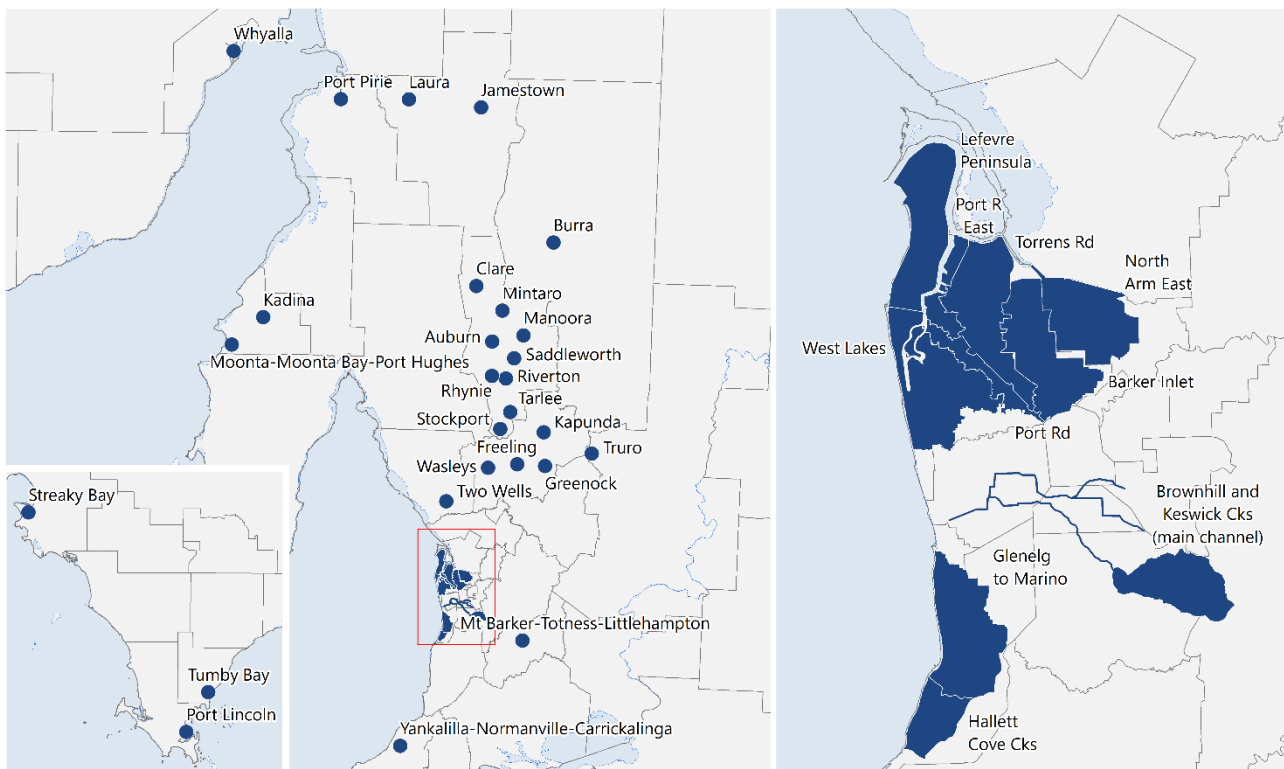
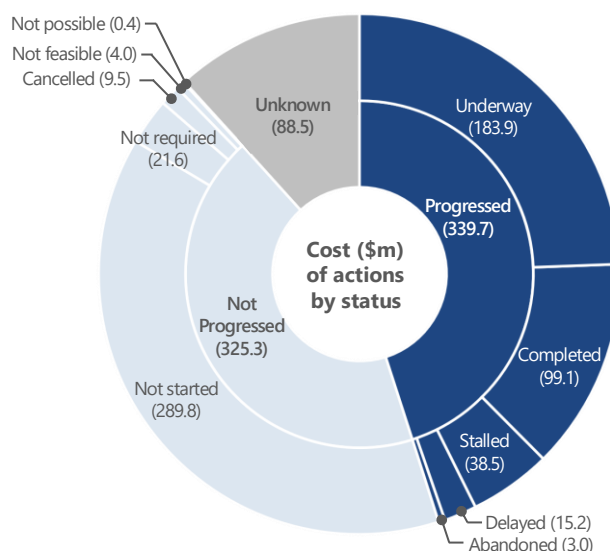


Figure 1: Locations of approved SMPs across South Australia.

