



NRAR Board meeting - Minutes

MEETING	NRAR Board meeting		
MEETING NO.	No.24	DATE	17 September 2019
LOCATION	Sydney	TIME	10:00 am – 3.00pm
BOARD INVITEES	Craig Knowles (Chair), Ilona Millar (member), Bruce Brown (member)		
NRAR INVITEES	Grant Barnes (Chief Regulatory Officer), Graeme White (Director Operations West), Alison Collaros (Manager Licencing & Approvals East), Russell Johnston (Executive Officer), Kirsty Ruddock (Director- Regulatory Investigations and Compliance) Greg Abood (Director Regional Water Regulation (East), Tim Gilbert (Director Regulatory Capability and Coordination)		
OTHER INVITEES	Listed next to relevant agenda item		

Agenda Item	Notes
Housekeeping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minutes of 13 August were adopted</li> <li>No declarations of a conflict of interest.</li> </ul>
The Board met in-camera	The Board met in-camera to discuss CRO Grant Barnes' 2018/19 Performance Review; Budget aspects and pre-discussion on Agenda Item 2.
Decision on adoption of updated recommendation to resolve Maules Creek investigation in response to new legal advice. Invitees: Kirsty Ruddock	Options for resolution discussed with Board. New developments since previous update have led to a change in direction and will require additional advice that will slightly delay finalisation of the matter. Board approved external legal advice request.
Approval of Communication strategy regarding mining investigation - include holding statement for Board review. Invitees: Kirsty Ruddock and Genine Somers	The Board concluded that the Communications strategy needs to be revised as a result of discussions and changes from Item 2. Noted: Communications strategy on hold for discussions at Monday's CRO/Chair weekly meeting.
Post-metering consultation Invitees: Aaron Walker and Anna Bailey	The Board accepted the update on metering roll-out timeframes as "for information", having been previously briefed on the matter. Recommendation made to incorporate an acknowledgement that part of the rationale for changing the timeframes is due to the drought.

<p>Seeking formal Board approval to request that Minister delegate L&amp;A function to NRAR Board  Invitees: Geoff Cameron/ Elise Trask</p>	<p>Recommendation accepted – noting previous board discussion on the matter and that this was simply formalising the in-principle approval already provided. Board approved that this matter proceed to the earliest possible Executive Council meeting once the final brief is prepared.</p>
<p>Licensing &amp; Approvals – continuous improvements made  Invitees: Graeme White / Greg Abood</p>	<p>Items 5,6 &amp; 7 were dealt with as one package by the Board. Ms Collaros provided key wins including streamlined process, faster turnaround and team morale improvements.  The Board requested a Standing Item to be added to Board Agenda to report on the Matrix management with expectations to see continuous improvement as essential to business model and to mitigate potential risk to NRAR.</p>
<p>Nous Review findings &amp; recommendation Invitee: Graeme White/ Greg Abood</p>	<p>Mr White gave an overview of Nous findings and recommendations following their assessment of the NRAR Licensing &amp; Approvals function with a focus on the findings re: future pricing model and potential IPART involvement in determination. The Board noted the work and its incorporation into the continuous improvements project for L&amp;A.</p>
<p>Meeting with MDBA  Invitee: Brent Williams</p>	<p>Mr Williams reflected on the positive working relationship that has developed between NRAR and the MDBA. He particularly cited the value of remote sensing work being undertaken in collaboration between the two organisations.  Mr Williams provided an update on the Water Resource Plan accreditation process currently on foot, and advised he was happy to organise further meetings to provide more detailed updates on this matter.  The Board confirmed that NRAR will be represented at 1 October MDBA Board meeting by CRO and Bruce Brown, Chair and Ilona Millar attending via VC.</p>
<p>Sean O'Toole - Report back on recommendations following industry engagement on IDAS/SSD/SSI  Invitee: Graeme White/ Sean O'Toole</p>	<p>The Board thanked Mr O'Toole for his paper. Four points of particular interest arose from the findings: definition of water course, stakeholder meeting frequencies - move to quarterly, delays in approvals and Matrix management.  The Board advised that Matrix management will now be a standing item to the Agenda.  Mr O'Toole raised the potential for NRAR to pick up on DPIE online systems as urgent. He advised that DPIE are keen to take over and encourages moving forward quickly.</p>
<p>Introductory meeting Jim Bentley</p>	<p>Mr Bentley provided an overview of his role and direction since joining the department expressing that in his experience to date both the Minister and the department value NRARs independence and seek to support it.  NRAR's forward budget was discussed as was Mr Bentley's intentions to provide all assistance in managing NRAR's relationship with DPIE.</p>

General Business Update	<p>CRO Grant Barnes provided a paper for the Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NRAR media releases x 4</li> <li>• Stakeholder engagement sessions - FPH consultations – Graeme White represented NRAR at all sessions to date, with exception of CRO attendance at Mildura.</li> <li>• Attendance at Budget Estimates hearings</li> <li>• Budget points by Bruce noted – we are tracking spend fortnightly</li> <li>• Non-financial report – next iteration will be indicative of performance against service standards.</li> <li>• PMES results – positive trend with room for improvement; actions are being taken by snr exec team to raise that figure.</li> <li>• WHS – reporting has improved</li> <li>• IPART – Tim Gilbert retasked to focus on this work.</li> <li>• Board secretariat: Sharon Ryan stepping into role for Oct, November and probably December meetings.</li> </ul>
Chief Regulatory Officer performance discussion	The Board confirmed acceptance of CRO PDP.

<b>New/Continuing action items following meeting</b>	<b>Person responsible</b>	<b>Due date</b>
Brief Bruce Brown on NRAR finances outside of Board meeting schedule	Chief Regulatory Officer / Board Secretariat	monthly
Reporting Matrix- Licensing & Approvals - continuous improvements	Director Regional Water Regulation (West – Murray Darling)	monthly
Formal budget package, including revenues, expenses and reporting against key objectives	Board Secretariat	Once available
Independent review of proposed case triage methodology	Chief Regulatory Officer	Once available
Advice on administrative functions presently conferred on NRAR by the Secretary (outside remit of Board) and possibility to be formally delegated to the Board by the Minister- taken off-line for completion post meeting	Chief Regulatory Officer	September
Report back on strategic options to address how NRAR can fully meet its monitoring & audit obligations.	Chief Regulatory Officer	October
Advice on the forward-contract nature of agricultural commodities to better understand the implications for compliance.	Chief Regulatory Officer	October

Next meeting  
Wednesday 9 October