

# AELERT 2026 CONFERENCE

## *Future ready regulation: embracing innovation, leading change, and strengthening regulatory systems*

6-8 October 2026 | Sofitel Melbourne on Collins | Naarm Melbourne, Australia | In-person & virtual

### OVERVIEW & PURPOSE

#### **Future-ready regulation is practical, collaborative and outcome focused**

Regulators across Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific are navigating the most consequential period of change in a generation. The EPBC Act is being reformed, a national EPA is being established, and artificial intelligence is reshaping how compliance is monitored and enforced. Industries are transitioning at pace, and communities are demanding greater transparency, accountability and involvement from the agencies entrusted to protect the public interest.

The **AELERT 2026 Conference: Future Ready Regulation** is designed for regulators responsible for meeting those demands. Over three focused days in Melbourne, regulatory leaders, practitioners, researchers and specialists will come together to transform challenges into solutions — sharing proven strategies, building capability, and strengthening the systems that underpin effective regulation.

Future ready regulation will explore these five key themes:

1. **Digital innovation and emerging technologies** — the transformative role of AI, data, cyber security, and digital tools in modern regulatory practice
2. **Leading change across industries** — strategies for navigating transitions in sunset sectors, supporting emerging industries, and staying ahead of rapid economic and technological shifts
3. **Public trust, ethics, and accountability** — strengthening transparency, ethical governance, and community confidence in regulatory systems
4. **Sustainability and long-term resilience** — integrating climate readiness, environmental stewardship, and ESG principles into regulatory frameworks
5. **Collaborative and cross-sector leadership** — models that foster multi-disciplinary teams, cross-jurisdictional innovation, and shared regulatory problem-solving

This conference will empower you to lead change within your organisation and to contribute meaningfully to the evolution of regulatory practice by providing:

- **Practical tools, real world examples, and actionable insights** to implement within your team, branch, and agency,
- **Exposure to best-practice frameworks and tested approaches** that improve regulatory performance, impact and leveraging results to build public trust; and,
- **Opportunities to build connections, share experiences and develop partnerships** with peer regulators across jurisdictions and solve complex challenges together.

Delegates will return to their agencies with practical approaches they can apply immediately, new connections across jurisdictions, and the confidence that comes from collaboration.

## WHO SHOULD ATTEND

The AELERT 2026 Conference: Future Ready Regulation is designed for regulators at every level, across all sectors, not just environmental regulation. Delegates represent state and territory government agencies, Commonwealth departments, EPA bodies, water authorities, biosecurity and primary industries, resources and energy regulators, planning and land agencies, public health and a range of other regulatory functions across Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific Islands. If your work touches any of these functions, this conference is built for you:

- Policy design, law making and regulatory reform
- Compliance, enforcement, investigations and intelligence
- Approvals, impact assessment and licensing
- Communications, community engagement and stakeholder management
- Workforce development, capability building and organisational maturity
- Governance, risk, ethics and regulatory assurance
- Data, technology, science and monitoring

Researchers and academics are a valued and active part of the AELERT community, and the program will bring practitioners and researchers together featuring a dedicated pathway for academic contributions in plenary and breakout sessions, workshops and poster presentations.

## THE CONFERENCE REGULATORS RECOMMEND

The AELERT community is built on trust, shared experience and a genuine commitment to regulatory excellence. Every conference, our delegates arrive as peers and leave as collaborators, ready to tackle new challenges in an evolving landscape.

This is what delegates had to say after the AELERT-INECE 2024 Global Summit:

<b>400</b> delegates in 2024	<b>97%</b> rated program Excellent or Good	<b>82%</b> found sessions relevant to their agency	<b>97%</b> would recommend to a colleague
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"The event left me feeling inspired, encouraged and more self-confident."  
— Lyndal Beer, Acting Principal Advisor Intelligence and Analysis, EPA South Australia

"I now look at some things differently and made many new connections. Am recommending the conference structure to others — it was very active and actions-focused, not just passive downloads of information."  
— Jason Nelson, Training and Development Coordinator, DWER Western Australia

"[The 2024 Summit made me feel] like I am not alone in the good fight — there are a lot of people in this space willing to help each other achieve good outcomes."  
— Samuel Hyson, A/Director Wildlife Operations, NT Government

## CONFERENCE PROGRAM: FROM PLENARY TO PRACTICE

### Day 1 – Embracing Innovation on the Frontier of Regulatory Practice

**Future Ready Regulation** Day 1 begins with the big-picture forces reshaping regulation: AI and digital tools, national reform agendas, the climate and nature positive transition. Delegates leave Day 1 with a shared, current picture of the landscape, the challenges ahead, and the context to capitalise on everything that follows.

### Day 2 – Fostering Regulatory Excellence

Moving from context to practice, Day 2 focuses on real-world application of best practice across compliance, enforcement, approvals, capability and industry-specific regulation featuring speakers, case studies, multiple breakout streams and focused practical workshops plus the Technology and Innovation Showcase.

### Day 3 – Collaboration and Co-Design for Better Outcomes

The final day addresses strengthening regulatory systems, leadership and people. First Peoples co-governance, regulatory stewardship, ethics and accountability, and cross-sector collaboration. The afternoon closes with the Regulatory Knowledge Exchange workshop to go deeper on the conference topics that resonate with you most.

#### Technology & Innovation Showcase: Sponsor Show & Tech – Plenary

Technology vendors and service providers working with regulatory bodies in Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific are invited to demonstrate real-world applications of AI and emerging technologies in licensing, compliance, investigations, testing and public engagement, with a clear emphasis on practical application to improve operational outcomes.

#### Regulatory Knowledge Exchange – Workshop

The final session is built to create space for delegates and speakers alike to go unpack topics presented in the conference, collaborate with peers, and build solutions in real-time. This is a collaborative problem-solving workshop, a knowledge exchange, and also an opportunity to network with a rich cross-section of regulatory professionals. This is a session with something for everyone, you won't want to miss it!

## CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

A call for abstract submissions will commence in late April and presenters accepted will receive a discounted registration rate.

- Accepted abstracts will be featured within either a plenary or breakout session, support a masterclass workshop, or a poster presentation.
- Poster presenters also feature in a dedicated lightning round plenary, plus display time across breaks, welcome reception event and the day 3 regulator knowledge exchange session.
- All delegates receive a certificate of attendance documenting structured professional development hours
- Presenters receive an additional addendum confirming their contribution — suitable for CPD logs and professional development records at your institution or professional association

**Dates:** 6–8 October 2026

**Venue:** Sofitel Melbourne on Collins, Melbourne

**Format:** In-person and virtual

**Virtual opens:** August 2026

**Partnership:** Delivered in partnership with EIANZ

**Registration and enquiries:** [aelert@sa.gov.au](mailto:aelert@sa.gov.au)

## AELERT 2026 CONFERENCE: PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Preliminary Program | 6–8 October 2026 | Sofitel Melbourne on Collins | In-person and online

<b>Day 1: Embracing Innovation on the Frontier of Regulatory Practice</b>	
Day 1: Big-picture shifts in digital innovation, AI, data, climate and national regulation reform	
<b>Plenary</b>	Conference opening Welcome to Country   Opening Frame
<b>Plenary</b>	State Of Environmental Regulation In 2026
<b>Plenary</b>	National Reforms — Climate and Nature Positive Regulation
<b>Plenary</b>	Digital Innovation and Emerging Technologies
<b>Plenary</b>	Poster Presentation Lightning Round Rapid-fire practitioner and research showcase
<b>Concurrent breakout sessions — Concepts in Focus</b>	
<b>A)</b> AI-enabled and automated regulation	<b>B)</b> Digital evidence and chain of custody
<b>C)</b> Advanced monitoring technologies	<b>D)</b> EPBC reform in practice
<b>Social event   Welcome reception</b>   Sofitel Melbourne on Collins	
<b>Day 2: Fostering Regulatory Excellence</b>	
Application across compliance, enforcement, approvals and environmental regulation	
<b>Plenary</b>	Regulatory Excellence in Practice
<b>Plenary</b>	Beyond Compliance — Harm Reduction in Environmental Protection
<b>Plenary</b>	Building Public Trust, Legitimacy and Social Licence
<b>Showcase</b>	Technology and Innovation Showcase — Sponsor Show & Tech Sponsor-led demonstrations of digital tools   No-pitch format
<b>Concurrent breakout sessions — Regulation in Practice</b>	
<b>A)</b> Compliance and enforcement excellence	<b>B)</b> Approvals and impact assessment reform
<b>C)</b> Workforce and capability building	<b>D)</b> Leading change in transitioning industries
<b>Concurrent workshop sessions - Mini Masterclasses</b>	
<b>Workshop 1:</b> Risk-based regulatory design	<b>Workshop 2:</b> Behavioural insights for compliance
<b>Workshop 3:</b> Emergency readiness and environmental resilience	<b>Workshop 4:</b> Communications, risk communication and outrage mitigation
<b>Social event   Conference gala dinner</b>   Plaza Ballroom Melbourne	
<b>Day 3: Collaboration and Co-Design for Better Outcomes</b>	
Cross-sector leadership, First Peoples partnerships, ethical governance and public trust	
<b>Plenary</b>	First Peoples Leadership and Co-Governance
<b>Plenary</b>	Regulatory Stewardship and System Leadership
<b>Plenary</b>	Cross-Agency and Cross-Sector Collaboration
<b>Closing</b>	Closing plenary — the Future-Ready Regulator Synthesis, commitments and close
<b>Workshop</b>	Regulatory Knowledge Exchange — open space technology session Self-nominated topics   speakers available   all rooms
<b>Day 4: Optional site visits and tours</b>	
Friday 9 October   Melbourne and surrounds   Registration details to follow	
<b>Optional</b>	Site visits and tours — Melbourne and surrounds Curated visits to regulatory facilities, environmental sites and industry operations

Program is preliminary and subject to change. Speaker confirmations, full session descriptions and timings will follow.