



RULES FOR THE OPERATION OF THE PYRAMID-BOORT CUSTOMER REFERENCE GROUP

1. ESTABLISHMENT

The Reference Group shall commence operations when individuals applying for membership are appointed to the Reference group by the Board and G-MW calls the first meeting of the Reference Group by nominating a date, time and place for the first meeting.

2. STRUCTURE

The Reference Group shall consist of a maximum of nine members appointed by the Board. Within that number, the Board shall appoint a chair and a deputy chair of the Reference Group either as a result of the application process or otherwise. Members may be removed from the Reference Group by written notice from the Board and the Board may disband the Reference Group following notice in writing to all current members.

3 FUNCTIONS

3.1 The functions of the Reference Group are to advise and assist the G-MW Board

- a) in Goulburn-Murray Water's decisions regarding service level and price trade-offs and local operational matters
- b) in the monitoring and implementation by Goulburn-Murray Water of its costs and services, and its identification of potential system, service and delivery improvements and efficiencies
- c) in the development by Goulburn-Murray Water of its asset management plans, maintenance and capital programs
- d) in the development and implementation by Goulburn-Murray Water of water resource management plans (which would include the management and use of surface water and groundwater)
- e) in the preparation by Goulburn-Murray Water of an annual area plan; annual budget estimates; asset management plans and responses to Government on various policy issues, and
- f) in the development by Goulburn-Murray Water of its policies, procedures, tariff structures and billing arrangements.

While the advice and assistance of Reference Group will be highly valued, ultimately, the authority for decision making lies with the Board of Goulburn-Murray Water.

- 3.2 The Reference Group shall also assist Goulburn-Murray Water in its dealings with its customers by -
- a) relaying Goulburn-Murray Water decisions and information provided for general release
 - b) supporting Goulburn-Murray Water in resolution of customer disputes
 - c) providing input to the development of communication strategies that meet Goulburn-Murray Water customers needs, and
 - d) maintaining the confidentiality of Goulburn-Murray Water confidential information.

4 ALLOWANCES

- 4.1 G-MW will pay each member –

- a) a session fee, according to rates set in accordance with section 122C(5) of the Water Act 1989; and
- b) a travelling allowance, for attending a meeting of the Reference Group; and
- c) meeting preparation allowance for studying papers and preparing reports required by the Reference Group ; and
- d) reimbursement of out of pocket expenses for performing their duties with prior approval of the Operational Manager

- 4.2 Session fees, meeting preparation allowances and travelling expenses will be paid to Reference Group members when attending meetings and undertaking official member duties.

- 4.3 Payment of session fees, meeting preparation allowances and travelling expenses shall be paid in accordance with the remuneration of part time non-executive Directors of State Government Boards and members of Statutory Bodies and Advisory Committees and other approvals by DSE.

- 4.4 A half day session fee will be paid for under 4 hours time commitment including travel.

A full day session fee will be paid for over 4 hours time commitment including travel.

- 4.5 No session fee or travelling expenses are payable where the Reference Group member is already in receipt of remuneration for that period from another organisation and is on the Reference Group as a result of being a member of that other organisation.

5 RESIGNATION

A member may resign his or her position on the Reference Group by notice in writing to the Corporate Secretary of Goulburn-Murray Water.

6 REFERENCE GROUP CHAIR

The Reference Group Chair will be appointed by the Board and is responsible for:

- a) acting as principle spokesperson for the Reference Group
- b) developing meeting agendas in conjunction the Operational Manager
- c) ensuring the business conducted by the Reference Group is within its functions described in paragraph 3
- d) chairing meetings of the Reference Group
- e) all correspondence on behalf of the Reference Group

7 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

- 7.1 Members are required to complete a declaration of interests in the format contained in Attachment 5, and declare any actual or potential conflict of interest and any involvement in other related community, government and business interests. This information will be placed in a register maintained by the Corporate Secretary of G-MW.
- 7.2 The declarations will remain confidential to the Managing Director, the Corporate Secretary, and the Operations Manager.
- 7.3 Conflicts of interest shall be dealt with in accordance with the procedures contained in Attachment 3.

8 MEETING PROCEDURES

- 8.1 A quorum comprises the majority of members (the Chair is counted as a member).
- 8.2 The Reference Group is encouraged to reach consensus decisions wherever possible with a formal vote used where necessary on the basis of a simple majority. All members have one vote and the Chair also has a casting vote in the event of a tie.
- 8.3 A member who is unable to attend a meeting may not appoint an alternate or a proxy to attend and / or vote in the member's place.
- 8.4 The agenda for Reference Group meetings is set by the Operational Manager in consultation with the Chair of the Reference Group.
- 8.5 Additional agenda Items can be added to the agenda for discussion only at the commencement of a meeting (before any items of business are dealt with) and only with unanimous agreement by all at the meeting and shall be available to G-MW senior management and the Board.
- 8.6 An appropriate record of proceedings of every meeting shall be kept. Minutes of meetings must be treated as confidential by members and will be retained by G-MW on the corporate electronic records management system. Draft minutes are to be provided to members a minimum of a week prior to the next meeting.

- 8.7 Meetings are not open to the public.
- 8.8 The frequency, location and timing of meetings are determined by the Operations Manager in consultation with the Chair. The minimum notice for meetings to be provided to all members is five days.
- 8.9 Administrative support is provided by Goulburn-Murray Water staff and directed by the Operations Manager.

9 LIAISON WITH COMMUNITY GROUPS

To facilitate the performance of the Reference Group's functions described in paragraph 3 the Reference Group may, from time to time, nominate certain of its members to liaise with any community group (eg. tourism, recreation, environment, local Government, Catchment Management Authorities or farmer groups) and to report back to the Reference Group, as the need arises.

10 ROLE OF OPERATIONAL MANAGER

The Reference Group represents customers and stakeholder interests. As an officer of Goulburn-Murray Water, the Operational Manager will provide the formal link and primary contact between the Reference Group and Goulburn-Murray Water. Operational Managers are not Reference Group members.

11 ROLE OF G-MW STAFF

- 11.1 Senior G-MW management staff including the Managing Director may attend Reference Group meetings;
- 11.2 The role of G-MW senior management is to provide information, discussion input and to report back to G-MW. The senior manager should also advise the Reference Group Chair if discussions or actions move beyond the functions of the Group and should also raise with the Chair any potential conflicts of interest if they arise in discussions at the meeting.

21 December, 2009