

4.3.1. Conflicts of Interest

All Board members and staff are required to complete and sign a Declaration of Interest annually at the Annual General Meeting. This confidential information is maintained in a secure location by the Executive Officer.

'Declarations of Interest' are a standing item on the agenda of any meeting of the Board of the New England North West ACC. Members and staff are required to declare any actual or perceived conflicts of interest bi-monthly. Should a Board member or staff member declare a possible conflict of interest at any meeting of the Board the member must;

- Ensure the declaration of interest is recorded in the minutes of the meeting
- Other Board members are to determine the extent of the conflict of interest, direct or indirect
- A direct conflict of interest is if a Board or staff member has been directly involved or has a vested interest in the preparation of information or an application for funding that the Board is assessing
- An indirect conflict of interest is if a Board or staff member is if the Board of staff member is known to any person or persons mentioned in the application
- Although actions toward the Board or staff member are determined at the meeting the guide is that for a direct conflict of interest the Board member or staff member must leave the room when the information/application is being discussed. If the conflict is considered indirect the Board member may remain seated with other members but must not participate in any discussion about the project.

Any Board or staff member determining if a possible or perceived conflict of interest exists should discuss the detail with the Executive Officer or Chairman.

NEW ENGLAND NORTH WEST AREA CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
DECLARATION – CONFLICT OF INTEREST BOARD MEMBERS AND STAFF

Surname:			
Other Names:			
Home Address:			
City:		State:	
Postcode:		Telephone:	(02)
Position:			

1. I understand and acknowledge that it is a requirement of my appointment to the New England North West Area Consultative Committee that I fully disclose to the best of my current knowledge, any situation which may lead to a conflict (“conflict” includes potential or perceived conflict) between my duty to the New England North West Area Consultative Committee in relation to any aspect of my personal interests (“personal interests “ include the interests of any business associate or immediate family member).
2. I understand and acknowledge I will disclose any asset, interest or appointment which may constitute a conflict between my duty to the New England North West Area Consultative Committee in relation to any aspect of my personal interests.
3. I understand that it is a condition of my involvement with the New England North West Area Consultative Committee that I must immediately declare any situation which may arise or come to my attention, which represents a conflict of interest between my duty to the New England North West Area Consultative Committee any my personal interests.
4. I understand that in making this Declaration I must either confirm that I know of no current situation that places my personal interests in conflict with my duty to the New England North West Area Consultative Committee (Part A) or disclose such information honestly and fully (Part B).

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

(Complete sections A OR B)

PART A – NO KNOWN CONFLICT

- A. I confirm that at the time of signing, I am unaware of any conflict of interest between my duty to the New England North West Area Consultative Committee any my own personal interests and I undertake to draw to the attention of the New England North West Area Consultative Committee, any situation which may later arise that could lead to a conflict of interest between my duty to the New England North West Area Consultative Committee in relation to any aspect of the New England North West Area Consultative Committee and my personal interests.

NENWACC FUNCTION & INCLUSIONS

Signature:	
Signature of Witness:	
Name of Witness (please print):	
Date:	

PART B – DISCLOSURE (interests, appointments and other matters requiring disclosure)

B. I disclose the following interests and I undertake to draw to the attention of the New England North West Area Consultative Committee any situation which may arise that could lead to a conflict of interest, or potential conflict of interest between my duty to the New England North West Area Consultative Committee and my personal interests.

NB. The New England North West Area Consultative Committee will only use the disclosures made in this declaration for the purposes of the New England North West Area Consultative Committee and will otherwise comply with the Information Privacy Principles under the Privacy Act in relation to the disclosures.

(a) Income sources including shares	
(b) Appointment as a director	
(c) Appointment as a trustee	
(d) Any other material personal interest which might appear to raise a conflict with your duty to the New England North West Area Consultative Committee.	
Signature:	
Signature of Witness:	
Name of Witness (please print):	
Date:	

4.4. ACCs AND THE POLITICAL PROCESS

4.4.1. Contesting Elections and other Politically Aligned Activities

DOTARS supports the involvement of ACC Chairs, members and Executive Officers in community organisations and institutions such as service clubs, Chambers of Commerce and Local Government.

However, a special case of actual or perceived conflict of interest arises when a Chair, Committee member or employee of an ACC is active in any capacity in a State, Federal or Local Government election, or when there is a perception that they are publicly aligned politically (eg. attendance in their ACC professional capacity at a political event).

This situation may raise a perception of conflict of interest between their apolitical role with the ACC and their political affiliations. It is general practice in public life to separate these roles.

To avoid the potential conflict of interest:

- Chairs and members of an ACC who are candidates, campaign managers, running for pre-selection or aligned publicly in any way during a State, Federal or Local Government election must stand aside during the period of the election. As soon as possible, they must contact their DOTARS Regional Manager to discuss their replacement while they are campaigning as a candidate or assisting the campaign publicly in any way.

- ACC employees who are candidates, campaign managers, running for pre-selection, or aligned publicly in any way during a State, Federal or Local Government election are also expected to step aside during the period of the election campaign. In cases where it is not possible for the employee to take leave, the employee must not represent the ACC publicly during the period of the campaign and the onus is on the ACC to implement the appropriate action to enable the ACC to continue to function and meet its obligations under the funding contract.

The ACC Chair / Committee are accountable and responsible for establishing procedures to ensure any involvement in such organisations does not impact on the duties the ACC employee is expected to perform under their employment contract and in relation to their role.

4.4.2. ACC employees elected to Local Government

DOTARS supports the involvement of ACC Chairs, members and Executive Officers in community organisations and institutions such as service clubs, Chambers of Commerce and Local Government.

However, ACC employees elected to LGAs may find themselves exposed to actual or perceived conflicts of interest given their role in promoting, coordinating comments and assisting applicants in the development of their application under the Regional Partnerships (RP) programme.

The ACC Chair / Committee are accountable and responsible for establishing procedures to ensure any involvement in such organisations does not impact on the duties the ACC employee is expected to perform under their employment contract and in relation to their role (as defined in the ACC Handbook).

The ACC Chair / Committee are also accountable and responsible for establishing procedures to maintain the apolitical nature of the ACC during LGA elections. ACC employees are expected to follow the arrangements outlined in this Handbook for activity related to State and Federal elections (which is currently to stand aside from their job or role on the committee if they are candidates, campaign managers, running for pre-selection or aligned publicly in any way during a state, Federal or LG election). When ACC employees have to stand aside during an election period, the ACC must advise their DOTARS Regional Manager as soon as possible to discuss the employee's replacement during the campaign period).

ACCs must inform DOTARS of any ACC employees elected to LGA's and employees are required to advise the Regional Manager of their election so that DOTARS can maintain a register of ACC employees elected to LGA's. In this advice, the ACC must also outline and / or confirm:

- how the ACC will manage the employee's work including all RP related activity while the employee stands aside during the election period;
- that the employee's dual responsibilities will not in any way impede their ability to perform the duties of their ACC position;
- the process the ACC has implemented to deal with conflicts of interest that will inevitably arise for the employee in the course of their role in Regional Partnerships project promotion and applications;
- and that the processes implemented by the ACC to manage the issues can withstand public scrutiny.

The 'period of the campaign' is understood to take effect from the time the election is formally called.

The Assistant Secretary of the Regional Communities Branch will consider exemptions from these requirements on an individual case by case basis. Anyone seeking such an exemption should contact his or her relevant DOTARS Regional Office Manager in the first instance.

4.4.3. Use of ACC Facilities for Political Purposes

ACC assets and premises must not be used for party political purposes. This includes producing or disseminating political material using ACC equipment or resources such as photocopiers, fax machines, and office supplies.

4.4.4. Display of Political Material

Display of party political material including posters, leaflets and badges, is not permitted on ACC premises. Similarly, information that is of a political nature must not be added to ACC websites or included in ACC printed material.

4.4.5. Public Comment on Political and Social Issues

The Government does not restrict ACC Chairs, members and employees making public comment.

However, they must be aware that there is a tension between comments made in a personal capacity and in their capacity as a representative of an ACC. Therefore, ACC Chairs, members and employees should carefully consider the impact of any public comments they make. In particular, ACC Chairs, members and employees should not take any action or make any public comments in their role as a representative of an ACC that might imply that the ACC prefers or supports the policies of a particular political party.

In this context public comment includes comments made on political and social issues as part of public speaking engagements, radio and television interviews, general correspondence,

and in any other circumstances, where it is reasonably foreseeable that the comment will flow to the community at large.

4.4.6. Information Campaigns and Promotional Activities

Some information and promotional campaigns related to Australian Government programmes and initiatives may need to be suspended or curtailed during an election campaign period, depending on the nature of the campaign and whether they are likely to affect voting in an election.

Campaigns, items on websites and newsletter articles which highlight the role of particular Ministers or which address issues which are controversial between the major political parties must be discontinued in the caretaker period (ie, from when the election is formally announced by the Governor General until the result of the election is formally declared).

DOTARS will circulate advice to ACCs on caretaker conventions that will apply during the caretaker period.

