

Howard Water Advisory Committee

Terms of Reference

1. The Purpose of the Committee

The Howard Water Advisory Committee has been formed by the Minister for Environment and Natural Resources to provide advice and recommendations to the Controller for Water Resources on the development of a water allocation plan for the Howard Groundwater System.

2. Statutory Effect

Section 23 of the *Water Act* authorises the Minister to establish, and appoint the members of, a Water Advisory Committee.

3. Terms of Reference

The Committee will:

- Actively and honestly participate in the development of the water allocation plan for the Howard Groundwater System;
- Identify, discuss and make recommendations to the Controller of Water Resources on matters regarding the assessment, management and use of water from the Howard Groundwater System.
- Share information about the water allocation planning process with the community and seek their values and interests ensuring these are communicated back to the Controller of Water Resources.
- Participate in the development of water management strategies for the Howard groundwater system that are consistent with the requirements of the Water Act.
- Consider any other matters referred to it by the Minister or Controller of Water Resources.

4. Composition of the Committee

Members of the committee and chairperson will be appointed by the Minister from nominations received during the Expressions of Interest process. In addition to the chairperson, the committee will have a minimum of eight members appointed by the Minister.

Members will be selected with reference to their interest in the development of a Howard Water Allocation Plan and commitment to the sustainable growth of the Territory economy, as well as recognised experience and knowledge in appropriate areas pertaining to water use and planning, regional development, indigenous affairs, agriculture, mining, tourism, environmental protection, irrigated agriculture, horticulture, water engineering and water management.

Members must possess the ability to work with a diverse group of people with a range of values, interests, backgrounds and expertise. The members selected by the Minister will ensure that a diversity of representation is achieved

The Minister may also appoint an ex-officio member to the committee from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, to ensure high level expertise is available when required.

5. Terms of Appointment

The membership of the Committee will be for the period required to develop and achieve Ministerial approval of the Howard Water Allocation Plan. This is envisaged to be 12 months from establishment of the Committee.

Members who do not attend three consecutive meetings may have their membership reviewed.

6. Operating arrangements

- Members shall declare conflicts of interest and inform the chairperson immediately if a matter comes before the committee that may have a personal financial or other substantial personal interest.
- Meetings will be held as often as necessary to conduct the business of the committee. It is envisaged meetings will be held every 4-6 weeks, most likely in the evening on a business day.
- Members may nominate to the chairperson an alternate to attend meetings in their place if they are unable to attend a part or the whole meeting. The alternate has the same participating and voting rights as the member for the duration of the meeting.
- Confidentiality will be maintained by all participants at all times.
- A quorum in respect of the committee shall comprise half the membership including alternates.
- In the event that the chairperson is not able to attend a meeting they shall nominate an alternate chairperson, or if this is not possible, the committee shall elect a chairperson from those present.
- There is no obligation on the committee to reach consensus in its recommendations. The role of the committee is the identification of issues, critically evaluate information and to offer suggestions for innovative water management strategies that support the declared beneficial uses.
- The chairperson is the primary media spokesperson for the committee.
- Sitting fees as per the remuneration for statutory bodies schedule payable to non-government appointees will apply.
- The Water Resources Division of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources will provide an Executive Officer to provide secretariat support.