

# Terms of Reference

(18 March 2013)

## Wheatbelt NRM Noongar Elders Advisory Group

**Role:** To provide advice and guidance to the Wheatbelt Natural Resource Management (NRM) Team for the development and review of Aboriginal NRM projects. This includes providing opinions and cultural guidance on strategic planning, project development, program logic developments and funding applications.

**Scope:** The Advisory Group meetings are a forum in which to discuss natural resource management issues, Aboriginal culture and values for the Wheatbelt region. The Advisory Group provides cultural advice to Wheatbelt NRM on current and future Aboriginal NRM projects and other Wheatbelt NRM projects, if asked. The Advisory Group offers direction and advice about who to talk to when conducting specific activities.

**Membership:** The Wheatbelt NRM Aboriginal Advisory Group consists of up to ten members with considerable traditional knowledge.

When a vacancy arises, the position will be advertised both formally through regional press and informally through networks. Those wishing to apply for the membership must complete an application form – obtained from the Aboriginal NRM Facilitator or via the Wheatbelt NRM website.

Membership will be reviewed by the Advisory Group and a recommendation on acceptance will be put through the CEO to the Wheatbelt NRM Board for confirmation.

Each member will be given sitting fees and travel costs for each meeting they attend. If a support person for a member is required, accommodation and meals can be reimbursed. Wheatbelt NRM will cover travel costs of up to 20km each way from the residence of the support person to the member's normal place of residence. The support person will not receive sitting fees.

Suitable proxy members are encouraged to attend if a core member is unavailable and will be paid a sitting fee and travel costs.

Proxy members cannot permanently replace existing Advisory Group members, however they can apply for a position on the Advisory Group should one become available. If a member has nominated a proxy for 3 meetings in a row the member will be asked by the Aboriginal NRM Project Facilitator if they are able/want to continue their role or would prefer the position was put up for nominations. Once a decision has been made the Advisory Group will give a recommendation to the WNRM CEO and Board for confirmation.

If a member misses two consecutive meetings without nominating a proxy, or providing notice of unavoidable absence, their position on the Advisory Group can be revoked and put up for nominations. This decision will be made by the Advisory Group and Wheatbelt NRM staff.

Wheatbelt NRM staff and Advisory Group members will offer assistance to anyone interested in applying for a position on the group.

**Guests and Visitors:**

Guests will be invited to meetings as requested by Advisory Group members and Aboriginal NRM staff member (within Wheatbelt NRM).

Visitors are welcome to attend Advisory Group meetings, however they will not receive a sitting fee or travel costs and the Wheatbelt Aboriginal NRM Facilitator should be advised of any visitors 2 working days prior to the meeting for catering purposes.

Visitors do not have voting rights.

**Voting rights:**

The Advisory Group will seek to work in cooperation to reach a consensus on issues. Where this is not possible, a vote will be cast. Each group member is entitled to a single vote.

**The majority decision will prevail.**

**Requirement of members:**

- Attend Advisory Group meetings, or if unavailable, submit an apology and where possible, nominate a proxy member who is able to attend.
- Communicate to the Advisory Group the ideas, concerns and direction of the wider Aboriginal community.

- Communicate the ideas and direction of Wheatbelt NRM to the wider Aboriginal community.
- Advise the group of any conflict of interest involving material gain or immediate family they may have in regards to a meeting topic.

**Term of office:** There is no term of office – members voluntarily resign from the Advisory Group.

**Chair:** An Aboriginal NRM staff member (within Wheatbelt NRM) or a willing Elder will chair the meetings on a rotating basis.

**Minutes:** An Aboriginal NRM staff member (within Wheatbelt NRM) will record the Minutes and provide copies of the Minutes to each group member.

**Responsible Officers:** Project Manager (Aboriginal NRM) and Project Facilitator (Aboriginal NRM).

**Meeting Frequency:** Four times per year.

**Document Review:** The terms of reference will be reviewed every three years.