NEW ENGLAND NORTH WEST ACC
ARRANGEMENTS FOR CARETAKER PERIOD

The following has been developed from advice received from DOTARS on activities that can be conducted during the Caretaker Period.

Caretaker Period commences 31 August 2004 and concludes on Sunday after the election.

When an election is called the House of Representatives is dissolved and the Government assumes a "caretaker" role – hence it is called Caretaker Period. This is described as the caretaker period when, by convention, the Government ensures that significant decisions are not taken which would bind an incoming Government and limit its freedom of action. During this time the public service and organisations funded by the Commonwealth must be especially careful to maintain their apolitical status.

All Ministers/Parliamentary Secretaries continue their commissions as Ministers but abide by certain caretaker conventions – this basically means the Minister would not make significant funding decisions on programmes or policy matters.

All Australians have the right to participate in public debate on political and social issues, and to participate in our democratic political processes. However, it is an expectation of the Commonwealth that ACCs take care to ensure their operations remain apolitical at all times. This reflects that ACCs receive public funding support from the Australian Government. In particular, publicly funded resources should not be used to favour either side during an election period.

In this context public comment includes comments made on political and social issues as part of public speaking engagements, radio and television interviews, letters to the press, booklets and notices, and in other circumstances, where it is reasonably foreseeable that the comment will flow to the community at large.

There is little restriction on ACC Chairs, members and employees making public comment. However, each person must be aware that there is a tension between comments made in a personal capacity and in his or her capacity as a representative of an ACC. Chairs and Executive Officers should give careful consideration to the impact, by virtue of their position, of any public comments they make.

In particular, ACC Chairs, members and employees should not take any action or make any public comments in their roles as representatives of their ACC that imply that a particular party will be successful at an upcoming election or that an ACC prefers or supports the policies of a particular political party. As any public comment on behalf of an ACC on an issue of current political controversy is likely to be interpreted as favouring one side of the argument, it would normally be appropriate to avoid such comment.

ACCs should be particularly alert to incidents that may compromise the apolitical nature of the ACC's operations in the Caretaker Period.

POINTS TO REMEMBER:

- Do not speculate about the election or the future shape of ACCs or programmes administered by the ACC
- In general, the conduct of staff of the New England North West ACC should be; apolitical, performing duties in an impartial and professional manner, all staff should avoid possible or perceived conflicts of interest
- Office, vehicles, computers etc are not to be used to support political activities, this includes wearing or displaying political material
- If you have any doubt about activities, please discuss it with Rebel
- use of ACC facilities for political purposes;
- display of political material;
- campaigning and involvement in political activities;
- standing for Parliament;

- public comment on social and political issues;
- launches, seminars and other public events; and
- information campaigns or promotional activities.

1. CAMPAIGNING BY ACC CHAIRS, MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES

Where ACC Chairs, members or employees are playing a significant part in a political campaign there is the potential for a perceived or actual conflict of interest between issues raised in the campaign and their involvement with the ACC. It would also be difficult for individuals who are significantly involved in campaigning to maintain the commitment of time and attention necessary as an ACC Chair or member.

ACC Chairs who are significantly involved in a political campaign must promptly contact their DOTARS Regional Manager to discuss their replacements whilst they are campaigning.

Each ACC must ensure that Executive Officers and employees who are significantly involved in political campaigning, take leave from their positions for the duration of the campaign.

Where an ACC Chair, member, Executive Officer and employee is significantly involved in political campaigning, this must be brought to the attention of your DOTARS Regional Manager. DOTARS will provide further advice on the action to be taken in the circumstances.

If ACC Chairs, members and employees take part in any political campaigning, they must avoid creating the impression that they are representing an ACC. For example by wearing clothing or badges that feature their ACC name and/or logo and/or the ACC network logo or introducing themselves as a Chair, member or employee of their ACC.

The Secretary of DOTARS has the discretion to determine the action to be taken to resolve the perceived or actual conflict of interest resulting from the involvement of the individual in political campaigning.

2. STANDING FOR PARLIAMENT

ACC Chairs, members and employees of an ACC who decide to contest a State or Federal election should also be aware that their decision might raise in their communities a perception of conflict of interest between their role with their ACC and their political aspirations. ACC Chairs planning to contest a State or Federal election must, as soon as practical, contact their DOTARS Regional Manager to discuss the implications of their decision and their replacements until the results of the election are announced. It is expected that that a member or employee of an ACC who has decided to contest a State or Federal election step aside until the election results are known. Leave for ACC members should be in line with the rules of the ACC constitution (where these provisions exist). Leave for ACC staff should be consistent with his or her employment contract.

3. PROVISION OF INFORMATION

During the caretaker period, an ACC must not give any member of any political party information that may be used for political advantage. If an ACC receives any requests for information on their work or Regional Partnerships projects, these should be referred to DOTARS.

4. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

Work to develop new projects or changes to existing projects can continue in-house but will not be prepared for Ministers for a decision until after the election and appointment of new (or reappointment of previous) Ministers.

5. PROGRAMME PUBLICATION/ADVERTISING

All direct promotion of the New England North West ACC and the Regional Partnerships programme is to be withdrawn and not distributed or re activated until after the election and the appointment of new Ministers.

- Do we continue promoting programmes?

Caution needs to be exercised that materials to be used on ACC websites are not political material and printed material produced and distributed by ACCs is not electoral matter (that is matter which is intended or likely to affect voting in an election). Information that is of a political nature must not be added to websites or included in ACC printed material. Therefore the website will be removed for the caretaker period.

Campaigns, items on websites and newsletter articles which highlight the role of particular Ministers or which address issues which are controversial between the major political parties would normally be discontinued in the caretaker period.

Agencies should avoid active distribution of material during the caretaker period if it promotes Government policies or emphasises the achievements of the Government or a Minister.

Passive distribution of material, such as continued placement in the agency's offices or distribution in response to requests is acceptable.

- Do we continue running grant writing workshops?

There are no grant workshops or group discussions that could be seen as active promotion of a programme to be conducted during this period. Such activities could be perceived as promoting Government activities. Even if all references to specific programmes in the workshops were removed, it would be hard to avoid the specific programme being discussed and hence promoted.

- What should we do about project launches already organised to involve an MP?

Where possible, programme related events and launches should be postponed until after the election is decided. Where this is not possible, the MP's invitation to speak or officiate at the event should be tactfully withdrawn citing the caretaker conventions. Alternatively, it may be appropriate to invite candidates from other parties to also attend but not speak or officiate at the event.

Staff should not normally attend launches, nor provide material other than factual information (i.e. not speeches) to Ministers for launches. Where considerable funds and arrangements are already set, and it is not possible to postpone the event, arrangements should be explored for inviting equal representation from Opposition as well as Government representatives.

6. PROJECT PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

- Do we continue to accept funding applications?

We can continue to accept applications for funding, however we should advise that they will not be considered for funding until after the election. Background work on project assessments should continue, however the applicant should not be contacted for further information regarding their application during the caretaker period. A standard advisory letter should be sent to applicants submitting applications during this time.

7. PROJECT PROPOSAL REVIEW AND EVALUATION/ASSESSMENT

- What advice can we give to applicants who ask about their projects?

We should write advising that no decision on their project will be taken until after the election.

8. PROJECT FORMAL APPROVAL AND CONTRACT SIGNED

- Can we proceed to contract a project that the Minister/Parliamentary Secretary has approved and which has been announced?

When a decision has been made and announced prior to the election being called, a project may be contracted during the caretaker period where the dollar value of these projects is generally small, and timeliness is important.

Major contracts should not be entered into during the caretaker period. When considering whether a contract qualifies as 'major', officers should consider the dollar value of the commitment and also whether it involves a routine matter of administration or instead represents a politically contentious issue. As a general rule, advice should be sought for projects with a value over \$2 million.

- Does DOTARS continue to process funding applications?

Assessments can be prepared for consideration by the incoming government but should not be put to the Parliamentary Secretary/Minister for decision until after the election and appointment of new ministers. Applicants should be provided with a letter advising of the implications of the Caretaker period on the progress of their application.

- Can DOTARS contact unsuccessful applicants during the caretaker period?

Yes, if the decision was taken prior to the election being called or taken by a Departmental delegate.

9. PROJECT MONITORING, PROGRESS REPORTING CLAIMS AND PAYMENTS

- Where an existing project involves regular payments, should these payments continue through the caretaker period?

Yes

- Should project monitoring continue?

Yes

10. PROJECT COMPLETION

- Can a project be finalised during the caretaker period?

Yes

11. PROGRAMME REPORTING AND AUDITING

- Can reports on approved projects (including requests by electorate) be provided to government and/or opposition Ministers/Members/Senators?

All requests for information should be cleared with a member of the DOTARS Caretaker Team. Normally such requests will be met unless the material requires significant resources to compile and was clearly for use in the election campaign.

- Can programme audits continue?

Work on audits can continue but should not be put to the Minister/Parliamentary Secretary for consideration during the caretaker period.

