

LOWER MURRAY WATER
CUSTOMER CONSULTATIVE
COMMITTEES

Terms of Reference for Urban Committees

December 2010

PREAMBLE

The Corporation is committed to providing excellent customer service and intends to proactively seek advice from the community on its activities.

Urban committees will be called Customer Consultative Committees.

The objective of establishing these Terms of Reference is to provide a sound framework for Committees to operate and give advice to the Corporation on its service to urban customers.

1 ESTABLISHMENT

Committees are to be established by the Corporation in the Northern and Southern area of the region serviced by Lower Murray Water. **The Committees are established by the Board of the Corporation pursuant to Clause 122(c) of the Water Act 1989.**

2 PURPOSE

The purpose of these Committees is to provide advice to the Board of the Corporation on a range of water and wastewater related matters. They are not established as lobby forums. The Corporation may seek advice from the Committees on Corporate Planning; embracing maintenance priorities, capital expenditure requirements, service levels, tariff changes and billing regimes and any other matters of mutual interest referred to the Committees by the Board.

In addition, the Board will meet with the representatives of the Committees at least annually.

Responsibility for making policy decisions remains with the Board. These committees have an advisory role, not a decision making role.

3 ELIGIBILITY

3.1 For Appointment

Candidates must be a customer supplied by one of the water districts for the Region for which they are applying.

A Candidate:

- (a) Must not:
 - (i) Be an undischarged bankrupt; or
 - (ii) Have been prosecuted for an offence under the *Water Act 1989*,
 - (iii) Been convicted of any indictable offence within the last 5 years; or
 - (iv) Have a debt with the Corporation beyond 90 days, without having entered into an arrangement with the Corporation that would apply to a similar class of debtor, and
- (b) Must, upon appointment, sign an acknowledgement to comply with the Protocols for Customer Consultative Committees. Candidates will be supplied with such documents as a pre-condition for nomination.

3.2 To remain as a Committee Member

A Committee member must, while that person is a Committee member:

- (a) Continue to comply with item 3.1(a);
- (b) Attend a minimum of one meeting in any calendar year, unless written approval for absence is given by the Corporation.
- (c) Comply with the Protocols and Terms of Reference.
- (d) In the event of the Committee passing a vote of no confidence in a member, the appointment of the member is terminated, and the member replaced in the same manner as if they had resigned.

4 APPOINTMENTS

4.1 Timing – Appointments will be made every three years normally in July.

4.2 Appointments will sought by advertising in the local media seeking expressions of interest.

4.3 Process of Appointment – The Board of the Corporation shall determine the appointees at its absolute discretion and generally based on achieving a cross section of customer types representing our diverse customer range.

4.4 Insufficient Candidates – Where there are insufficient candidates for the available vacancies further candidates will be sought.

4.5 Chair/Alternate Chair – Each year the Board of the Corporation shall appoint a Chair. In the absence of the Chair the Corporation will provide an alternative Chair.

5 TERM OF OFFICE

Committee members will have a term of three years (Clause 4.2).

6 COMMITTEE COMPOSITION

There shall be six members appointed to each Committee in each of the Northern and Southern areas serviced by the Corporation, plus.

1 Board Representative

1 Management Representative (A nominee of the Managing Director)

7 FILLING OF A CASUAL VACANCY

In the event of a vacancy occurring refer to Section 4.4 – Insufficient Candidates.

8 MEETINGS

9.1 Regular Meeting - The Committees shall meet with the Corporation at least twice in each 12-month period usually in the months of July/August and February/March.

9.2 Meetings will be held at various locations within each Region.

9.3 Meeting with the Board – The Committee are invited to separately meet with the Board annually.

9.4 Information forums with individual Committees will be convened upon request and with approval of the Managing Director.

9 QUORUM

A quorum of four (4) Committee members (a minimum of two (2) of which are to be community members) is required for any meeting, with one (1) member taking the Chair by agreement in the absence of the Chair.

10 VOTING

The Committee's aim is to achieve consensus on all decisions. In the event that there is a formal vote on an issue, all members including the Chairman have an equal vote. Any deadlock votes shall be recorded as such in the meeting minutes, and noted as an "Unresolved Issue".

11 ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

The Corporation will provide administrative support for all regular meetings. Senior officers will attend meetings and provide the necessary support information to enable informed discussion. Other information may be provided upon request and at the discretion of the

Managing Director.

12 MEETING PROCEDURES

Meetings shall be conducted in accordance with generally accepted meeting procedures.

13 MEETING NOTICE/AGENDA

A notice of meeting and an Agenda shall be prepared by the Corporation and provided along with relevant information papers 5 clear days prior to scheduled regular meetings.

14 SITTING/TRAVEL FEES

Payment of sitting fees and travel expenses shall be made:

- From attendance records, as noted in regular meeting minutes;
- In accordance with regulations set by Victorian Government (*Guidelines for the Appointment and Remuneration of Part-time Non-executive Directors of State Government Boards and Members of Statutory Bodies and Advisory Committees 1998*) or
- As determined from time to time by the Minister; and
- Shall be for regular meetings of the Committees and special meetings requested by the Corporation.

15 RELATIONSHIP WITH CORPORATION

- (a) Committees shall provide advice to the Corporation or its delegate.
- (b) Day to day communication with the Corporation shall be through the MD, or his nominated delegate.

16 CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS

Committees are not a customer complaints service or customer liaison service. Any complaints shall be forwarded to the Corporation without delay. Committee members shall not advocate for complainants.

17 INDUCTION AND TRAINING

The Corporation will provide each person appointed to membership of a Committee with a copy of:

- Terms of Reference for Customer Consultative Committees;
- The Protocols for Customer Consultative Committees;
- Details of relevant sessional fees;
- The most recent Annual Report; and
- The current Corporate Plan or Water Plan as appropriate.

The Corporation will also provide each Committee member with induction training, as soon as possible after the Committee member is appointed; to assist the Committee member to understand the business and procedures of the Committee.

Each Committee member is required to undertake further training from time to time as a committee member. The Corporation will pay for the cost of the training.