

Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD) Governance Commitment Statement

Purpose

This statement outlines the Directorate's commitment to effective governance practices that support transparency and accountability. Good governance and culture enable us to effectively set our strategic direction, manage our operations and achieve our expected outcomes.

Background

As outlined in the ACT Government's *Governance in the ACTPS*, the ACT Government provides governance and accountability structures, including legislation, policies, frameworks, toolkits and guides. These enable us to understand our responsibilities and accountabilities to government and the community.

EPSDD is responsible for promoting sustainable living and resource use, providing an integrated planning and land use system that contributes to sustainable development and strengthening the Territory's response to climate change.

We aim to lead the Territory through promoting liveability when planning for urban growth and ensuring prosperity, productivity and sustainability. We improve liveability through:

- effective management of ACT's parks and reserves
- sound environmental management and land conservation
- development of policy and programs to manage sustainability and climate change
- delivery of the ACT Government's commitment to eradicating loose-fill asbestos insulation
- considered land strategy, policy, planning and urban design
- conserving and promoting ACT's heritage, and
- supporting programs to improve ACT's water and energy services.

Principles

In all of our endeavours we commit to having systems and processes in place to ensure we are:

- accountable for, and transparent in, our decision making
- engaging with, and gaining the trust of, our community
- spending public funds responsibly and for the benefit of our community, and
- enabling our people through clear lines of responsibility.

We will achieve this through:

- leadership which sets direction and culture
- managing and accepting risks to achieve business objectives
- establishing actions and processes to address issues as they arise
- assuring compliance and quality, and
- board and committee structures which oversight, guide and monitor.

Risk Management

Underpinning our commitment to good governance is managing risk to meet our fiscal, social and environmental responsibilities. Risk is inherent in all our functions and elimination of all risk is not practical or appropriate. Implementing a strategic and systematic approach to risk management aligned with our organisational objectives enables sound judgment and decision-making, cost effective use of resources and maximises potential opportunities while minimising adverse consequences.

Sound risk management principles provide a basis for:

- consistent, confident and accountable planning and decision-making
- certainty of business operations demonstrated through achieving expected outcomes
- excellence in management; encourages innovation through responsible risk-taking
- effective allocation and use of resources
- sound incident management and reduction in the cost of risk
- sound stakeholder confidence and trust
- clear understanding of everyone’s roles, responsibilities and authorities for managing risk
- compliance with relevant legislation
- the development of a more risk-aware culture through enhanced communication, skills development, and reporting of risk, and
- an appropriate balance between the cost of managing risk and the anticipated benefits.

Risk Appetite

As an organisation, when we identify risk we consider how much we are willing to accept in order to achieve our objectives. Risk appetite is about understanding the drivers and potential outcomes of risk and accepting risk within agreed limits. When engaging with the community we understand that we have to accept certain risks to meet their needs.

When making decisions on behalf of EPSDD, we are risk aware; taking on risk where it supports us to achieve our strategic objectives without unreasonable exposure for our people, management of our financial responsibilities or the delivery of our business operations.

EPSDD is its people and we take a zero tolerance approach to work health and safety risk. This means that we make sure we systematically identify, control and treat these risks and give our people the appropriate equipment and training they need to do their jobs safely.

As an organisation committed to integrity, we have zero appetite and tolerance for internal fraud and corruption. This means that we do everything in our power to safeguard the public interest through having reliable fraud control policies and processes in place to prevent fraud happening or to pick it up quickly and deal with it effectively if it occurs.

EPSDD is committed to ensuring that our risks are treated, monitored and escalated in accordance with agreed process and managed to an appropriate and agreed level.

This statement aligns with the ACT Government’s *Governance in the ACT Public Service* and confirms the Directorate’s commitment to effective governance with a focus on understanding our legislative, regulatory and policy obligations to meet government and community expectations.

Ben Ponton

Director-General, Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate

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