

Video transcript:

Understanding Victoria's Contaminated land

Audit question

In this review we assessed if publicly available data about contaminated land in Victoria is accurate, current and fit for purpose.

Who and what we examined

We examined the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (or DEECA) and the Environment Protection Authority Victoria (or EPA).

Following a 2016 inquiry, the government committed to making an online public database to help people identify potentially contaminated sites.

We looked at DEECA and EPA's Victoria Unearthed database, which they launched in 2019 in response to the inquiry.

What we concluded

Victoria Unearthed fulfils the inquiry's recommendation.

But it's not meeting its full potential to provide accurate, current and fit-for-purpose data.

This is because DEECA and EPA have not evaluated if it continues to meet users' needs and kept all its datasets complete and up to date.

Background

People need to know where contaminated land is so they can make informed decisions about how to use and manage it.

Victoria Unearthed is Victoria's first statewide database for contaminated land data. It shows this information on an interactive map.

Finding 1: Victoria Unearthed has useful data but DEECA hasn't evaluated it

Victoria Unearthed has useful data. But DEECA hasn't formally evaluated it.

This means DEECA doesn't know if Victoria Unearthed is meeting its full potential to be a comprehensive, reliable and user-friendly source of information.

Finding 2: DEECA and EPA understand the quality of their data but could communicate this with users more

Victoria Uearthed meets the government's minimum data quality standards.

Its website has some important information about the quality of its datasets.

But DEECA and EPA have more detailed information about each dataset's strengths and limitations in their internal data quality statements. They haven't shared these with users yet.

This means users may find it difficult to make informed decisions about using Victoria Uearthed's data.

What we recommended

We made 2 recommendations to DEECA and one to EPA about evaluating Victoria Uearthed and sharing information to improve its user experience.

More information

To find out more, or to read our full report, go to audit.vic.gov.au