# Data Quality Statement

## Summary information

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| Data asset name: | Environmental Audit Reports (EP Act 1970) and EP Act 2017 |
| Date: | 01/01/1990 (EP Act 1990) 01/07/2021 (EP Act 2017) |
| Data asset owner: | Environmental Protection Authority, Quality Branch, Environmental Audit Unit (EAU). |
| Description of data asset: | This dataset covers all environmental audit reports which have been completed under the 1970 EP Act and 2017 EP Act and have been submitted to EPA. The data of the report is in the format of PDF files. All audits have a Part A, (Audit Report file), Part B (Report Appendices file) and Part C (Executive Summary file). There are also a small number of audits which include additional Part D appendices files. With EP Act 1970 environmental audits, EPA started capturing GIS polygon information since 2014, prior to this point information was captured.  EP Act 1970 environmental audit data is also stored in physical folder records in the Computer Assisted Records Management System (CARMS) database. . CARMS was a database used to label and categorise physical manilla files which were used stored EPA records. The database allowed users to locate where physical records were located and which staff members and organisational units had receipt of them.  Hard copy of submitted Environmental Audits were saved in the CARMS database from 1990-2020. Hard copy storage ceased on the 25 March 2020. At this time the Environmental Audit unit sent an official all-auditor email indicating that hard copies of audit submissions would no longer be required.  EP Act 2017 environmental audits as well as PDF files all have both point and polygon information which is submitted by auditors to EPA..  It should be noted that there are significant data issue with audits lodged prior to the introduction of IBIS business information system in 2013. It was identified that prior to 2013 the frequency of data integrity issues was occurring. There are audits that were completed before 2004 that have no electronic/digitized PDF files on record. These audits will only exist as physical files in the CARMS archives stored by record management contractor Grace.  There were issues with earlier audits (pre 2013) that were often missing Part B (Report Appendices) and or Part C (Executive Summary files). |
| Legislation and authority: | Environmental Protection Act 1970 (Section 53V and Section 53X).  Environmental Protection Act 2017 (Section 208) |
| **Scope and coverage:** | This data asset contains environmental audit reports which have been completed for specific sites across Victoria. Environmental audits assess site conditions, land use suitability and risk of harm from activities. Under the EP Act 1970 environmental audits can be prepared under section 53X or section 53V. |
| **Reference period:** | 1 January 1990 to current. Environmental audits notified to EPA prior to 1 July 2021, can be under the EP Act 1970. As there are no time constraints for the submission of environmental audits that were notified to EPA prior to 1 July 2021. All audits notified post 1 July 2021 are notified under Section 208 of the EP Act 2017. |
| **Frequency and timing:** | Environmental audits were published by EAU when all quality assurance (QA) reviews have been completed. EAU would publish audits on weekly basis once QA reviews were completed. This occurred until IBIS was decommissioned on the 1 November 2022. After 1 November 2022 all environmental audits are to be sent to EPA’s DRA hub for publishing on a fortnightly basis. |
| **Formats available:** | PDF files, Point and Polygon GIS data and Physical CARMS file stored in Grace archives. |
| **Other notes:** | While all environmental audits are considered public documents, there is a very small subset of 53V audits completed prior to the 1 January 2014 that were not published. This is due to the 53V audits contaminating confidential information. These 53V audits were provided as an exclusion list to DEECA and were not published on Vic Unearthed.  The old EPA interaction portal had a restriction which prevented public publication and display of any 53V audit completed prior to the 1 January 2014. |

## Data quality description

### Accuracy

The data in this asset is of high accuracy as it is completed by EPA-appointed Environmental Auditors who maintain their own internal QA processes. Environmental auditors are appointed by the Authority after a rigorous selection process, demonstrate their minimum of 10 years' experience and have the appropriate post graduate qualification.

The data is further assessed by EPA’s internal QA processes, with an administrative review of all audits submitted as a minimum QA review.

### Completeness

There is an increase issue of data integrity in the older data set. There were known issues regarding missing audit files which were never provided in an electronic format, and missing CARMS file. Data integrity improved after 2004.

### Representative

The representativeness of this data is high as audits are statutory documents produced by EPA appointed environmental auditors and these reports also are subject to a robust Quality Assurance and review process by EAU.

### Timeliness/Currency

Auditors have a statutory requirement to submit all environmental audits to EPA within seven calendar days from the audit completion date for EP Act 1970 Audits and within five business days for EP Act 2017 Audits

### Collection

Prior to 2016, data was received as a physical submission of a audit report document, which was placed in a physical CARMS folder. As part of the submission, auditors attached either a CD/DVD or USB storage device of the PDF audit files. These files were then downloaded, attached into EPA’s business information systems, and the CD/DVD or USB media was stored in the physical CARMS folder. After 2016 auditors were transitioned to the online EPA interaction portal to lodge audit files electronically. Until 25 March 2020, auditors were required to submit environmental audits via the EPA interaction portal and provide a hard copy to EPA. With the commencement of the EP Act 2017 on the 1 July 2021 all audits were moved to an online submission process though the New EPA portal.

### Consistency

Previously there was not a consistent way the data has be collected. Legacy data especially audits completed before 2004 often were missing files, no digitisation of the files or were provided in a PDF electronic format. There have also been past issues where data migrations have occurred between business information systems, such as migration from Step Plus to IBIS in 2013.

### Fit for purpose

The data is fit for the specific purpose for which it was intended.

# Disclaimer

This data asset is provided “as is”, without warranty to the suitability of the data for unspecified use. The burden of assessment of fitness of the data lies completely upon the user.

# For further information

For further information regarding this data quality statement please contact Environmental Audit Unit, Quality Branch, EPA at [environmental.audit@epa.vic.gov.au](mailto:environmental.audit@epa.vic.gov.au).

# Document control

## Version history

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Version | Date | Comments |
| 0.1 | 24/11/22 | 1st Draft |
| 1.0 | 30/06/23 | Incorporated feedback. Final draft. |