

# Drillers' Qualification Advisory Committee - Terms of Reference

<b>Document title</b>	Drillers' Qualification Advisory Committee - Terms of Reference
<b>Contact details</b>	Department of Environment and Natural Resources
<b>Approved by</b>	Minister for Environment and Natural Resources
<b>Date approved</b>	10 January 2020
<b>Document review</b>	5 years, unless required sooner
<b>TRM number</b>	LRM2017/0059-0044

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Approved by</b>	<b>Description</b>
2.0	10 January 2020	Minister for Environment and Natural Resources	New

<b>Acronyms</b>	<b>Full form</b>
Act	Water Act 1992
Controller	Controller of Water Resources under the Water Act 1992
DENR or Department	Department of Environment and Natural Resources
DQAC	Drillers' Qualification Advisory Committee
Minister	Minister for Environment and Natural Resources
Regulations	Water Regulations 1992
ToR	Terms of Reference

## 1. Purpose

The Drillers' Qualification Advisory Committee (**DQAC**) has been appointed by the Minister to provide advice and recommendations to the Controller of Water Resources and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (**the Department**) in relation to the granting, renewal or variation of drilling licences, in relation to the operation of Part 6, Division 2 (Drilling Licences) of the Act and on matters referred to it by the Controller.

## 2. Statutory effect

The DQAC is established under section 54 of the Water Act 1992 (**the Act**). Functions of the DQAC are prescribed under regulation 12 of the Water Regulations 1992 (**the Regulations**). Membership of the DQAC is governed by regulation 13.

## 3. Composition of the Committee

The DQAC consists of 8 members, comprising a mix of skills and interests. One member will be appointed as the Chairperson.

A person is qualified to be appointed as a member of the DQAC if the Minister is satisfied the person has skills, knowledge and experience in one or more of the following areas:

- (a) hydrogeology;
- (b) groundwater engineering;
- (c) planning and conduct of drilling operations.

At least two of the members must be representatives of users of drilling services and be persons who, in the Minister's opinion, are not involved in the drilling industry or employed in the public sector.

Before appointing a person to be a member, the Minister will have regard to the range and level of skills, knowledge and experience required among the members of the DQAC to enable it to perform its functions.

## 4. Chairing Functions

The Chairperson will be responsible for convening meetings of the DQAC as directed by the Controller.

The Chairperson will ensure accurate reporting of the advice and recommendations of the DQAC is provided to the Department.

## 5. Terms of Appointment

Four members will be appointed for an initial term of two years, with the remaining members appointed for one year term to allow for the staggering of retiring members. Of the four members appointed for a term of two years, at least one must be a representative of users of drilling services who is not employed in the public sector nor involved in the drilling industry; and at least two must have experience in hydrogeology, groundwater engineering or planning and conduct of drilling operations.

Members are eligible to be re-appointed by the Minister for further terms.

## 6. Role of Government Agencies

The Department will provide Secretariat support to the DQAC and will assist the Chairperson to organise meetings, prepare agendas and record minutes.

Northern Territory Government staff from various agencies will provide relevant technical advice and information to assist DQAC to develop its advice and recommendations.

## 7. Operating arrangements

A quorum for the DQAC shall comprise the Chairperson and three other members.

Members shall declare conflicts of interest and inform the Chairperson immediately if a matter comes before the DQAC in which they may have a personal, financial or other like interest. The member will be excused from the meeting for the matter and is not eligible to vote on the matter. The secretariat will maintain an ongoing register of declared conflicts of interest.

Meetings will be convened as directed by the Controller. Meetings will be open to the public except in the case of matters that are confidential, privileged or commercially-sensitive, in which case the meeting will be closed for consideration of those matters. Members of the public observing meetings are not permitted to participate in proceedings. If matters of confidentiality are raised during the course of discussions, public observers will be asked to leave the room.

Confidentiality will be maintained by all participants at all times.

There is no obligation on DQAC to reach consensus in its recommendations. Questions arising must be determined by a majority vote of the members present and voting.

Records must be kept of the meetings. Minutes will be published online with any confidential material redacted.

## 8. Functions

The functions of the DQAC are to:

1. Provide advice and recommendations to the Controller:
  - regarding the granting, renewal and variation of all levels of drilling licences.
  - regarding the operation of Part 6, Division 2 (Drilling Licences) of the Act.
  - on any other matters referred to it by the Controller.
2. Provide a forum for consultation and communication on bore construction and construction materials and hydrogeological findings and issues across the Northern Territory.
3. Advise on, and assist with, the dissemination of information on the drilling and, where appropriate, construction of bores, to the drilling sector and users of driller services.
4. Provide feedback on proposals to update and review the drilling provisions in the *Water Act 1992* and *Water Regulations 1992*.
5. Advise on the content and presentation of drilling information, Fact Sheets and any other documentation relating to drilling and drilling requirements.

## 9. Remuneration

Sitting fees as per the relevant NT Government Remuneration for Statutory Bodies schedule will be payable to non-government appointees.