

# 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 *Water Act 2007*, 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.

An audit of several aspects of the Bureau's corporate governance framework by the Bureau's contracted internal audit provider was in progress during the latter part of 2008-09 and is expected to be finalised during 2009-10.

## Organisational Arrangements

As of 30 June 2009, the Bureau of Meteorology comprised:

- four divisions: Services, Systems, Corporate and Water;
- twelve branches: Observations and Engineering; Information Technologies, Ionospheric Prediction Service, Weather Services, Climate and Oceans, Water Data Services, Water Reporting Services, Water Forecasting Services, Water Information Technology Planning and Development, Executive and International Affairs, Management Services, and Finance and Budgets;
- the Centre for Australian Weather and Climate Research (a joint research operation with the CSIRO);
- the National Meteorological and Oceanographic Centre (NMOC), located in Melbourne;
- seven Regional Offices located in the State capital cities and Darwin;
- fifty-eight meteorological Field Offices across Australia, offshore islands and Antarctica; and
- two solar observatories.

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, Deputy Directors oversee key functions of the Bureau as follows:

- **Deputy Director (Services):** heads the Services Division which has the direct responsibility for Output Group 1.3 (Meteorological and Related Services and Products);
- **Deputy Director (Research and Systems):** heads the Systems Division which has the direct responsibility for Output Groups 1.1 (Meteorological and Related Data) and 1.2 (Meteorological and Related Research);
- **Deputy Director (Water):** heads the Water Division which has the direct responsibility for Output Group 1.5 (Water Information).

The role of Division Head for the Corporate Division was performed during 2008-09 by the Director of Meteorology.

The Director of Meteorology, the three Deputy Directors and the three Assistant Directors in the Corporate Division 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, the Superintendent of NMOC, and the Regional Directors. These meetings are held fortnightly on the alternate week to Executive meetings. As well as reporting on progress with implementation and program risks, senior managers respond to key issues that are referred by the Executive for consideration at the program/branch level.

The production of the Bureau's outputs are managed on a national basis within the Head Office division and branch structure, however, some day-to-day activities are managed within NMOC and each of the seven Regional Offices under the guidance of the Superintendent NMOC and the Regional Directors. The Superintendent NMOC and the Regional Directors report to the Deputy Director (Services) and are integral to the operation of the Bureau's management framework for planning and operations.

In addition to the general division and branch structure, there are a number of specialist roles which are attached to senior positions:

- **Chief Climatologist**, performed by the Assistant Director (Climate and Oceans);
- **Chief Information Officer**, performed by the Assistant Director (Information Technologies); and
- **Chief Financial Officer**, performed by the Assistant Director (Finance and Budgets).

The senior staff of the Bureau as at 30 June 2009 are shown in relation to the organisational structure in the foldout at the back of this report.

Supporting the management of the Bureau, there are a number of specifically-focussed committees that report to the Executive. The current committees and their roles are as follows.

- **Asset Program Committee** - undertakes monitoring and reporting on progress of the asset replacement program.
- **Asset Purchase Monitoring Sub-Committee** – as an extension of the Asset Program Committee, the sub-committee receives and reviews status reports on asset projects, and provides regular reports on expenditure and expense as well as a forum for discussing the application of asset-related management policies and procedures.
- **Australian Meteorological Data and Information Services System (AMDISS) Working Group** – to facilitate the planning and development of systems that provide efficient, user-focussed electronic access to the Bureau's products and services.

- **Basic Product Set Review Committee** – maintains ongoing liaison with private sector service providers, utilising established consultative mechanisms to ensure that private sector operators are kept informed of ongoing changes in the Basic Product Set and given adequate time to prepare for any impacts.
  - **Budget and Program Committee** – supports budget and resource planning activities and provides ongoing monitoring of the financial performance of the Bureau.
  - **Bureau IT Standing Committee** – oversees and coordinates all information technology activities.
  - **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.
  - **Data Management Working Group** – has responsibility for coordination and implementation of data management activities within the Bureau.
  - **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.
  - **Library Advisory Committee** - provides advice to the Executive and to the Chief Librarian on matters relating to library services.
  - **National Occupational Health & 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.
  - **Training and Staff Development Committee** – oversees planning and coordination of training activities within the Bureau.
- The Bureau also has steering committees for all major projects and initiatives including:
- the Pacific Islands - Climate Prediction Project;
  - the Forecast Streamlining and Enhancement Project (incorporating the Graphical Forecast Editor Project);
  - the Australian Tsunami Warning System Project;
  - the Australian Water Resources Information System Project;
  - the Australian Hydrological Geospatial Fabric Project;
  - the National Water Accounting Development Project;
  - the Human Resource Management System Project;
  - future accommodation at 700 Collins Street;
  - pandemic planning;
  - the Radar Network and Doppler Services Upgrade Project;
  - the supercomputer upgrade project (joint ANU/Bureau); 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.

The Bureau has a number of partnership arrangements with other Commonwealth agencies for the delivery of common outcomes through distributed responsibilities. In each case, a supervisory or management committee involving representatives from each agency has been established to manage the collaborative arrangement. The current committees are as follows:

- the Centre for Australian Weather and Climate Research (CAWCR) Supervisory Committee, comprising the CAWCR Director and representatives from the Bureau and the CSIRO;
- the Australian Tsunami Warning System (ATWS) Inter-Departmental Steering Committee (IDSC), comprising representatives from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (chair), the Bureau, Geoscience Australia, Emergency Management Australia and the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID); and
- the Water Information Research and Development Alliance (WIRADA) Management Committee, comprising representatives from the Bureau and the CSIRO.

## Bureau of Meteorology Advisory Board

The Bureau of Meteorology Advisory Board is responsible for advising the Minister 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 2008-09 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 five times during 2008-09, in August, November, December, March, and May.

The main work of the Committee during the year was to monitor:

- the annual audit program (including governance, accountability/capability framework, project management, and administration of grants audits) and development of the next year's program;
- the acceptance of the Bureau's 2007-08 financial statements;
- the process for reporting compliance with the financial management framework;
- the further refinement of the audit process;
- the follow up of past audit recommendations;
- operation of the Risk Sub-committee including finalisation of an improved risk management framework and a risk identification and assessment program;
- progress with the implementation of enhanced Business Continuity Management arrangements; and
- arrangements for executive scrutiny of risk management.

## Corporate Planning and Evaluation

In 2008-09 planning in the Bureau of Meteorology was based on a framework of program-based activities delivering the Government-agreed outcome and related outputs. A schedule of planning meetings provided the basis for generating strategic and operational plans, including two workshops focused respectively on strategic planning and workforce planning. The planning process also included input from the Bureau of Meteorology Advisory Board.

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 its performance in achieving its planned outcome and outputs using a range of indicators.

## Risk Management and Fraud Control

The Bureau of Meteorology promotes the application of integrated risk management principles in all program planning activities and management systems and aims to create an environment whereby all Bureau employees will assume responsibility for managing risk.

The Bureau supports a systematic and rigorous approach to risk management that is fully aligned with the Bureau's planning processes and seeks to identify and manage risks to the achievement of its strategic, program and project objectives. Risk Management is overseen in the Bureau by the Executive and a Risk Sub-committee which reports on risk to the Bureau of Meteorology Audit Committee and monitors the treatment of higher-level risks and the implementation of risk management policy and procedures.

In 2008-09 the Bureau won two Comcover Awards for Excellence in Risk Management for its Disaster Mitigation Program and the Australian Tsunami Warning System (a joint nomination with Geoscience Australia and Emergency Management Australia). Other significant risk management activities undertaken during the year include:

- the development and delivery of six in-house Risk Management Workshops for training/educating Bureau staff in risk management principles and practice;
- the twice yearly identification and assessment of risks across all Bureau programs; and
- participation in the annual Comcover risk management benchmarking study leading to a seven per cent discount to the Bureau's Comcover insurance premium in 2008-09.

The results of a fraud risk assessment, conducted in accordance with the Commonwealth Fraud Control Guidelines, were incorporated into the Bureau's 2007 Fraud Control Plan. The Fraud Control Plan provides the basis for the Bureau's fraud control activities December 2007 to November 2009 and its development was overseen by the Bureau of Meteorology Audit Committee and Risk Sub-Committee.

## 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, which is based on the Commonwealth heritage management principles, establishes processes for the identification and assessment of the heritage values of all places owned or controlled by the Bureau, and for the development of a Bureau heritage register to record the heritage status of each Bureau offices.

The report commissioned by the Heritage Management Steering Committee to identify and assess heritage values of Bureau owned and controlled sites, including sites that may lie within or in the vicinity of, heritage sites, was finalised. This review identified a number of sites for inclusion on the Bureau's heritage register and sites where the development of a heritage management plan was desirable.

Noting its particular significance, and as a first step, a detailed review of the Giles Meteorological Office was commissioned to be undertaken by July 2009. In addition, arrangements were made for generic Heritage Handbooks to be prepared for distribution to relevant internal stakeholder.

## 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 website at [www.bom.gov.au/inside/services\\_policy/serchart.shtml](http://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. Approximately ten formal complaints about service were received through Regional Offices during 2008-09. The issues raised were dealt with by the Regional Director concerned; any specific suggestions were considered, and on occasion a minor change was made to a service in response. Over the year the web feedback facility logged 199 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 and were included in the draft being developed for the next Enterprise Agreement;
- 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 were referenced in selection criteria for all Bureau positions;
- an on-line 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 on-line course are expected to be a performance measure 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 by accessing the Australian Public Service Commission's website;
- guidelines for Bureau staff in respect to Duty of Care, Making Public Comment and the Performance of Outside Work/Employment were repromulgated;
- 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 2008-09 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.