12. ACC ASSETS

ACC assets and premises must not be utilised for political purposes. This includes producing or disseminating political material using ACC equipment or resources, for example; photocopiers, fax machines and office supplies. Candidate's requests to visit ACC premises for electioneering purposes should be declined. Political meetings must not be held on ACC premises.

Display of political material including posters, leaflets and badges is not permitted on ACC premises.

For clarification on specific situations you should contact your Regional Office.

4.4.7. Dispute Involving Conflict of Interest Issues

Where a conflict of interest by a Chair, member or employee of an ACC is brought to DOTARS' attention and is disputed by the ACC, the Programme Delegate, Assistant Secretary, Regional Communities has the power to investigate and determine the action necessary to address the conflict(s) they deem appropriate.

DISPUTE INVOLVING CONFLICT OF INTEREST ISSUES

The processes for addressing conflict of Interest issues are;

BOARD MEMBERS & STAFF

1. Any time a Board member or staff member believes there could be an perceived or actual incident of conflict of interest, it should be recorded and communicated to the Executive Officer. A staff member or Board member can notify the Executive Officer at any time in writing.
2. 'Conflicts of Interest' is a standing item on the agenda of the New England North West ACC

The process for an individual or an organisation to make representation to the New England North West ACC on an actual or perceived conflict of interest is as follows;

1. Claims of an incident or perceived conflict of interest must be made in writing to the Chairman of the New England North West ACC PO Box 669 Tamworth NSW 2340.
2. The claim will be assessed by the Executive Officer and forwarded to the Chairman within 5 days of receipt.
3. The Executive Officer is to prepare a response to the incident or perceived incident within 10 days of receipt of the claim and discuss the claim with the person the allegations involve.
4. The Chairman is to convene or discuss the claim with members of the Board, the claimant and the staff member or Board member involved. The Chairman may call an extraordinary meeting of the Board to deal with the claim.
5. The recommendations of any action to be taken by the Board is to be discussed with DOTARS and acted upon.

The claimant may if unsatisfied contact the Regional Office of DOTARS to seek further clarification on the issue.

If the Board member or staff member is unsatisfied with the process or finding of the Board they too may discuss the detail with the Regional Office of DOTARS.

5. MANAGEMENT OF ACC OPERATIONS

5.1. CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

Corporate governance is about how an organisation is managed, its functional structures, its culture, its policies and strategies, and the ways in which it deals with its various stakeholders. In many ways governance is a combination of legal and better practice organisational structure and management requirements aimed at facilitating accountability and improving performance. (Auditor-General, Better Practice Public Sector Governance p.2)

The Department requires ACCs to adopt good corporate governance through best practice including:

- clear definitions of responsibility, roles of the ACC Chair, members and employees, with clear lines of reporting;
- clear understanding of relationships between the ACC and all levels of government, business and the broader community;
- transparent management processes and procedures for addressing conflicts of interest from those entrusted to manage resources and deliver outcomes; and
- Accountability for all operational aspects, particularly for decisions about funding.

Corporate governance is underpinned by a values system and code of conduct that outlines standards of integrity and ethical behaviour and highlights the level of transparency and consistency in actions that all staff should adopt.

Good corporate governance also requires sound risk management. Finally, reporting is needed for accountability purposes including outlining significant issues that arise and comparing performance against key indicators.

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

The understanding of Corporate Governance and compliance is agreed to in this document and in signed Employment Contracts for all staff. The Board commit to all procedures by signing membership applications annually.

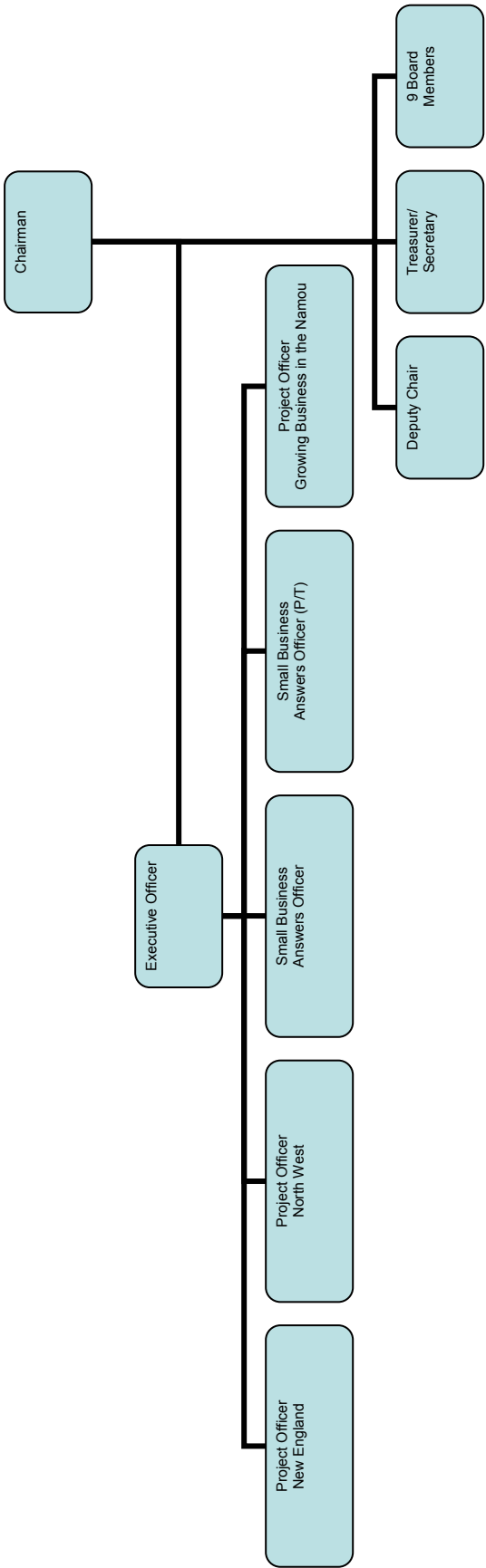
All Board members and staff are required to complete and sign a Declaration of Interest annually at the Annual General Meeting. This confidential information is maintained in a secure location by the Executive Officer.

'Declarations of Interest' are a standing item on the agenda of any meeting of the Board of the New England North West ACC. Members and staff are required to declare any actual or perceived conflicts of interest bi-monthly. Should a Board member or staff member declare a possible conflict of interest at any meeting of the Board the member must;

- Ensure the declaration of interest is recorded in the minutes of the meeting
- Other Board members are to determine the extent of the conflict of interest, direct or indirect
- A direct conflict of interest is if a Board or staff member has been directly involved or has a vested interest in the preparation of information or an application for funding that the Board is assessing
- An indirect conflict of interest is if a Board or staff member is if the Board of staff member is known to any person or persons mentioned in the application
- Although actions toward the Board or staff member are determined at the meeting the guide is that for a direct conflict of interest the Board member or staff member must leave the room when the information/application is being discussed. If the conflict is considered indirect the Board member may remain seated with other members but must not participate in any discussion about the project.

Any Board or staff member determining if a possible or perceived conflict of interest exists should discuss the detail with the Executive Officer or Chairman.

Organisational Chart



5.2. RISK MANAGEMENT

Each ACC should have a documented risk management process in place. A risk management process identifies key risks, outlines strategies for minimising those risks and provides a plan to address residual risks across the organisation. It is a process that includes four functions of planning, organising, leading and controlling losses of an organisation at a reasonable cost.

Each ACC is to periodically review its risk management plan, its decision making process on the level of risk, its management of planning and the day-to-day operational processes it utilises. Both the process applied in the risk analysis and the control procedures to be implemented must be documented and reported to the appropriate ACC meeting for acceptance/amendment. ACCs are also expected to review their plans in consultation with their external auditor. The Department will review ACCs' Risk Management plans as part of the Department's Quality Assurance Assessment process.

RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

In the administration and implementation of its Annual Business Plan, and in its use of funding from the Department of Transport and Regional Services, the Committee is committed to demonstrating sound corporate governance.

The NENWACC has prepared this Risk Management Strategy to provide guidelines for the management and operation of the organisation. The strategy should be read in conjunction with the above documentation.

