CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

The Bureau's corporate governance framework is designed to provide a sound basis for decision making, to define mechanisms for accountability and stewardship and to promote both leadership and strategic direction for the Bureau.

Corporate governance measures within the Bureau include:

- the legislative foundation provided by the Meteorology Act 1955, the Public Service Act 1999, and the Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997;
- a robust executive and management structure;
- a mechanism for stakeholder input and review through the Bureau of Meteorology Advisory Board, and a number of theme-based consultative committees;
- sound procedures for risk management and fraud control;
- an internal audit plan that addresses key business and financial risks to improve Bureau business and management practices;
- an audit committee focussing on fraud, risk management and internal audit, and oversight of the preparation of the Bureau's financial statements;
- an extensive planning and reporting framework with well-defined corporate planning processes;
- detailed asset management policies and guidelines; and
- a community service charter.

ORGANISATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

During 2003-04, an internal audit of the Bureau's corporate governance arrangements found that, to a large extent, the Bureau's governance framework reflects many elements of better practice for budget-funded agencies. The audit also provided a number of recommendations as to how the Bureau could further strengthen its arrangements. These will be considered and implemented, as appropriate, in 2004-05. Following an organisational restructure in January 2004, the Bureau of Meteorology now comprises:

- three divisions: Services and Systems, Research and Corporate;
- seven branches: Observations and Engineering; Communications and Computing Systems; Bureau of Meteorology Research Centre; Weather and Ocean Services Policy; National Operations; Executive and International Affairs; and Management.
- seven Regional Offices located in the State capital cities and Darwin;
- fifty-five Field Offices across Australia, offshore islands and Antarctica; and
- a commercial arm called the Special Services Unit (SSU).
The Director of Meteorology has formal responsibility for managing the Bureau and has the responsibilities and powers of an agency head under the Public Service Act 1999 along with the statutory responsibilities identified in the Meteorology Act 1955. Supporting the Director, two Deputy Directors and the Chief Scientist oversight key functions of the Bureau as follows:

- Deputy Director (Services and Systems): heads the Services and Systems Division which has the direct responsibility for Output Groups 1.1 (Meteorological and Related Data and Products) and 1.3 (Meteorological and Related Services);
- Deputy Director (Corporate Activities): serves as the Bureau's Chief Finance Officer and heads the Corporate Division which has the direct responsibility for Output Group 1.4 (International Meteorological Activities) and for the corporate and cross-cutting activities which are attributed as an overhead across all output groups;
- Chief Scientist: heads the Research Division and is responsible for overseeing all research and scientific activities as well as the management of the Bureau of Meteorology Research Centre which has the direct responsibility for Output Group 1.2 (Meteorological and Related Research).

The Director of Meteorology and the three Division Heads form the Bureau Executive. The Executive has the responsibility for setting strategic policies and priorities for the Bureau and is the highest level decision-making body within the organisation. Executive meetings are chaired by the Director and generally held fortnightly as circumstances permit.

The actions of the Executive are supported by Senior Management Meetings which involve all members of the Executive, all Branch Heads and the Manager of the SSU. These meetings are held fortnightly on the alternate week to Executive meetings. As well as general program reporting, senior managers respond to key issues that are referred by the Executive for consideration at the branch level.

In addition to these cross-cutting forums, there are a number of specifically-focussed committees that report to one of the Executive members, or to the Executive as a whole. The current committees and their roles are as follows:

- Asset Management Committee (AMC) - provides high level policy advice to the Executive on asset management issues.
- Asset Purchase Monitoring Committee (subcommittee of the AMC) - oversights planning and implementation of asset management policies and procedures.
- IT Standing Committee - oversees and coordinates all Information Technology activities within the Bureau of Meteorology.
- Australian Meteorological Data and Information Services System (AMDISS) Management Committee - undertakes broad coordination and strategic development of AMDISS.
- Data Management Committee - undertakes coordination and implementation of data management activities within the Bureau.
- Staffing Review Committee - undertakes monitoring of staffing and salary usage and assists in the development of the Bureau staffing strategy.
• Bureau of Meteorology Staff Consultative Committee - provides a formal forum for unions and staff representatives to meet with the Executive and other senior Bureau management to address workplace relations and related issues.

• Training and Staff Development Committee - oversees planning and coordination of all training activities within the Bureau.

• Library Committee - provides advice to the Executive and to the Chief Librarian on matters relating to library services.

• Basic Product Set Review Committee - provides recommendations to the Executive through the Assistant Director (Weather and Ocean Services) on revisions to the Bureau's Basic Product Set.

The Bureau also has steering committees for all major projects including currently the Forecast Streamlining and Enhancement Project, the Future Accommodation Project and the Radar Network and Doppler Services Upgrade Project.

Regional Directors report directly to the Director of Meteorology, meet as a group a number of times per year as part of annual planning processes, and are integral to the operation of the Bureau's matrix management framework for planning and operations.

The Senior staff of the Bureau as at 30 June 2004 are shown in relation to the organisational structure in Figure 34.

ADVISORY BOARD

The Bureau of Meteorology Advisory Board is responsible for advising the Parliamentary Secretary and the Director of Meteorology on issues of relevance to the proper discharge of the functions of the Bureau, including the national and international environment for meteorological service provision, the Bureau's Corporate Strategy and Forward Program, and broadscale resourcing and implementation issues.

The annual report of the Advisory Board for 2003-04 is provided at Annex A.

AUDIT COMMITTEE

The Bureau of Meteorology Audit Committee has responsibility for fostering the development and implementation within the Bureau of:

• an effective and efficient audit service;

• compliance with applicable laws and regulations;

• reliable financial and management reporting;

• an appropriate fraud control plan, with supporting procedures; and

• risk identification and management processes.

The Audit Committee met three times during 2003-04, in August, January and April. The major focus of the Committee for the year was the oversight of:

• the annual audit program (including financial, program, Regional Office and IT-based audits);
Figure 34. The senior staff of the Bureau of Meteorology at 30 June 2004.
• the approval of the Bureau's 2002-03 financial statements;
• the development of new procedures to support accountability at all levels within the 2003-04 financial statements process;
• the development of new fraud and risk management procedures;
• the development of a new asset management manual; and
• the Bureau's response to the Australian National Audit Office management letters.

CORPORATE PLANNING AND EVALUATION

Planning in the Bureau of Meteorology is based on a framework of program-based activities delivering government-agreed Outputs and Outcomes. The planning system operates on overlapping five-year and one-year time-scales. For 2003-04 the system involved:
• a Regional Director's Conference and Planning Workshop on 19 March 2003, which considered the Bureau's five-year corporate strategy 2003-08, published in its Forward Program 2003-08, and agreed on corporate priorities and management strategies for 2003-04;
• a Budget and Program Workshop on 23 April 2003, which reviewed draft plans and resource allocations for 2003-04 in the light of the expected Budget outcome;
• issue of a Budget Staff Notice on 14 May 2003 advising of the implications of the Budget introduced into Parliament on the previous evening; and
• publication of a Budget and Program 2003-04 document setting out the Bureau's corporate strategy 2003-08, related management strategies and corporate priorities, internal resource allocations and detailed regional and program plans for the year.

An essential component of the annual planning cycle is an evaluation of performance against plans. The Bureau monitors and reports, through its annual report to Government, on the effectiveness as well as quality, quantity and price, of each of its four Output Groups using a range of indicators that relate to the objectives of its internal programs.

In 2003-04, the Bureau reviewed its cost recovery arrangements against the government's new cost recovery policy and guidelines. As part of this review, a Cost Recovery Impact Statement (CRIS) was prepared for submission to government through the 2004-05 Budget process.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND FRAUD CONTROL

During 2003-04 the Bureau enhanced its risk management and fraud control framework by developing an updated Fraud Control Plan and a new Risk Management Handbook. Both initiatives are consistent with, and draw heavily upon, the framework adopted by the Department of the Environment and Heritage. The Plan and the Handbook are being distributed widely throughout the organisation and will be complemented with relevant training in 2004-05. There were no reported incidents of fraud in 2003-04.
SERVICE CHARTER

The Bureau’s service charter sets out the standards of service clients can expect from the Bureau, their rights and responsibilities and how to find out more about the organisation. The charter applies to all clients, including other government agencies, community organisations, industry and members of the public.

The principal means of accessing the charter is through the Bureau's website at www.bom.gov.au/inside/services_policy/serchart.shtml

ETHICAL STANDARDS

During the reporting period, the Bureau continued to demonstrate its ongoing commitment to the Australian Public Service (APS) Values and Code of Conduct in several ways:

- the APS Values and Code of Conduct were highlighted in the recently completed Certified Agreement;
- briefing information on the Values and Code of Conduct was included in the induction packages and training programs provided for all new employees;
- the Values and Code of Conduct were embedded in selection criteria for all Bureau positions and were widely promoted throughout the organisation;
- an online course covering the APS Values and Code of Conduct was rolled out during the year. More than 50 per cent of all staff either completed, or started, this course and an allied training program;
- sessions on the Values and Code of Conduct were provided to groups of managers and staff whenever possible including, for example, at the Queensland Officers-In-Charge Conference in September. Information on these issues was also made available via the Bureau's Intranet with access to the APS Commission’s database;
- guidelines on managing breaches of the Code of Conduct were developed, and made accessible to employees via the Bureau Intranet;
- Review of Action procedures, as provided for in Section 33 of the Public Service Act 1999, were made available to aggrieved employees; and
- the Bureau continued to be represented at all quarterly meetings of the APS Commission’s Performance and Conduct Network held during the year.

EXTERNAL SCRUTINY

There were no judicial decisions or decisions of administrative tribunals during 2003-04 which affected the Bureau. Similarly, there were no reports by the Auditor-General, Parliamentary Committees or the Commonwealth Ombudsman which referred to the Bureau.