Table 1: Count and estimated cost of all actions identified in approved SMPs, by status.

Action Status		Count	Cost (\$m)
Progressed	Completed	122	99.1
	Underway	107	183.9
	Delayed	10	15.2
	Stalled	17	38.5
	Abandoned ¹	3	3.0
	Sub-Total	259	339.7
Not Progressed	Not started	320	289.8
	Cancelled ²	19	9.5
	Not required ³	9	21.6
	Not feasible ⁴	13	4.0
	Not possible ⁵	29	0.4
	Sub-Total	390	325.3
Unknown		170	88.5
Total		819	753.5



Notes:

1. Actions genuinely commenced but abandoned due to technical, financial or regulatory issues, or inability to secure necessary pre-requisites (e.g. land).
2. Actions cancelled because an alternative action was identified and pursued.
3. Actions not required because a circumstance did not eventuate (e.g. a major land division did not occur).
4. Actions deemed not feasible as a result of further investigation.
5. Actions not possible due to a change in the regulatory environment (e.g. the new land use planning system).

Table 2 provides details of the count and estimated cost of actions that are considered to be outstanding. An action outstanding is one which has a status of ‘underway’, ‘delayed’, ‘stalled’, ‘not started’ or ‘unknown’.

Works projects comprise the overwhelming majority of actions outstanding. Figure 3 shows the estimated cost of works projects outstanding compared to the estimated cost of all other action types outstanding (see Table 2 for action types), grouped according to the priority assigned in the originating SMP (‘high’, ‘medium’, ‘low’ or ‘not determined’).

Table 2: Count and estimated cost of actions identified in approved SMPs that are outstanding, by type.

Action Type	Count	Cost (\$m)
Works	487	609.5
Other (e.g. monitoring, education)	66	0.9
Investigation or study	35	0.5
Policy development or adoption	25	1.8
Land acquisition ¹	11	3.2
Total	624	615.8

Notes:

1. The costs of acquiring land (as may be require to complete works projects) are rarely stated in SMPs and therefore this figure is likely to be a gross underestimation.

Despite regional local government areas accounting for almost three-quarters of SMPs approved to date, works projects identified in approved regional SMPs account for only about one-quarter of all works projects by estimated cost (Figure 4). This would tend to confirm the intuitive expectation that the need for major works is concentrated in the more heavily urbanised metropolitan Adelaide area.

The split of estimated costs between metropolitan and regional local government areas for all other action types is more even. This is logical considering emergency preparedness, planning investigations and appropriate policy settings are all fairly universal requirements without strong disparity between metropolitan and regional areas.

Figure 5 shows the number of actions from approved SMPs that are completed and outstanding, classified by the type of benefit provided through the action.

Limitations

The information on the status of SMP actions is collated from data provided to the SMA by respective local government authorities. Although the information is provided in good faith, error and omissions are possible, and it is impractical for the SMA to independently verify all of the information provided.

Information has been drawn from approved SMPs only. SMP coverage of metropolitan Adelaide and regional

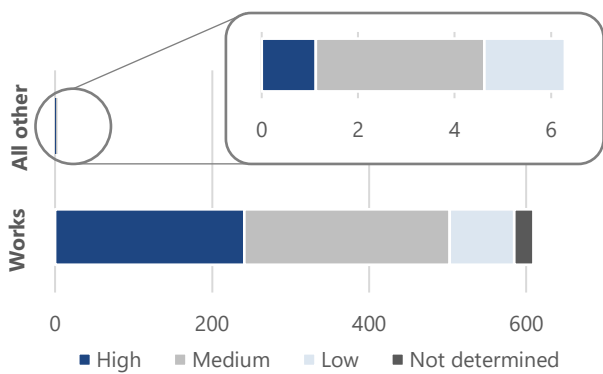


Figure 3: Estimated cost (\$m) of actions identified in approved SMPs that are outstanding, by type and priority.

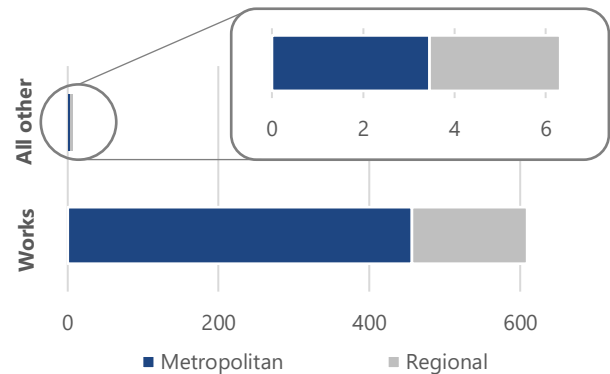


Figure 4: Estimated cost (\$m) of actions identified in approved SMPs that are outstanding, by type and locality.

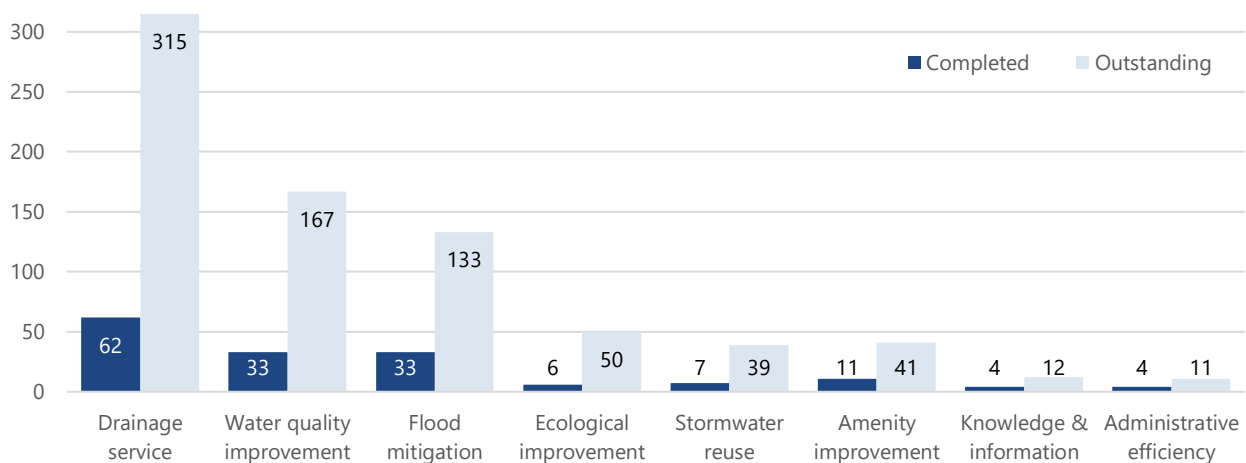


Figure 5: Number of actions identified in approved SMPs that are completed and outstanding by the type of benefit delivered. (Note: actions can deliver more than one benefit type.)

cities and towns is incomplete. The summary of actions and estimated costs herein should not be misconstrued as representing the totality of necessary or desirable stormwater management actions across metropolitan Adelaide or South Australia.

Costs are collated from estimates prepared for SMPs, some of which are more than ten years old. Cost estimates are updated on a best endeavours basis where this information is provided by local government authorities, but no systematic adjustment has been applied for inflation and other escalations. Planned future work will investigate the feasibility of applying escalation factors in line with the Australian Bureau of Statistics Building Price Index (BPI) or similar.

The proportion of SMP actions with unknown status is reflective of both local government authorities that have not provided information to the SMA, and some

newer SMPs only recently approved. Obtaining an accurate status for actions recorded as unknown will be a priority for future status updates.

Acknowledgement

The assistance of local government staff who provided status updates for their respective SMPs is gratefully acknowledged.

Further Information

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