

Environmental Protection Authority Stakeholder Reference Group

Terms of Reference

March 2012, updated May 2018

The Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) has overarching responsibility for the provision of advice to Government on environmental matters. The EPA values stakeholder contribution in meeting this responsibility.

There is significant benefit in regular discussion and debate with an informed and diverse group of stakeholders. The stakeholder reference group also helps build constructive working relationships between the EPA and its stakeholders.

The EPA recognises that the stakeholder reference group is only effective if there is a high level of trust between all parties, a commitment on the EPA's part to involve the group early in new initiatives, and a commitment from stakeholders to raise topics to be discussed and contribute constructively.

Scope

The stakeholder reference group's work is primarily forward looking, providing high level strategic advice on the policies, strategies and processes that frame the EPA's work. The stakeholder reference group's considerations may extend to legislation, regulation and policy review and reform.

Roles and responsibilities

The stakeholder reference group has an informal liaison role rather than a formal advisory or decision-making role.

Responsibilities of members:

- Discuss and debate matters referred by the EPA
- Nominate other matters for discussion
- Suggest alternative approaches
- Contribute constructively
- Consult, inform and educate others
- Respect any confidentiality requirements
- Advise when a "company/agency" position is being expressed

Responsibilities of the EPA:

- Appoint the members
- Refer matters to the group for discussion
- Involve the reference group early in policy and strategy development
- Listen and provide feedback on suggestions and comments
- Provide executive, administrative and technical support
- Respect any confidentiality requirements

The stakeholder reference group will meet on an as needs basis, and no less than quarterly.

The meetings will be chaired by the EPA Chairman, or in his/her absence, a nominated delegate.

Process

The role of the stakeholder reference group is to debate concepts and new initiatives and then provide advice to the EPA, and consequently it is not envisaged that the group will need to vote on issues.

Where a general consensus is apparent this will be recorded in the meeting notes.

Confidentiality

It is important that members feel free to contribute honestly and that there is a level of trust between the members.

All electronic and written documents are for stakeholder reference group members with the expectation that members will distribute these documents responsibly and only for obtaining feedback from the groups they represent. No documents are to be made available to the media.

The contributions of members are not to be used against them, or any organisation they belong to, outside the meetings. The views or information presented during the meetings are not to be provided to the media.

Membership (as at 22 May 2018)

The core membership of the stakeholder reference group is:

Conservation

Conservation Council of WA
World Wildlife Fund
The Wilderness Society
Environmental Defenders Office
Environmental Institute of Australia & New Zealand
Environmental Consultants Association
Natural Resources Management WA

Planning

Urban Development Institute of Australia
WA Local Government Association

Resources Industry

Association of Mining and Exploration Companies
Australian Petroleum Production and Exploration Association
Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Chamber of Minerals and Energy

Agriculture

Pastoralists & Graziers Association of WA
WA Farmers Federation

The membership may also include individuals invited at the request of the Chairman of the EPA who have relevant experience in environmental protection and related matters.

Sub-groups may also be formed over time to deal with specific issues as they arise.

Should a member not be able to attend a meeting, that member may send a proxy to represent them. If a member wishes to invite an observer to any meeting, they must first ask the permission of the Chairman.