It covers four major sections:

- Administration and Operation (including financial)
- Committee Performance
- Staff Performance
- External Performance

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Administration and Operation (including financial)

Risk Type	Nature of Risk	Strategies to Avoid Risk	Current Risk level	Activities
Financial	The agreed NENWACC operational budget is not adhered to.	Committee members to receive a copy of the operational funding budget. Any variations or projected variations to be notified, discussed, agreed upon and minuted at NENWACC meetings.	Low	NENWACC Operational Expenditure is a standing agenda item at each NENWACC meeting. Expenditure is presented against the agreed budget line items. Changes to the agreed operational budget are agreed to by the NENWACC committee, minuted and sent to DOTARS for approval.
Financial	Unauthorised expenditure of NENWACC funds.	Financial statement and most recent bank reconciliation presented at each NENWACC meeting. Each bank reconciliation is to be signed by the Executive Officer and Treasurer. Financial report signed off from each meeting with minutes. Expenditure by cheque requires two signatures – signatories to be determined annually at the NENWACC AGM.	Low	Financial statements presented to NENWACC meetings include full transaction statement of all ingoing and outgoing funds. Expenditure is reviewed half way through the financial year.
Financial	Recording of financial transactions to the general ledger is not up to date or undertaken regularly.	Financial transactions and general ledger entry kept up to date.	Low	Accounts and financial transactions are updated each fortnight. Financial statements reviewed by the Finance & Audit Sub-Committee and recommended to Board meetings. Up-to-date financial statements are reported to NENWACC meetings.
Financial	Bank accounts are opened or operated without authorisation.	NENWACC to approve banking arrangements, noted annually. Executive Officer and Treasurer to monitor operation of bank accounts.	Low	Requirements for signatories. Part of annual review of NENWACC Operational Details undertaken at the AGM.
Financial	A register of all bank accounts is not kept.	A bank account register kept.	Low	Register of bank accounts maintained on file.

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Risk Type	Nature of Risk	Strategies to Avoid Risk	Current Risk Level	Activities
Budgetary	Funds are not expended against identified and agreed to budget items.	A complete chart of accounts will be kept showing expenditure against each budget item.	Low	Financial reporting of actual versus budget are reviewed by the Finance and Audit Sub-Committee. Financial report to the NENWACC each meeting includes statement of expenditure against budget. NENWACC confirms in Operational Details.
Contractual	NENWACC operational funding is used as security.	NENWACC acknowledges that funding is not to be used as security.	Low	Backups of computer networks are maintained daily. Backup tapes held of site daily.
Administrative	Financial records are lost.	Financial records are maintained in both electronic and hard copy formats. Electronic back-ups are maintained, either in-house or off-site. Hard copy financial records are stored in a securely locked cabinet.	Low	Financial record keeping checked and is undertaken regularly (at least monthly) and back-up procedures are undertaken.
Administrative	Operational funds are expended for petty cash and travel without limits.	The Operational Details outlines the expenditure of petty cash and travel expenses for Committee members and staff. Travel expenses are in line with ACC Handbook and reviewed when changes are made to Handbook.	Low	Operational Details reviewed annually at AGM.
Administrative	Audit reports not prepared by a suitably qualified accountant or equivalent in accordance with contractual requirements.	Engage suitably qualified accountant for auditing purposes.	Low	Audit report tabled and accepted by NENWACC and thoroughly reviewed by Finance and Audit Sub-Committee
Administrative	Inappropriate destruction of data or loss of access to data.	Data backup system in place and run regularly. Data recovery system in place. Hard copy files maintained of all-important documentation.	Low	Data back-up system installed on computer, with files transferred to disk storage. Disks files in secure location. File backup on daily and monthly basis.

Committee Performance

Risk Type	Nature of Risk	Strategies to avoid risk	Current Risk Level	Activities
Mismanagement of association	NENWACC Committee members are not aware of their rights and responsibilities under the NSW Associations Incorporation Act 1984.	Each member to be supplied with a copy of the Rights and Responsibilities under the NSW Associations Incorporation Act 1984.	Low	Committee reviews their Rights and Responsibilities as an agenda item at the AGM. Updates and information from DOTARS provided in EO reports.
Mismanagement of association	NENWACC is not adhering to the mandatory obligations under the NSW Associations Incorporation Act 1984, eg annual reports.	Each member to be supplied with a copy of the Rights and Responsibilities under the NSW Associations Incorporation Act 1984.	Low	Committee reviews their Rights and Responsibilities as an agenda item at the AGM.
Mismanagement of association	Amendments to the NENWACC Constitution are not lodged with the appropriate body or provided to DOTARS.	Any amendments will be lodged with the appropriate body.	Low	Resolution approving amendments to the NENWACC Constitution will include directive to lodge the changes with Department of Fair Trading and DOTARS.
Member's performance	NENWACC Committee members are not aware of their roles and responsibilities under the DOTARS Operational contract.	Committee members supplied with copies of the Handbook for Area Consultative Committees incorporating procedures and policies for the NENWACC. Copies of the DOTARS Operational contract are made available to Committee members each year.	Low	Committee members issued with a folder to contain all relevant documentation. Accuracy of information included in Members documents reviewed annually.
Mismanagement of association	Perpetual register of members is not current.	Register of members to be kept current and reviewed on a quarterly basis.	Low	Register is reviewed on a six monthly basis or as membership changes. DOTARS is advised of membership changes.
Contractual	Committee members are paid a sitting fee.	Members to acknowledge that no sitting fee is available.	Low	Full register provided to DOTARS annually. The Handbook for Area Consultative Committees distributed to members to hold on file.

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Risk Type	Nature of Risk	Strategies to Avoid Risk	Current Risk Level	Activities
Contractual	Chair and/or committee members provide verbal advice on contractual arrangements that breaches contract, leading to litigation.	Chair and/or committee members instructed not to provide verbal advice on contractual arrangements. All advice on contractual arrangements to be in writing from the chair after receiving appropriate advice.	Low	ACC Code of Conduct developed and endorsed by Committee members.
Insurance	NENWACC members face litigation for financial mismanagement or professional misconduct.	Professional indemnity and public liability insurance maintained by DOTARS covers NENWACC members.	Low	Copy of insurance coverage made available to NENWACC members and maintained on file.
Mismanagement of association	NENWACC members are not appointed in accordance with the ACC's rules of incorporation.	NENWACC Chair made aware of responsibilities for appointment as outlined in the Handbook for Area Consultative Committees. NENWACC chair made aware of NENWACC Constitution.	Low	NENWACC processes outlined in policy and procedures document. The Handbook for Area Consultative Committees and Constitution distributed to chairperson to hold on file.
Mismanagement of association	Meetings are not run in accordance with the NENWACC constitution.	All Committee and sub-committee meetings required to have a formal agenda. All Committee and sub-committee meetings required to produce minutes against the agenda items. All minutes for Committee and sub-committee meetings to be endorsed at a subsequent meeting and signed off by chair.	Low	Agendas, papers and minutes for all Committee and sub-committee meetings are maintained by the Executive Officer. All agenda, papers and minutes for all Committee and sub-committee meetings are maintained on file.
Mismanagement of association	Decisions relating to the operation of the NENWACC are not reflected in the minutes of the meetings.	All decisions are to be raised, discussed, motioned and minuted in accordance with the Constitution.	Low	Minutes are open to comment and review by committee and signature by Chair.

NENWACC FUNCTION & INCLUSIONS

Risk Type	Nature of Risk	Strategies to Avoid Risk	Current Risk Level	Activities
Mismanagement of association	Minutes are not authorised as a true and accurate reflection of Committee or sub-committee meetings.	<p>All minutes for Committee and sub-committee meetings to be endorsed at a subsequent meeting and signed off by chair.</p> <p>All minutes for Committee and sub-committee meetings to be produced and distributed within 10 days of the meeting.</p> <p>All minutes to be made available for perusal by Committee or sub-committee members at least 48 hours before the next meeting.</p> <p>All minutes for Committee and sub-committee meetings to be held on file.</p>	Low	Minutes of Committee and sub-committee meetings are a standing agenda item at subsequent meetings for endorsement.
Mismanagement of association	Decisions of the NENWACC are unable to be verified.	All minutes for Committee and sub-committee meetings to be held on file.	Low	Minutes are produced as soon as practicable after each Committee and sub-committee meeting, and copies distributed to participants and DOTARS. Filing is kept up to date.
Mismanagement of association	Sub-committees operate without knowledge or authorisation of NENWACC.	Establishment and powers of sub-committees are to be agreed, endorsed and recorded in the minutes of NENWACC meetings.	Low	Powers of sub-committee reviewed at the AGM.
Mismanagement of association	Sub-committees operate without knowledge or authorisation of NENWACC.	Sub-committee minutes are to be tabled at next available NENWACC meeting for endorsement.	Low	Sub-committee meeting minutes are standing agenda item at meetings of the NENWACC.
Conflict of Interest	NENWACC members benefit from activities of the NENWACC.	Conflict of Interest policy implemented. Committee members sign a declaration to advice of any conflict of interest in matters discussed and agreed upon by the NENWACC.	Low	Conflict of Interest Register maintained on file. New members are required to sign a conflict of interest declaration. Chair/Committee members ensure any conflict of interest issue is raised and minuted at Committee meetings. NENWACC Constitution contains relevant information relating to Conflict of Interest.

