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 service charter setting out the standards of service to the community.

ORGANISATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

The Bureau of Meteorology comprises:

- three divisions: Services and Systems, Research, and Corporate;
- eight branches: Observations and Engineering; Communications and Computing Systems; Bureau of Meteorology Research Centre; Weather and Ocean Services Policy; National Operations; Executive and International Affairs; Management; and Finance and Budgets.
- seven regional offices located in the state capital cities and Darwin;
- fifty-seven field offices across Australia, its 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, the Chief Scientist, and (since April) a Special Executive Advisor (Hydrology) 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...
Deputy Director (Corporate Activities): served as the Bureau’s Chief Finance Officer until January 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); and

Special Executive Advisor (Hydrology): was appointed in April in relation to the Bureau’s new role in water information under the National Plan for Water Security announced on 25 January, to provide high-level hydrological advice, liaison with water sector stakeholders, and assistance in the recruitment of staff to support the Bureau’s new function.

The Director of Meteorology, the three Division Heads and (since April) the Special Executive Advisor 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-focused 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.
- Asset Purchase Monitoring Committee - undertakes monitoring and reporting on progress of the asset replacement program including expenditure and obligations.
- Staffing Review Committee – undertakes monitoring and reporting 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 Director of Meteorology and other senior Bureau management to address workplace relations and related issues.
• National Occupational Health and Safety Committee – oversees and coordinates the Bureau’s compliance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act and its implementation, including the development of policies, promotion of safe work practices, and reviewing, monitoring and reporting functions.

• Heritage Management Steering Committee - oversees the preparation, implementation and ongoing review of Commonwealth Heritage Management Plans within the Bureau, including reporting against the Bureau’s Heritage Strategy.

• 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.

• Charging Policy Review Committee - reviews and coordinates detailed aspects of the Bureau’s Charging Policy.

• 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 2006-07) the Pacific Island – Climate Prediction Project, the Forecast Streamlining and Enhancement Project, the Australian Tsunami Warning System Project, the Management Services Centralisation Project, the Human Resource Management System Project, the Radar Network and Doppler Services Upgrade Project, the Large Scale Data Storage System Project, the VRO/BMTC Accommodation Project (overseeing the move of the Victoria Regional Office and the Bureau of Meteorology Training Centre) and the Field Office Replacement Project which is coordinated with other major observation and cross-program field infrastructure initiatives through the Major Observations Program Infrastructure Coordination Management Committee.

Regional Directors report directly to the Director of Meteorology, meet as a group a number of times each 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 2007 are shown in relation to the organisational structure in Figure 39.

**BUREAU OF METEOROLOGY ADVISORY BOARD**

The Bureau of Meteorology Advisory Board is responsible for advising the Minister/Assistant Minister/Parliamentary Secretary with responsibility for the Bureau 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 broad scale resourcing and implementation issues.

The annual report of the Advisory Board for 2006-07 is provided at Annex A.
Figure 39. The senior staff of the Bureau of Meteorology at 30 June 2007.
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 2006-07, in September, December, March and May.

Two special meetings which had limited agendas and were confined to discussion of the financial statements for 2005-06, were conducted by telephone in July and August. The main work of the Committee during the year was to monitor:

- the transition to a new Internal Audit service provider;
- the establishment of new Internal Audit management arrangements;
- the annual audit program (including compliance, financial, operational, information technology and risk management audits);
- the acceptance of the Bureau’s 2005-06 financial statements;
- development of processes for reporting compliance with the financial management framework;
- the further refinement of the audit process, including the follow up of past audit recommendations;
- operation of the Risk Sub-committee including the development of an improved Risk Assessment Handbook and the risk identification and assessment program;
- continuing work on fraud risk assessment and a Fraud Management Plan for the Bureau; and
- the update of Chief Executive Instructions.

A Review of the Bureau of Meteorology commenced in late 2006. The objective of the Review is to assess the ability of the Bureau of Meteorology to sustainably fulfil its role as Australia’s National Meteorological and Hydrological Service. The Review is considering, inter alia, funding and resources, the changing needs and expectations of users of climate and weather services and the effectiveness of the Bureau in meeting its objectives under its existing business model, governance arrangements and management structure. The Review was specifically requested to “make recommendations on the activities the Bureau should undertake, and the financial, operational and structural implications of pursuing
those activities, and the required actions to ensure the long-term vitality and sustainability of meteorological and related services”.

The Review Panel consisted of five independent experts, namely, Emeritus Professor Mary O’Kane (Chair), Mr Len Early, Brigadier General Jack J. Kelly Jr. (USAF retired), Dr James Bradfield Moody and Ms Siobhan McKenna. The Panel undertook broad consultation with relevant stakeholders, including the consideration of submissions from the general public (53), other stakeholders (130) and Bureau staff (36). The Review Panel expects to report to the Minister and Assistant Minister for the Environment and Water Resources and the Bureau of Meteorology in early 2007-08.

