

## BUREAU OF METEOROLOGY ADVISORY BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2007-08

### ROLE OF THE ADVISORY BOARD

The Bureau of Meteorology Advisory Board was created in June 2002 as a non-statutory body. The function of the Board is to advise the Minister and the Director of Meteorology on issues of relevance to the proper discharge of the functions of the Bureau. More specifically, the role is set out in the following terms of reference approved by the Minister.

From time to time the Minister may assign ministerial responsibility for the Bureau to the Parliamentary Secretary or Assistant Minister appointed to assist with the portfolio. During 2007-08, the Advisory Board reported to the then Assistant Minister, the Hon. John Cobb MP, from 1 July to 3 December and to the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts, the Hon. Peter Garrett AM MP, from 3 December to 30 June. In this report, the term Minister is hereafter used to denote the person with ministerial responsibility for the Bureau.

### TERMS OF REFERENCE

The major responsibilities of the Board are to:

- a) keep under review, and advise the Minister and Director of Meteorology on:
  - (i) The changing environment affecting national and international demand for the provision of meteorological and related services;
  - (ii) The Bureau's Corporate Strategy and Forward Program;
  - (iii) The optimal balance of resources to be applied to the various public interest priorities of the Bureau including severe weather warning services, provision of public weather, climate, hydrological and oceanographic services, maintenance of the national climate record and the conduct of research and investigation;
  - (iv) The appropriateness of the allocation of current and future products and services provided by the Bureau in the categories of free, cost recoverable or commercial;
  - (v) Stakeholder views of the Bureau's current products and services and emerging needs;
  - (vi) Any other issues of relevance to ensuring the efficiency and effectiveness of the Bureau of Meteorology;
- b) respond to issues and requests addressed to it by the Minister, the Director of Meteorology and members of the stakeholder community; and
- c) report, at least annually, to the Minister on its activities and to make recommendations in relation to the performance and future direction of the Bureau.

### MEMBERSHIP

Membership of the Board is at the invitation of the Minister, after consultation with the Prime Minister. While the Director of Meteorology and the Portfolio Secretary are included as ex-officio members, the balance of membership is constituted so as to broadly reflect the Bureau's stakeholder community, with individual members selected on the basis of their ability to contribute at the highest level to the development of meteorology in Australia.

Members are selected to represent, as far as possible, the following broad sectors:

- agriculture;
- aviation;
- defence;
- fire and emergency services;
- environmental management;
- marine;
- media;

and/or the following specialist fields:

- economics;
- law;
- meteorology; and/or
- scientific research.

Some members are recognised as contributing expertise and experience in more than one of these areas. Since March 2006, the Advisory Board has comprised the following members.

<b>MEMBER</b>	<b>POSITION</b>
Mr Barry Grear AO (Chair)	President, World Federation of Engineering Organisations
HE Ms Jan Adams	Ambassador for Climate Change Department of Climate Change
Mr Mackenzie Craig	Primary Producer
Ms Sue Howard	Director of Radio Australian Broadcasting Commission
Ms Siobhan McKenna	Associate Commissioner, Productivity Commission Managing Partner, Illyria Pty Ltd
Mr Russell Miller	Partner Minter Ellison
Dr James Moody	General Manager, International Development CSIRO
Professor Will Steffen	Director The Fenner School of Environment and Society Australian National University
Mr David Borthwick (ex officio)	Secretary Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts
Dr Geoff Love (ex officio)	Director of Meteorology Bureau of Meteorology

## ACTIVITIES OF THE BOARD 2007-08

### MEETINGS

During 2007-08, meetings were held on 8 August 2007 (meeting 2007/2) at Parliament House Canberra and 20 September 2007 (meeting 2007/3), 14 December 2007 (meeting 2007/4) and 23 April 2008 (Meeting 2008/1 at the Bureau's Head Office in Melbourne. Details of member attendance at meetings are provided below.

MEMBER	8 August (meeting 2007/2)	20 September (meeting 2007/3)	14 December (meeting 2007/4)	23 April (meeting 2008/1)
Grear (Chair)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Adams	✓	X	X	✓
Craig	✓	✓	✓	✓
Howard	X	✓	✓	✓
McKenna	✓	✓	✓	✓
Miller	✓	✓	✓	✓
Moody	✓	✓	✓	✓
Steffen	✓	✓	✓	✓
Borthwick	✓	X	X	✓
Love	✓	✓	✓	✓

### MAJOR ISSUES EXAMINED IN 2007-08

During the year the Board considered the following major issues:

- the report of the Review of the Bureau of Meteorology, *Creating an Australian Bureau of Meteorology for the 21st Century*;
- the new Water Information arrangements;
- the Bureau's future scientific directions;
- options for the supercomputer replacement;
- funding models for Aviation and Defence Weather Services;
- Aviation Weather Service developments;
- Centenary activities and events;
- the four-year Operational Plan; and
- a report on the 15th Congress of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).