NENWACC FUNCTION & INCLUSIONS

Risk Type	Nature of Risk	Strategies to Avoid Risk	Current Risk Level	Activities
Mismanagement of association	NENWACC does not comply with the Privacy Act 1988 and privacy requirements are breached.	Adherence to the NENWACC's Privacy Statement and Policy.	Low	Privacy Statement and Policy enforced. Privacy complaints to be included in the NENWACC Executive Officer's Report to NENWACC Meetings.
Taxation	Australian Tax Office threatens to fine NENWACC over taxation returns, including BAS.	BAS returns to be completed in a timely manner.	Low	BAS completed.
Assets	NENWACC assets removed from NENWACC premises without authorisation.	Assets Register to be maintained and kept up-to-date following any asset purchase or lease agreement.	Low	Asset register reviewed by the Board annually. Asset register forwarded to DOTARS with each quarterly report on operations.
Assets	The DOTARS delegate has not approved asset purchases over \$1,000.	All asset purchases over \$1,000 to be approved by DOTARS delegate.	Low	ACC acknowledge purchase limit without DOTARS approval.
Leases	Leases, including vehicle leases are entered into without the approval of the NENWACC.	Lease arrangements to be agreed upon by NENWACC.	Low	Lease agreements to be agenda item at AGM and approval documented in the minutes.
Taxation	No documentation to support calculation of FBT liability.	Logbooks to be provided in all NENWACC vehicles and users required to maintain them.	Low	Motor vehicle logbook used to establish FBT liability.
Administrative	Unauthorised or inappropriate use of NENWACC facilities and assets.	NENWACC to monitor use of facilities and assets.	Low	NENWACC Executive Officer to advise any issues of concern to NENWACC.

Staff Performance

Risk Type	Nature of Risk	Strategies to Avoid Risk	Current Risk Level	Activities
Employment of staff	NENWACC engages staff without appropriate process and working conditions.	Process for engaging staff clearly defined in Policy. All staff employed under contracts.	Low	Staffing Policy implemented. Employment letters and signed contracts on file.
Employment of staff	NENWACC staff do not comply with NENWACC policies.	Ensure that staff members are aware of NENWACC policies that relate to them and their activities.	Low	NENWACC Staff to complete a Conflict of Interest Declaration and Privacy Statement.
Employment of staff	Staff do not perform at a satisfactory level.	Performance review implemented.	Low	Performance review undertaken six monthly as per Policy.
Termination of staff	NENWACC doesn't follow accepted guidelines when dismissing staff.	NENWACC uses standard process for terminating staff.	Low	Process undertaken by Executive Officer (where appropriate), Chair and one other committee member.
Employment of staff	Staff resigns unexpectedly.	Recruitment process is established for replacement of staff.	Medium	Staff job description forms on file for all staff positions. Staffing Policy implemented.
Occupational Health Safety	Staff injured at work.	Develop an Occupational Health Safety Consultation Statement to facilitate development of good work practices.	Medium	Staff and Committee to adhere to process outlined in the OHS Consultation Statement. OHS Standing Item on NENWACC Meeting Agenda.
Occupational Health Safety	Staff who drive vehicles involved in road accident.	All staff to undergo advanced driver training at NENWACC expense.	Medium	Driver training instituted as part of annual review of staff training.
Insurance	Employees are injured on the job.	Ensure Workplace cover is in place and maintained.	Low	Workers compensation policy purchased.

NENWACC FUNCTION & INCLUSIONS

External Performance

Risk Type	Nature of Risk	Strategies to Avoid Risk	Current Risk Level	Activities
Committee actions	Projects that do not meet the respective programme guidelines are endorsed by NENWACC.	Assessment of applications procedures included in operations procedures. NENWACC to review each RP project proposal and ensure that project is within programme guidelines. Up-to-date data and information is available to committee members to aid decision-making process. Other programs are responded to.	Low	Programme guidelines provided to NENWACC members when seeking RAP project endorsement. Delegation to Sub-Committee structures. Processes adhered to for consideration of other project applications.
Committee actions	Committee has low credibility and poor reputation in its community.	Committee membership kept under constant review. NENWACC addresses concerns and issues of key stakeholders and clients.	Low	Effective communication channels maintained between NENWACC and stakeholders and clients. Chair and EO to review committee membership to ensure best representation.
Project Management	Projects implemented without NENWACC knowledge or involvement.	NENWACC to ensure that proponent is aware of the need for activity to be undertaken in partnership. NENWACC Projects Sub-Committee structure.	Low	Acknowledgement of NENWACC's role and need for partnership activity. NENWACC represented on project steering committee.
Contractual	Australian Government is not acknowledged in line with contract requirements.	NENWACC to acknowledge the Australian Government on all appropriate material.	Low	Committee members cognizant of need to acknowledge Australian Government on material.
Committee actions	Low public awareness of NENWACC in its community.	NENWACC Marketing Strategy prepared and implemented.		Chair and Committee members to promote role of NENWACC at every opportunity. Marketing and Media is a standing item on Board papers. Executive Officer and other staff to implement Marketing Strategy.

5.3. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

DOTARS provides funds to ACCs through the Operational Funding Contract to cover the day-to-day operational and administrative costs as identified in the Annual Business Plan.

The Operational Funding Contract specifies the arrangements for payment.

Each ACC is to implement appropriate financial management controls, guidelines and management information reports consistent with Australian Accounting Standards as specified in the Operational Funding Contract. Each ACC must maintain financial records so that they can readily comply with the requirements of the Operational Funding Contract.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Financial management is the responsibility of the Executive Officer, the Treasurer and the Finance & Audit Sub-committee.

The role of the Finance and Audit Sub-Committee is to;

- Review actual to budget figures for all accounts
- Question any expenditure over budgeted figures
- Review quarterly BAS Statement
- Provide advice to the Board of the New England North West Area Consultative Committee on accounts, income and expenditure
- Provide a Treasurers Report to the Board
- Authorise monthly expenditure
- Provide advise on annual budget and auditing processes
- Present annual budget and audit figures to the Board

The Finance Committee will meet bi-monthly two weeks prior to the Board meeting.

Reports prepared for the committee will be for the reporting quarter;

- include actuals to the end of month prior
- budget year to date and variations
- MYOB reconciliation reports for all accounts
- listing of transactions for the period

The EO will prepare a written report for the committee explaining/providing information for any positive and negative variations to budget.

Report from the Finance Committee will be provided in the Board papers for the meeting of the NENWACC.

5.4. REPORTING

The Operational Funding Contract specifies the requirements for ACCs to report to DOTARS. Essentially the reports are:

- a quarterly/half-yearly report that includes a financial statement as well as reporting on progress towards achieving the deliverables specified in the Annual Business Plan and the outputs and outcomes set down in the Strategic Regional Plan.
- DOTARS advises ACCs of the report format; and
- an annual report of outcomes against the Strategic Regional Plan and Annual Business Plan, submitted to DOTARS no later than 30 August, following the end of the financial year on which the report is based.

The Operational Funding Contract outlines reporting requirements.

The Operational Funding Contract outlines reporting requirements. Currently the New England North West ACC uses the following procedures for reporting to funding partners.

The reporting to Government is an important part of the contract and is a basis for termination if the information is not forthcoming.

The table overleaf outlines the reporting procedures.

The New England North West ACC also takes its role as the provider of information to Government seriously and at each Board meeting 'Messages to Government' is included as a reportable item.

Any messages to Government are usually sent to the relevant department or member, with copies to the Minister for ACCs and Regional Partnerships as well as DOTARS Regional Office.

NENWACC FUNCTION & INCLUSIONS

AREA	REPORTING REQUIREMENTS	DATE DUE	INFORMATION TO BE PROVIDED
ACC	Annual Reporting	To be completed before the end of September annually.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Annual Report to the Board and the community on the outcomes of the financial year ▪ Original signed copy the Audit Report ▪ Audit Report must include document pertaining to ACC Operational Expenditure
	Progress Reporting	To be completed before the end of January for July to December period. To be completed before the end of July for the January to June period.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Report against the Business Plan ▪ Report against Marketing Plan ▪ Report against KPIs ▪ Financial report of budget versus actual ▪ Listing of relevant newspaper articles
IDO	Annual Reporting	To be completed before the end of September annually.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To be included in the annual report of the organisation. ▪ Includes a report of outcomes for the financial year ▪ Audit Report must include a summary document pertaining to IDO Operational Expenditure
	Progress Reporting	To be completed quarterly on the 15 th day of the end month of the quarter.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Report against the Project Plan ▪ Financial report of budget versus actual ▪ Listing of relevant newspaper articles
SBA	Annual Reporting	To be completed before the end of September annually.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To be included in the annual report of the organisation. ▪ Includes a report of outcomes for the financial year ▪ Audit Report must include a summary document pertaining to SBA Operational Expenditure
	Progress Reporting	To be completed six monthly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Template of information required included in funding contract ▪ Listing of relevant newspaper articles
SBCEP	Annual Reporting	To be completed before the end of September annually.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To be included in the annual report of the organisation. ▪ Includes a report of outcomes for the financial year ▪ Audit Report must include a summary document pertaining to SBCEP Operational Expenditure
	Progress Reporting	To be completed six monthly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Listing of relevant newspaper articles
SKILLS	Annual Reporting	To be completed before the end of September annually.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To be included in the annual report of the organisation. ▪ Includes a report of outcomes for the financial year ▪ Audit Report must include a summary document pertaining to Skills Operational Expenditure
	Progress Reporting		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Listing of relevant newspaper articles

5.5. COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

5.5.1. Meetings

All ACCs must hold meetings to enable the incorporated body to make decisions, in accordance with the requirements of their Constitutions.

