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 within the Bureau is based around:

- 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

The Bureau of Meteorology is comprised of:

- 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-seven field offices across Australia, offshore islands and Antarctica; and
- a commercial arm called the Special Services Unit (SSU).

The Director of Meteorology has formal charge of the Bureau under the Meteorology Act 1955 and has the responsibilities and powers of an agency head under the Public Service Act 1999. 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 1.3 (Meteorological and Related Services and Products);
• 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; and
• 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:
• 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’s 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 (during 2004-05) the Climate Prediction Project, the Forecast Streamlining and Enhancement Project, the Australian Tsunami Warning System Project, the Basic Observing System Project, the Management Services Centralisation Project, the Human Resource Management System 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 management framework for planning and operations.

The Senior staff of the Bureau as at 30 June 2005 are shown in relation to the organisational structure in Figure 35 (following page).

**BUREAU OF METEOROLOGY 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 Strategic Plan, and broadscale resourcing and implementation issues.

The annual report of the Advisory Board for 2004-05 is provided at Annex A.

**BUREAU OF METEOROLOGY 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 four times during 2004-05, in July, November, February and May. 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);
• the acceptance of the Bureau’s 2003-04 financial statements;
• the review of the internal audit function, following two years of experience in the Bureau;
• the revision of the Audit Committee Charter and establishment of a Risk Sub-committee;
• the preparation for the adoption of the Australian Equivalents to International Financial Reporting Standards (AEIFRS) in 2005-06; and
• the Bureau’s response to ANAO 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 2004-05 the system involved:

- a Regional Director’s Conference and Planning Workshop on 17-18 March 2004, which considered draft plans for 2004-05 and agreed on a revised planning framework, the output of which would include a five-year Strategic Plan, to be published between August and November, and an Operational Plan focusing on the next financial period, to be published between June and August;
- issue of a Budget Staff Notice on 12 May 2004 advising of the implications of the Budget introduced into Parliament on the previous evening;
- a Budget and Program Workshop on 20-21 May 2004, which reviewed draft plans and resource allocations for 2004-05 in the light of the Budget outcome; and

Due to staffing shortages in the Coordination and Planning area, a complete edition of the 2004-05 Operational Plan was not published but the essential elements of the plan were promulgated in a series of internal notices.

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 the 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.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND FRAUD CONTROL

In compliance with Commonwealth guidelines on Risk Management and Fraud Control, the Bureau in 2004-05 continued to enhance its risk management and fraud control framework through the following series of initiatives:

- formal adoption by the Bureau’s Audit Committee of a Risk Sub-Committee;
- updates of the Bureau’s Risk Management Handbook to address aspects of business continuity planning and the role of senior managers in assessing risk at the corporate level;
- promulgation of a Fraud Control Handbook which includes details of both the Bureau’s Fraud Control Plan and the procedures to be adopted in the event of a fraud incident;
- distribution, to all staff, of a two-page summary ‘Guide’ on fraud control; and
- development of plans for renewed emphasis on training related to risk management and fraud control.

During 2004-05 there was one reported incident of minor fraud. All monies involved were recovered and appropriate disciplinary and counselling measures were undertaken.
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 APS Values and Code of Conduct in several ways as follows:

- the APS Values and Code of Conduct were highlighted in the 2004-05 Certified Agreement;
- briefing information on the Values and Code of Conduct were included in induction packages and training programs provided for all new employees;
- the Values and Code of Conduct embedded in selection criteria for all Bureau positions have been widely promoted throughout the organisation;
- an on-line course covering the APS Values and Code of Conduct continues to be available to staff. The response to date has been strong in some areas of the Bureau, and less so in others, with some 50 per cent of all staff having either completed or started this course and 79 per cent an allied training program. Completion of these programs is frequently used as a performance criterion in relation to social justice objectives and tasks in the Bureau’s Staff Performance Management Scheme;
- sessions on the Values and Code of Conduct have been delivered to groups of managers and staff whenever possible including, for example, at Officers-In-Charge Conferences;
- information on ethical standards was also made available via the Bureau’s Intranet, with access to the Australian Public Service Commission’s database;
- guidelines on managing breaches of the Code of Conduct and whistle blowing procedures have been developed, and made accessible to employees via the 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 has been represented at ad hoc external courses and conferences on performance and conduct.

EXTERNAL SCRUTINY

There were no judicial decisions or decisions of administrative tribunals during 2004-05 which affected the Bureau. Similarly, there were no reports by the Auditor-General (other than the report on financial statements), Parliamentary Committees or the Commonwealth Ombudsman, which referred to the Bureau.