

ACT Natural Resource Management Advisory Committee

Terms of Reference

1. Overview

The ACT NRM, within Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate (the Directorate) of the ACT Government is recognised by the Australian Government as being a Natural Resource Management (NRM) regional body for the delivery of its NRM programs. ACT NRM is responsible for regional delivery of NRM investments in the ACT.

To support and contribute to the ACT NRM fulfilling its regional body role, the Directorate is required to establish an independent representative body to advise it. The independent representative body will consist and be engaged through a community consultation process and will advise the directorate on issues relating to natural resource management that are of community concern.

2. Role

2.1. Purpose

The role of the ACT Natural Resource Management Advisory Committee (NRMAC) is to provide advice to the Directorate, particularly on Australian Government funding for ACTNRM investments for the purpose of transparency of decision making and enhanced investment outcomes. This advice is based on the views of the groups that members represent.

The committee will contribute, test, and enrich ideas, and act as a sounding-board in providing advice and feedback on:

- where possible, aligning community expectations with national, regional, territory and local NRM priorities and investment, in the context of the ACT NRM planning framework and the NRM Plan;
- discussion regarding proposals under development for further investment submission to the Australian Government by the Directorate;
- engaging with the wider NRM, Rural and Landcare community on NRM investments;
- providing advice in terms of areas of community concern with natural resource management issues;
- achieving continuous improvement in regional delivery; and
- any other matters specified in writing by the Director-General.

The Chair of the NRMAC will represent the ACT on the board of NRM Regions Australia and participate in national forums for chairs of regional NRM bodies where participation advances the interest of the ACT region and pending resource availability.

2.2. *Relationship with the Directorate*

The NRMAC will provide advice independent from the Directorate's management. It does not have executive powers, management functions or the capacity to implement actions, or delegated financial responsibilities.

The Directorate is accountable for obligations under funding agreements between the ACT Government and the Australian Government. As such, the Directorate is responsible for submitting applications to the Australian Government, contracting project delivery, financial management, and monitoring and reporting.

3. *Membership*

3.1. *Composition*

The NRMAC shall consist of Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson and members who are external to the ACT Government with the ability to provide perspective of community stakeholder groups relevant to natural resource management delivery in the territory. The composition of the NRMAC should include:

- an independent chairperson,
- a representative from the Rural Landholders Association,
- a representative from Landcare ACT,
- an urban environmental volunteer,
- a Parkcare volunteer,
- an ACT community council representative,
- a biodiversity science representative
- representatives from the Dhawura Ngunnawal Committee,
- a representative from the ACT Conservation Council.

In making appointments, consideration will be given to gender balance and cultural diversity in accordance with the ACT Government Boards and Committees Handbook and advise the Minister of these appointments.

3.2. *Current membership*

Membership and the details of who the member is representing. will be noted and include appointment periods and reviewed every 3 years by the directorate to ensure consistency. A list of members will be included on the Directorates website.

3.3. *Observers*

Where appropriate and with agreement of both the Chairperson and the Directorate observers may be invited to one or more meetings.

3.4. *Appointments*

The Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson and other members of the committee will be appointed by the Director-General of the Directorate.

Members will be appointed for a period of up to three years. Members will receive remuneration in alignment with the Remuneration Tribunal.

Membership will be reviewed by the Minister and the Director-General on a regular basis, but as a minimum every three years.

If a member no longer represents the organisations that they were appointed to represent they will be required to resign, and a new representative appointed for the remainder of the term.

3.5. *Conflict of Interest*

The members are appointed from representative groups. It is acknowledged that many of those groups have received, and will continue to receive, funding from the ACT Government and specifically ACT NRM. This is acknowledged and is associated with the very reason that they are on this committee. This is not considered an immediate conflict of interest requiring declaration.

At the commencement of each meeting members will declare any other potential or actual conflicts of interest that may apply in respect to any agenda items. Where required by the Chairperson, the member(s) will be excused from the meeting or from the NRMAC's consideration of the relevant agenda item(s). Details of any conflicts of interests will be appropriately minuted.

Further instruction and advice on the management and recognition of conflict of interests is contained in Part D of *Governance Principles: Appointments, Boards and Committees in the ACT*.

3.6. *Code of Conduct*

All members are required to abide by the ACT Governments Boards and Committee Code of Conduct which outlines the standards of behaviours and ethical conduct expected of all people servicing on ACT boards and committees.

3.7. *Code of Ethics*

The ACT Government Code of Conduct is outlined in Section 9 of the *Public Sector Management Act 1994* (PSM Act) and details the requirements of a public employee in the ACT in performing their duties. Members of the NRMAC are responsible for being aware of their obligations consistent with the PSM Act. A copy of the Code of Ethics will be provided to all NRMAC members on commencement and prior to signing a code of conduct declaration.

3.8. *Induction*

New members will receive relevant information and briefings on their appointment particularly in reference to Section 3.6 and 3.7 and to assist them to meet their NRMAC responsibilities.

3.9. *Terminations*

The Director-General may remove any appointed member from office where the member:

- is absent for 3 consecutive meetings without reasonable cause;
- fails to adequately disclose a conflict of interest;
- fails to appropriately conduct themselves in light of an actual or perceived conflict of interest; or
- breaches the Code of Ethics or the Code of Conduct.

Notification of termination must be in writing from the Director General to all NRMAC members.

3.10. *Resignations*

Resignation by members must be received in writing by the Chairperson (or Deputy Chairperson in the case of the Chairperson resigning) and the Director-General and referred to the Director General in relation to filling the role.

3.11. *Dissolution*

The Director-General may dissolve the NRMAC by notice in writing to all Committee members.

4. *Administration*

4.1. *Frequency of meetings*

It is proposed that meetings will take place quarterly. The need for fewer or

additional meetings will be determined and agreed by the Chairperson and the Directorate.

4.2. *Quorum*

A quorum will comprise at least four members (where total number of members is six or seven). Should the Chairperson be absent for a meeting, the Deputy Chairperson in the first instance, will undertake the Chairperson's role for that meeting.

4.3. *Remuneration*

The level of remuneration received by the Chairperson and members of the NRMAC will be determined by the Director-General and guided by the standards set by the Remuneration Tribunal.

4.4. *Resources*

The Directorate will provide or source appropriate resources for the NRMAC to undertake its role as deemed appropriate by the Directorate.

4.5. *Agenda and supporting papers*

A formal agenda will be prepared for each meeting and endorsed by the Chairperson. The agenda and agenda papers are to be circulated no later than one week prior to each meeting, unless agreed by the Chairperson.

4.6. *Minutes*

Proceedings of NRMAC meetings will be minuted and include a record of decisions and actions.

4.7. *Secretariat*

The Directorate will ensure appropriate secretariat/administrative services are provided to the NRMAC.

4.8. *Advisors*

When issues arise requiring further clarification or explanation, Directorate officers or other parties with subject matter expertise may be invited by the Directorate to attend NRMAC meetings to assist the NRMAC in developing and providing advice.

4.9. *ACT Government*

A senior officer from the Directorate will represent the Directorate at meetings of the NRMAC. However, the senior officer does not have a determination role in relation to advice provided by the NRMAC.

4.10. *Presenters*

Presenters to the NRMAC may be invited by the Chairperson or on recommendation from the Directorate to speak to the NRMAC. Presenters may be asked by the Chairperson to absent themselves from any discussions of the NRMAC.

5. *Reporting*

5.1. *Review of Charter*

The NRMAC will review the terms of reference annually to ensure it remains current and reflects the NRMAC's role. Recommended changes will be considered by the Director-General and will be adopted at the Director-General's discretion.

5.2. *Reporting to the Director-General*

The NRMAC, through the Chairperson, will provide an annual report to the Director-General on:

- How the NRMAC has fulfilled its role as stated at section 2 of this Charter;
- Any issues associated with NRMAC's relationship with the Directorate.

The Chair may meet with EPSDD Executive up to twice per year to provide advice and updates on behalf of the NRMAC.

5.3. *Reporting to related portfolio agencies*

The Chair may request ACT NRM pass NRMAC advice to related portfolio agencies, including but not limited to Transport Canberra and City Services, where advice relates NRM aspects of agency's responsibility.