DOTARS expects all ACCs to comply with the following requirements:

- Provide adequate notice of meetings;
- Notify DOTARS Regional Office of meetings;
- Report on Year To Date expenditure against budget;
- Report on progress against Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in the Operational Funding Contract;
- Keep accurate Minutes of meetings;
- Record any declarations of conflict of interest and the action taken to address the conflict;
- Record ACC decisions; and
- Document any actions taken as a result of decisions.

5.5.2. Minutes

ACCs must keep accurate minutes of all proceedings and decisions of all ACC meetings in accordance with their Constitutions.

5.5.3. Sub-Committees

Where sub-committees are established, ACCs must ensure that their Constitution includes provision for decisions of sub-committees to be ratified by the full ACC. This is to protect the ACC from possible liabilities arising from decisions made on behalf of the ACC but to which the ACC Board has not been a party.

COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

Meetings

The New England North West ACC usually conducts Board meetings around the region. The purpose of this is to meet with communities or proponents in a number of locations annually.

Meetings are usually held in the Council buildings of the Local Government Area at no cost to the New England North West ACC.

As per the constitution of the New England North West ACC the following is the process for conducting meeting.

Meetings and Quorum

20. (1) The committee must meet at least 3 times in each period of 12 months at such place and time as the committee may determine.
- (2) Additional meeting of the committee may be convened by the Chair or by any member of the committee.
- (3) Oral or written notice of a meeting of the committee must be given by the Secretary to each member of the committee at least 48 hours (or such other period as may be unanimously agreed on by the members of the committee) before the time appointed for the holding of the meeting.
- (4) Notice of a meeting given under clause (3) must specify the general nature of the business to be transacted at the meeting and no business other than that business is to be transacted at the meeting, except business which the committee members present at the meeting unanimously agree to treat as urgent business.
- (5) Half plus one member of the committee of the association constitute a quorum for the transaction of the business of a meeting of the committee.
- (6) No business is to be transacted by the committee unless a quorum is present and if, within half an hour of the time appointed for the meeting, a quorum is not present, the meeting is to stand adjourned to the same place and at the same hour of the same day in the following week.
- (7) If at the adjourned meeting a quorum is not present within half an hour of the time appointed for the meeting, the meeting is to be dissolved.
- (8) At a meeting of the committee:
 - (a) The Chair or, in the Chair's absence, the Vice-Chair is to preside; or
 - (b) If the Chair and the Vice-Chair are absent or unwilling to act, such one of the remaining members of the committee as may be chosen by the members present at the meeting is to preside.

In order to comply with these requirements and the requirements of DOTARS;

- Meeting dates are set annual and are rarely subject to change
- In circulating information on meetings and business to the Board the Regional office of DOTARS is also included

A normal set of business papers for the Board include;

- Agenda of business to be discussed at the meeting
- Minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee

- Minutes of any meeting of Sub-Committees conducted since the last meeting
- Finance & Audit report including actual versus budget reports on income and expenditure
- Listing of all correspondence received including copies of any correspondence from the Australian Government
- Report from the Chairman (optional)
- Reports from any other Board members (optional)
- Report from the Executive Officer
- Report from all Project Officers and funding contracts
- Projects for endorsement
- Marketing & Media Report
- Any other Sub-Committee reports

Reports provided by the Executive Officer, Project Officers and funded projects should report on progress against Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and the Business Plan.

Minutes

Minutes are recorded by the Executive Officer and are reviewed by the Board at each meeting to ensure the accuracy of the meeting minutes and of all proceedings and decisions of all ACC.

Sub-Committees

The New England North West ACC has appointed the following Sub-Committees;

- Finance & Audit
- Central Projects
- New England Projects
- North West Projects
- Indigenous Development
- Namoi Valley Structural Adjustment Package

The Constitution outlines the powers and activities of any Sub-Committee;

Delegation by Committee to Sub-Committee

21. (1) The committee may, by instrument in writing, delegate to one or more sub-committees (considering of such member or members of the association as the committee thinks fit) the exercise of such of the functions of the committee as are specified in the instrument, other than:
- (a) This power of delegation; and
 - (b) A function which is a duty imposed on the committee by the Act or by any other law.
- (2) A function the exercise of which has been delegated to a sub-committee under this rule may, while the delegation remains unrevoked, be exercised from time to time by the sub-committee in accordance with the terms of the delegation.
- (3) A delegation under this section may be made subject to such conditions or limitations as to the exercise of any function, or as to time or circumstances, as may be specified in the instrument of delegation.
- (4) Despite any delegation under this rule, the committee may continue to exercise any function delegated.
- (5) Any act or thing done or suffered by a sub-committee acting in the exercise of a delegation under this rule has the same force and effect as it would have if it had been done or suffered by the committee.

- (6) The committee may, by instrument in writing, revoke wholly or in part any delegation under this rule.
- (7) A sub-committee may meet and adjourn as it thinks proper.

5.6. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

5.6.1. General Insurance

DOTARS currently arranges for three types of insurance cover for all ACCs:

- Not for Profit Organisation Liability Insurance;
- Personal Accident Insurance; and
- Combined General Liability Insurance: (Personal Injury / Property Damage / Advertising).

Not for Profit Organisation Liability Insurance covers the ACC against claims arising from 'wrongful acts' / professional indemnity (eg misstatement, misleading statement, act, omission,), 'employment practices' (eg breach of contract) and/or 'personal injury - publisher's liability' (eg defamation, infringement of copyright).

Personal Accident Insurance covers the ACC against any personal injury liability to the Committee Members of ACCs whilst involved in ACC activities including travel to and from such activities.

Combined General Liability Insurance (Personal Injury / Property Damage / Advertising) covers the ACC against any legal liability to the general public in respect of bodily injury (ie, public liability) or damage to property arising out of the business of the ACC.

Extraneous "out of pocket" expenses such as damage to or loss of personal property while undertaking ACC activities (eg. damage to personal vehicle on way to ACC meeting, stolen suitcases etc) should be managed within the ACCs' current budget where these incidents are not covered under the existing insurance policy. The Department will not pay for this type of "additional" coverage as the cost benefit is not there. If an ACC has any questions when an incident arises they should discuss it with their Regional Office in the first instance.

Copies of the Insurance Policy statements and schedules are posted to the secure Members section of the ACC website. Inquiries or questions regarding claims in relation to insurance matters should be directed to Marsh Pty Ltd - the Department's Insurance Broker - in the first instance, citing the relevant Insurance Policy Numbers. Their contact details are: 03 9603 2222.

In order to maintain the currency of their insurance cover, ACCs are required to provide the information to the Regional Office and the Insurance Broker (Marsh Pty Ltd) of any changes to membership of their ACC as soon as they occur.

The insurance cover outlined above is based on the activities for ACCs defined in the ACC Charter. ACCs who take on additional initiatives outside the Charter may need to take out additional insurance cover (at their own cost) – and are encouraged to seek their own advice on whether this is necessary or not.

5.6.2. Workers' Compensation Insurance

ACCs are responsible for taking out Workers' Compensation Insurance under the relevant State/Territory legislation to cover their employees and ACCs must be aware of and comply with their legal responsibilities.

5.6.3. Asset Insurance

ACCs are responsible for the insurance of all assets owned or controlled by the ACC. The ACC is also responsible for the insurance of any motor vehicle leased by the ACC (subject to the terms of the lease).

5.6.4. Record Keeping

ACCs must keep accurate records of their operations and store them securely. ACCs must maintain records and documents in a manner consistent with their statutory and contractual obligations. This requirement includes the maintenance of records on vehicle usage consistent with the requirements of the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

Much of the information gathered and recorded by the ACCs can be considered sensitive or “in-confidence”. The Commonwealth defines “in-confidence” to mean “information whose compromise could cause limited damage to the Commonwealth, the Government, commercial entities or members of the public” (Commonwealth Protective Security Manual). ACCs need to be aware of the sensitive nature of the information and take appropriate action to maintain its integrity.

Under the Operational Funding Contract ACCs must implement a records management system that: clearly marks and securely stores Commercial-in-Confidence Regional Partnerships applications and other confidential material and files;

- manages the distribution and retrieval of Regional Partnerships applications to ACC Board members (particularly where these are Commercial-in-Confidence);
- maintains accurate, up-to-date files of all ACC operational documents;
- maintains secure, separate files for ACC personnel (that contain employment contracts, performance reports and other appropriate material);
- retains records for no less than seven years and appropriately disposes of records when the records have ceased to be of current value;
- ensures all electronic records are secure and appropriate back up and archival processes are established and maintained for such records, including off-site storage approved by the committee; and
- maintains records of vehicle usage consistent with the requirements of the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

Insurance

DOTARS currently arranges for three types of insurance cover for all ACCs:

- Not for Profit Organisation Liability Insurance;
- Personal Accident Insurance; and
- Combined General Liability Insurance: (Personal Injury / Property Damage / Advertising).