More information on each of these is provided below.

The Board was able to assist the Bureau by:

- advising on the Review of the Bureau of Meteorology;
- advising on Aviation Weather Service developments;

- advising on Centenary activities and events; and
- advising on the four-year Operational Plan.

### **Review of the Bureau of Meteorology**

Over the course of meetings 2007/2, 2007/3 and 2007/4 the Advisory Board examined the findings of the Review of the Bureau of Meteorology, *Creating an Australian Bureau of Meteorology for the 21st Century*, in considerable detail and developed a response to the recommendations. The response supported the findings and provided additional background comments to contextualise the Review recommendations. The Advisory Board subsequently wrote to the Minister and provided a broad outline of the strategic issues and challenges facing the Bureau.

### **Water Information Arrangements**

At meetings 2007/2 and 2008/1 the Advisory Board was briefed on the plans for implementation of the Bureau's Water Information role under the Government's Water for the Future strategy and progress toward establishing the Water Division and associated arrangements. While noting that jurisdictional consultative arrangements should complement existing mechanisms, the Advisory Board was impressed with the progress made and the innovative opportunities that were being explored.

### **Future Scientific Directions**

An overview was provided to the Advisory Board of the possible future scientific directions flowing from the development, by the Centre for Australian Weather and Climate Research, of world class weather and climate models that would position Australia as a major player in the provision of both regional and global climate change predictions. The Advisory Board noted the potential benefits and recommended that the Bureau's Strategic Plan should be aligned with the potential directions and opportunities as outlined.

### **Supercomputer Replacement**

Options for meeting the Bureau's future supercomputing requirements were discussed at meeting 2007/4. The Advisory Board supported the development of an earth system modelling capacity and the concept of a national supercomputing facility, noting both the economies of scale to be realised and the intellectual benefits likely through broader academic collaboration and engagement.

Following negotiations and agreement with the Australian National University (ANU) for two interoperable supercomputers to meet the Bureau's needs as well as those of ANU, the National Computing Infrastructure initiative and CSIRO, the Advisory Board at meeting 2008/1 commended the Bureau on the outcome and recommended options for supporting supercomputing requirements into the future.

### **Funding Models for Aviation and Defence Weather Services**

Options for a new Aviation and Defence Weather Services funding model were discussed at meeting 2007/4. Two possible options were considered and the Advisory Board agreed that

the Bureau's preferred funding model was defensible and recommended that services be examined to confirm that there was no inherent strategic or financial disadvantage.

### **Aviation Weather Service Developments**

Recent developments and proposed changes to Aviation Weather Services were discussed at meeting 2008/1. The Advisory Board suggested that the Bureau follow up any potential opportunities for reduction of its Comcover premium as a result of ISO certification under a Quality Management System introduced for Aviation Weather Services. It also recommended that the Bureau continue to seek opportunities to provide value-added services.

### **Centenary Activities and Events**

In response to a briefing on the Bureau's proposed Centenary activities for 2008, the Advisory Board made a number of suggestions at meeting 2007/4 regarding a communications strategy and the key messages for dissemination. Consistent with the strategy and key messages, it also developed a list of potential activities designed to engage staff, stakeholders and the community.

### **Four-Year Operational Plan**

The Advisory Board reviewed the draft four-year Operational Plan at meeting 2008/1 and made a number of recommendations concerning the document's purpose, content and format. These included advice on terminology, the presentation of strategic priorities, the treatment of policy initiatives and the assimilation of appropriate organisational values and attributes.

### **Report on the 15th Congress of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO)**

At meeting 2007/2, Mr Mackenzie Craig reported on his attendance at the 15th WMO Congress in Geneva from 13 to 21 May.

## **OTHER ACTIVITIES**

### **Advisory Board Representation**

Members of the Advisory Board are, from time to time, invited to attend Bureau activities to represent the Board and to increase their knowledge of the Bureau, its operations, services, clients and stakeholders. Generally speaking, members are invited to Bureau events that are held in their local area or that pertain to their particular area of expertise.

### **Centenary Events**

Mr Barry Grear attended the South Australia Regional Office in March for a special Centenary World Meteorological Day celebration and the launch of the book *The Weather Prophets*.

In April Mr Barry Grear, Ms Sue Howard and Dr James Moody attended a special Centenary event hosted by the Bureau in Melbourne, in association with the Institute of Public Administration Australia, with a keynote address by the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts.