

Water Accounting Standards Board

Draft Terms of Reference

1. With the endorsement of the COAG Water Sub-Group, the Water Accounting Standards Board (WASB) has been established as a successor to the Water Accounting Development Committee (WADC), by the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) to continue the development of water accounting standards.

Role

2. The WASB will be responsible for:
 - a. The oversight and coordination of all *Australian Water Accounting Standards* development activities, including:
 - i. Maintaining the Water Accounting Conceptual Framework for the Preparation and Presentation of General Purpose Water Accounting Reports (Water Accounting Conceptual Framework);
 - ii. Developing and drafting of *Australian Water Accounting Standards*, including auditing and assurance standards as necessary in accordance with a standards development process agreed with BoM;
 - iii. Ensuring that the Water Accounting Conceptual Framework and related draft exposure *Australian Water Accounting Standards* are publicly accessible for voluntary adoption, feedback and review prior to recommending their adoption to the BoM for issuance;
 - iv. Promoting awareness of the water accounting discipline and work being developed to build understanding, invite feedback and encourage adoption;
 - v. Liaising with the Financial Reporting Council (FRC), the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) and the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board (AUASB) to ensure alignment where appropriate of the *Australian Water Accounting Standards* with Australian standards in relation to financial accounting and assurance;
 - vi. Assisting in the testing of standards and the development of national and industry capacity through the support of a network of jurisdictional and industry technical experts, including through pilot projects where appropriate;
 - vii. Reviewing, resolving issues and, if necessary, revising exposure drafts of the *Australian Water Accounting Standards* on the basis of user comment before making recommendations to the BoM on the adoption of the *Australian Water Accounting Standards*;
 - viii. Maintaining awareness and linkages with relevant international bodies;
 - ix. Providing technical support for the progressive development of the *Australian Water Accounting Standards*;

- b. Providing advice to the BoM and the National Water Account Committee on water accounting standards matters relevant to the National Water Account;
- c. Suggesting members for successive Water Accounting Standards Boards for the BoM consideration;
- d. Reviewing the Terms of Reference;
- e. Providing an annual report of its activities to the director of the BoM for public release.

Characteristics

3. The WASB will be:
 - a. a small independent expert advisory board;
 - b. required to meet on a regular basis at least 4 times per annum, as agreed by WASB;
 - c. supported by a small dedicated office staffed by and located within the BoM and able to draw on expert consulting resources as required; and
 - d. funded by BoM on the basis of a workplan agreed with BoM;

Membership

4. The WASB Chair and members will be appointed by the BoM for a term of up to 3 years and selected from nominations invited from a range of organisations and individuals. The key criterion for selection will be expertise related to *Australian Water Accounting Standards*.
5. Members will be expected to participate in the meetings and activities of the WASB up to a maximum of 20 days per annum.
6. It is intended that participation in the WASB will be cost-neutral to individual members. Sitting fees for participating in formal meetings or activities of the WASB, including up to half a day of preparation, will be paid to private sector members. The payment rate of individual members will be agreed between the individual and BoM.

Initial membership

7. To facilitate completion of the National Water Accounting Development project, the initial WASB membership will be drawn from existing WADC members. To ensure continuity of advice, this initial membership will continue until the completion of the first National Water Account at the end of 2010.
8. Initial members of WASB are:
 - Mike Smith (Chair)
 - Professor Jayne Godfrey
 - Peter Day
 - Tom Vanderbyl
 - Denis Flett.
9. An observer from the BoM will attend meetings of WASB.

Commencement

10. The WASB will be deemed to have commenced its role at the tenth meeting of WADC (WADC 10) on 20 April 2009.