Workers' Compensation Insurance

The New England North West ACC maintains Workers Compensation Insurance Policy with CGU.

Policy Details:

Contact Details:

CGU Insurance
22 Bourke Street
TAMWORTH NSW 2340

Telephone: (02) 6767 2300
Facsimile: (02) 6767 2381 (claims)

Asset Insurance

Asset Insurance is maintained by the New England North West ACC through Barry Taylor Insurance in Tamworth.

Policy Details:

Contact Details:

Barry Taylor Insurance
30 Bourke Street
TAMWORTH NSW 2340

Telephone: (02) 6766 5555
Facsimile: (02) 6766 7349

Records Management

- The management, security and confidentiality of project files are maintained by the Project Officer responsible for the project. Project files are usually maintained in lockable cabinets in the office. Files may be retrieved for client visits.
- Applications for Regional Partnerships may be retained on the computer system or on paper in client files

ACC Operational Documents

Each staff member is responsible for maintaining and updating their own operational files. This document has been prepared to assist with understanding procedures not necessarily the responsibility of one staff member.

Staff/Employee Documents

Staff and employee information is maintained by the Executive Officer.

The file of information maintained on staff members includes;

- Summary of employee information, DOB, TFN, address, payee details, bank details, superannuation etc
- Monthly timesheets
- Calculations of TIL and leave
- Tax forms
- Annual Leave and other leave applications

Archival Information

Filing is maintained by each officer. It is recommended files and records should be maintained for 7 years. Files should be reviewed annually to archive and dispose of information. Information that maybe historically significant to the organisation should be retained and stored securely.

Electronic Files Management

Electronic files are backed up daily by the automatic tape drive on the network server. At the end of the day these tapes are removed and changed for the following day. Updated tapes should be stored off site daily.

Moree Office Procedures

The step-by-step notes below are for the back up of the laptop computer.

- Start
- All Programs
- Accessories
- System Tools
- Back up
- Next
- Next
- Select Everyone's Documents and Settings
- Next
- Browse to the C:\
- Click Save
- Click Next
- Click Finish
- It will take around 7 to 10 minutes
- Click finish
- Open My Computer to where the bkf file is
- Right click and go to send to D:\
- Click on balloon in bottom right corner (write files to CD)
- A window will appear and select write those files to CD and ok
- It will take around 6 to 8 minutes.

Mail Register

The mail incoming and outgoing is registered in the Mail Register on the Server. The Mail Register can be found at Shared:\My Documents\General Stationery\Office Registers\Mail Register

The New England North West ACC has an account for postage with Australia Post.

Account number: 806 4848
 Customer name and address: NENWACC, PO Box 669
 Contact name: <Staff Member completing the form>
 Signature: <Staff Member completing the form>

The Peel St Australia Post is open from 8:30am to 5:00pm, the Australia Post sorting centre in Taminda is open until 6:00pm

Contacts:

Australia Post

Peel St

TAMWORTH NSW 2340

Telephone: (02) 6755 5988

Media Register

All of the newspaper stories that are highlighted by staff are recorded into an Excel file to go into the bi-monthly Board reports. Any newspaper stories that occur as a result of media releases that the ACC sends out are highlighted in this register.

The stories are clipped from the paper and filed in the appropriate project files.

5.6.5. Reimbursement of Costs incurred by ACC Members

ACC Operational Funds may be used, with Committee approval, to reimburse 'reasonable expenses' incurred by ACC Members in attending meetings or performing ACC activities. Reasonable expenses mean travel and accommodation, meals and incidentals. Maximum reimbursement for accommodation, meals and incidentals is not to exceed Tier 3 rates as determined and published by the Remuneration Tribunal from time to time (www.remtribunal.gov.au). Current rates as at June 2004 are at Appendix B.

The Department acknowledges that in some country areas the cost of accommodation may be substantially higher or lower, depending on supply and demand. In cases where the standard local costs exceed the designated rates, the ACC can exceed the above limits. However the ACC must ensure that the principles of reasonableness, accountability and value for money are upheld.

Reimbursement rates for travel are as follows:

- economy airfare where air travel is necessary for ACC Members;
- business class airfare for Chairs; and
- private vehicle travel to and from ACC duties covering out-of-pocket expenses for fuel at Remuneration Tribunal published rates.

Travel details and odometer readings are to be recorded on the claim.

Australian Government funds must not be used to pay ACC Members, including the Chair, 'sitting fees' or any compensation for discharging their duties as ACC Members.

An ACC Member, including the Chair, is not entitled to claim the cost of employing a person to look after their business whilst the Member is performing ACC duties.

5.6.6. Travel reimbursement for ACC Chairs, members and employees

It is recommended that travel costs incurred for ACC purposes be reimbursed at the current rates as set out by the Remuneration Tribunal. Current rates that would apply are:

- Tier 2 rates for ACC Chairs
- Tier 3 rates for all other ACC members and personnel.

Attached is the current schedule from the Remuneration Tribunal's determination as at March 2004, Appendix B. Updates to these rates are posted on the Remuneration Tribunal Website from time to time. These can be found at: <http://www.remtribunal.gov.au/determinationsReports/byYear/2004dets/2004-03Determination.pdf>.

REMUNERATION TRIBUNAL TRAVELLING ALLOWANCE RATES

A1. Travelling Allowance Rates:

The Travelling Allowance rates set out in Table A1.A will apply from 28 March 2004, in accordance with the provisions of Part 3 (Travel Expenses) of this Determination.

Table A1.A – Rates of Travelling Allowance (Accommodation, meals and incidentals) per overnight absence.

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4
	TIER 1	TIER 2	TIER 3
CAPITAL CITIES			
Adelaide	\$300	\$249	\$208
Brisbane	\$370	\$242	\$202
Canberra	\$300	\$227	\$186
Darwin	\$300	\$245	\$203
Hobart	\$300	\$217	\$190
Melbourne	\$370	\$274	\$236
Perth	\$370	\$230	\$203
Sydney	\$370	\$278	\$239
COUNTRY CENTRES			
Non- Specified Country Centres (i.e. not specified below)	\$196	\$171	\$146
NORTHERN TERRITORY			
Alice Springs	\$210	\$190	\$171
Jabiru	\$275	\$275	\$256
Nhulunbuy	\$226	\$226	\$207
Yulara	\$466	\$466	\$447
QUEENSLAND			
Cairns	\$196	\$186	\$158
Gold Coast	\$210	\$207	\$188
Horn Island (QLD)	\$213	\$213	\$194
Thursday Island (QLD)	\$235	\$235	\$216
Weipa	\$220	\$220	\$201
NEW SOUTH WALES			
Bathurst	\$196	\$186	\$158
Gosford	\$196	\$186	\$158
Maitland	\$196	\$186	\$158
Newcastle	\$290	\$192	\$173
Orange	\$196	\$186	\$158
Wagga Wagga	\$196	\$186	\$158
Wollongong	\$210	\$190	\$171
VICTORIA			
Bendigo	\$196	\$186	\$158
SOUTH AUSTRALIA			
Marla	\$196	\$186	\$158
Wilpena	\$210	\$200	\$181
WESTERN AUSTRALIA			
Broome	\$221	\$221	\$202
Dampier	\$210	\$196	\$177
Exmouth	\$210	\$197	\$178
Geraldton	\$196	\$186	\$158
Halls Creek	\$196	\$186	\$158
Kalgoorlie	\$210	\$191	\$172
Karratha	\$251	\$251	\$232
Kununurra	\$210	\$203	\$184
Newman	\$218	\$218	\$199
Northam	\$210	\$190	\$171
Paraburdoo	\$222	\$222	\$203

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4
	TIER 1	TIER 2	TIER 3
Pt Hedland	\$214	\$214	\$195
Tom Price	\$210	\$195	\$176
Wyndham	\$196	\$186	\$158
TASMANIA			
Burnie	\$196	\$186	\$158
Devonport	\$210	\$193	\$174
Launceston	\$210	\$189	\$170
EXTERNAL TERRITORIES			
Christmas Island	\$210	\$205	\$186
Cocos (Keeling) Island	\$210	\$205	\$186
Norfolk Island	\$210	\$204	\$185

A2. Meal and Incidental Components:

The rates set out in Table A2.A provide the relevant meal and incidental components of the Travelling Allowance rates set out in Table A1.A. These rates are specified for the purposes of clauses 3.6, 3.7 and 3.8.

A2.1

The rates in Columns 3 and 5 of Table A2.A apply to Non-specified country centres and the centres listed in Table A2.B below.