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 timescales. For 2006-07 the system involved:

- publication of a Strategic Plan 2006-11, which describes the major issues likely to influence the Bureau over the five-year period, and a summary of the Bureau’s strategic plans and related corporate goals for improving the delivery of its four basic Outputs;
- an Operational Planning Conference held on 24-25 November 2005, which considered initial draft plans for 2006-07 in the context of the issues and influences of most relevance for the coming year;
- issue of a Budget Staff Notice on 10 May 2006 advising of the implications of the Budget introduced into the Parliament on the previous evening; and
- a Budget and Program Workshop on 18-19 May 2006, which reviewed draft plans and resource allocations for 2006-07 in the light of the Budget outcome.

The evaluation of performance against plans is an important component of the Bureau’s annual planning cycle. 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 the past 12 months, the Bureau has continued to make good progress with formalising its management of organisational risks. Particular achievements include:

- the re-draft of the Bureau’s Risk Management Handbook;
- the integration of a formal risk assessment and management process with the Bureau’s planning processes, e.g. a formal risk identification and assessment process provides a basis for developing the Bureau’s 2007-08 operational plans;
- appropriate staffing to provide a focal point for the formal elements of the Bureau’s risk management framework;
• continued progress with rolling-out training in risk management to general staff;
• completion of a national review of the adequacy of the Bureau’s current framework for managing Occupational Health and Safety risks, in particular for the Bureau’s observation and engineering programs, which have roles and responsibilities relating to the operation and maintenance of equipment in rural and remote areas; and
• participation in the annual Comcover Risk Management Benchmarking study leading to a reduced Comcover insurance premium in 2006-07.

There were no reported incidences of fraud in 2006-07.

HERITAGE STRATEGY

Following amendments to the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act), a new national heritage system commenced from 1 January 2004.

Since 1908 the Bureau has demonstrated its commitment to heritage values through its efforts to record and preserve significant parts of its own history in delivering meteorological services to the Australian community.

Complementing this, the Bureau’s Heritage Strategy is based on the Commonwealth Heritage Management Principles and establishes a process for identification and assessment of the heritage values of all places owned or controlled by the Bureau, and development of a Bureau Heritage Register to record the heritage status of each Bureau place.

A preliminary assessment of places owned or controlled by the Bureau and distributed across various government jurisdictions within Australia and its Territories has been undertaken, including sites that may lie within, or in the vicinity of, heritage listed sites.

A Heritage Management Steering Committee was established during the year to guide the process of identifying and assessing heritage values, establishing the Bureau’s Heritage Register and developing, where necessary, heritage management plans. Action commenced on developing suitable terms of reference for qualified consultants to undertake the identification and assessment task. It is expected that this work will be completed in the first half of 2007-08.

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 service charter applies to all clients, including other government agencies, community organisations, industry and members of the public, and to all Bureau Outputs.

The charter can be accessed principally through the Bureau’s web site at www.bom.gov.au/inside/services_policy/serchart.shtml.

The Bureau invites feedback, including complaints and criticism, through its offices across Australia and also through a web feedback facility. Less than 10 formal complaints about service were received through Regional Offices during 2006-07. The issues raised were dealt with by the Regional Director concerned; any specific suggestions were consid-
ered, and on occasion a minor change was made to a service in response. Over the year the web feedback facility logged about 400 messages classified by the sender as “criticism” and these were redirected to the appropriate area of the Bureau for response and resolution as appropriate.

ETHICAL STANDARDS

During the reporting period, the Bureau continued to demonstrate its commitment to the APS Values and Code of Conduct in a number of ways, including the following:

- the APS Values and Code of Conduct were highlighted in the Bureau’s Certified Agreement 2006-2008;
- briefing information on the APS Values and Code of Conduct was included in induction packages and training sessions provided for new employees;
- the Values and Code of Conduct, embedded in selection criteria for all Bureau positions, continued to be widely promoted throughout the organisation;
- an online information and training course covering the APS Values and Code of Conduct was available to all Bureau employees;
- upholding the APS Values and Code of Conduct and completion of the online course is expected to be a performance criterion in relation to social justice objectives and work tasks in the Bureau’s Staff Performance Management Scheme;
- workshops and information sessions on the Values and Code of Conduct were delivered to several groups of managers and employees, including at Officers-in-Charge Conferences and Station Managers’ Conferences;
- employees were able to access information on ethical standards via the Bureau’s Intranet, as well as through the Australian Public Service Commission’s website;
- guidelines on the acceptance of gifts, managing breaches of the Code of Conduct and potential conflict of interest situations were given particular attention;
- review of Action procedures, as provided for in Section 33 of the Public Service Act 1999, were made available to aggrieved employees as necessary; and
- the Bureau was represented at external network meetings in relation to performance and conduct issues.

EXTERNAL SCRUTINY

There were no judicial decisions or decisions of administrative tribunals during 2006-07 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.