Table A2.A – Meals and Incidentals Components

Column 1	Col. 2	Col. 3	Col. 4	Col. 5
	(refer to clause A2.1)		(refer to clause A2.1)	
	Tiers 1 and 2		Tier 3	
Breakfast	\$20	\$18	\$18	\$16
Lunch	\$27	\$18	\$20	\$18
Dinner	\$38	\$35	\$34	\$31
Incidentals	\$20	\$20	\$14	\$14
Total	\$105	\$91	\$86	\$79

Table A2. B –Country Centres (refer clause A2.1)

Country Centre	Country Centre
Bathurst (NSW)	Halls Creek (WA)
Bendigo (Vic)	Maitland (NSW)
Burnie (Tas)	Marla (SA)
Cairns (Qld)	Orange (NSW)
Gosford (NSW)	Wagga Wagga (NSW)
Geraldton (WA)	Wyndham (WA)

Reimbursement of Costs incurred by ACC Members

Board Members

The New England North West ACC does reimburse costs incurred by members to attend ACC meetings and sub-committee meetings.

In accordance with rates specified by DOTARS, it is usual for the New England North West ACC to cover accommodation, meals and travel for overnight visits.

Claims should be made after the relevant meeting and will be posted or deposited to the Board member.

PERSONAL CLAIM FORM

(Claims will be processed fortnightly. Receipts for reimbursements must be attached to this form. Where possible reimbursements will be direct deposited into your nominated bank account.)

Date: _____

Recipient Name: _____

BANK ACCOUNT DETAILS:

BSB: _____

ACCOUNT NUMBER: _____

ACCOUNT NAME: _____

BANK NAME & BRANCH: _____

FOOD AND BEVERAGES (maximum amounts per person) – Breakfast = \$20.00 including GST, Lunch = \$30.00 including GST and Dinner = \$40.00 including GST

WHERE	DATE	AMOUNT
	GST	
TOTAL		

ACCOMMODATION (maximum reimbursement): NENW region/Regional NSW = \$90.00 including GST, Sydney/Melbourne = \$170.00 including GST, Darwin = \$140.00 including GST, Brisbane/Adelaide = \$130.00 including GST, Canberra/Perth = \$120.00 including GST and Hobart = \$110.00 including GST

WHERE	DATE	AMOUNT
	GST	
TOTAL		

TRAVEL (maximum reimbursement):

Engine Capacity (non-rotary)	Engine Capacity (rotary engine)	Rate per kilometre (cents per km)
Above 1,601cc	Above 801cc	65c per km
1,600cc and under	800cc and under	55c per km

WHERE	DATE	ODOMETER START	ODOMETER FINISH	CENTS PERKM	TOTAL KM	TOTAL
					GST	
					TOTAL	

OTHER EXPENSES

WHERE	DATE	AMOUNT
	GST	
TOTAL		

PRINT NAME: _____

SIGNATURE: _____

5.6.7. Bank Accounts

The establishment and maintenance of bank accounts (including credit card accounts) must be in accordance with the Operational Funding Contract and the ACC Constitution.

The Nominated Account must be established and administered as per the Operational Funding Contract. It can incorporate sub-accounts for related accounts (from Operational Funds) under this contract (such as the Employee Entitlement Account and/or Asset Replacement Account where these exist) where these sub-accounts are specifically separated from the main Operational Funding Account.

Each ACC should maintain a file containing all records relating to the bank accounts including authorisations to establish and operate the account, statements, and correspondence.

An additional file should be maintained for all account statements and reconciliations.

Where ACCs use a corporate credit card, the card must be in the name of the ACC, and records must be maintained as for other bank accounts. ACCs must ensure that rewards accrued through a loyalty/points accrual program are only used for ACC operations and not for personal benefit.

Bank Accounts

No accounts or commitments to expenditure are to be made by any Staff member or Committee member. Proposals for expenditure are to be determined by the budgeting process and approved annually by the Finance & Audit Committee.

For approvals outside this process, approval for the expenditure is to be sought from the EO. If the expenditure is above \$1,000 approval should be sought from the RO.

Accounts are maintained fortnightly and accounts paid on time. The accounts are maintained on a MYOB system and are located on the public access network at;

Public on 'nenwaccdc' (P)

- Accounts
 - MYOB13
 - ACC

Account Details

The NENWACC operates four bank accounts.

1. ACC Operational Grant
BSB: 112 879 Account Number: 121723854

This is the Nominated Account for the Operational Funding Contract for the ACC. It does incorporate sub-accounts for related accounts (from Operational Funds).

2. Projects Account
BSB: 112 879 Account Number: 066308964

This is the Nominated Account for the Operational Funding Contract for the IDO and the Skills Project. It does incorporate sub-accounts for related accounts (from Operational Funds).

3. Small Business Answers
BSB: 112 879 Account Number: 027716236

This is the Nominated Account for the Operational Funding Contract for the SBA. It does incorporate sub-accounts for related accounts (from Operational Funds).

4. Staff Leave Entitlements and Depreciation
BSB: 112 879 Account Number: 065723736

This is the Nominated Account for Employee Entitlements and Asset Replacement.

Contact: David Theile
Business Banker
St George
Peel Street
Tamworth

Telephone: (02) 6766 2619

St George Bank helpline – 1300 554 004

CHEQUE REQUISITIONS

As well as being maintained on the computer system on MYOB, a manual paper system is also maintained. An invoice is attached to the Cheque Requisition; payee details recorded, account payments and MYOB allocations. Cheque Requisitions are stored in files in cheque number order.

NEW ENGLAND NORTH WEST AREA CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
CHEQUE REQUISITION

FINANCIAL YEAR:	2003-2004
PAYEE:	
ADDRESS:	
INVOICE DATE:	
PAYMENT DATE:	
GRANT:	
ACCOUNT #:	
CHEQUE # OR DIRECT DEBT #:	

AREA	CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT	GST	TOTAL

AUTHORISED: _____ DATE: _____
AUTHORISED: _____ DATE: _____
ENTERED BY: _____ DATE: _____

Tax Invoices

From time to time the New England North West ACC may raise a tax invoice and have cheques paid to the ACC. Any cheques received by the ACC are recorded as paid and registered in the bank deposit book.

SAMPLE TAX INVOICE

Tax Invoice #: 2004-2005_0059

New England North West Area Consultative Committee Inc
 PO Box 669
 TAMWORTH NSW 2340
 ABN: 96 264 663 080

DATE: 8 October 2004

TO: Department of Transport & Regional Services
 GPO Box 594
 CANBERRA ACT 2601
 ABN: 86 267 354 017

ATTENTION: Maree Cooper (Regional Manager)

Qty	Description of supply	Unit Price	Total
2	Reimbursement of costs for TRAX training	0.55c	1,100.00
EO	Vehicle mileage 2,000 km @ Tamworth to Sydney (1,000km return)		
	Accommodation		
	Two nights in Sydney	\$137.50	275.00
3	Breakfast	\$18.00	54.00
3	Dinner	\$31.00	93.00
	SUB-TOTAL		1,522.00
	GST		152.20
		TOTAL	\$1,674.20

Payment is required within 14 days of the date of this invoice. Please make cheques payable to the NE NW Area Consultative Committee Account #1.

Please deposit to: NENW Area Consultative Committee
 Number 1 Account
 St George Bank – Tamworth

BSB: 112 879
 Account: 121 723 854

CHEQUE SIGNATORIES

Cheque signatories are determined annually at the AGM and submitted to the bank annually on forms provided by the bank.

On occasion accounts will be separated between the contracts of the ACC. Items such as cleaning, newspapers, electricity are divided to ensure the ACC is not contributing to the operational expenses of other functions.

As a general rule accounts are divided by the Project Officer functions. For example;

The newspaper account totals \$140.00 in 2004-2005 the expenditure would be split amongst

ACC	3 Project Officers	\$105.00
SBA	1 Project Officer	\$35.00

The account is divided by 4 and distributed equally.

In such a case the original invoice is always attached the ACC cheque requisition and copies attached to the cheque requisitions for other accounts.

CREDIT CARDS

Where ACCs use a corporate credit card, the card must be in the name of the ACC, and records must be maintained as for other bank accounts. ACCs must ensure that rewards accrued through a loyalty/points accrual program are only used for ACC operations and not for personal benefit.

The EO and Project Officers will have credit cards for work related expenditure and allowances.

Procedures for processing credit card payments are;

- Record event or activities for expenditure on receipt
- Receipts for expenditure are attached the statement by the Project Officer
- Accounts are checked and paid by the EO

The NENWACC has a \$1,000.00 credit limit for all cards distributed amongst staff.

In 2004-2005 credit cards are provided to;

ACC EO
 NE Project Officer
 NW Project Officer

SBA Project Officer

Fuel Cards

The NENWACC also operates a credit card system for fuel. The NENWACC has credit arrangements with Shell Card and Caltex. The Shell Card is paid manually and distinguished by vehicle registration numbers.

Name	Number plate	Caltex	Shell
Rebel Thomson	YPN467	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YPN467	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YPN467
Joanne Stead	YKS405	(has Alec's signature)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YKS405
Ildu Monticone	YPN468	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YPN468	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YPN468

Petrol cards should be kept with you at all times, and never left in the car, or where other people may have access to them.

To order new petrol cards or cancel lost cards ring the appropriate supplier;

Contacts: Shell Helpline – 1300 655 676
Caltex Helpline – 1300 659 928 or chargecard@caltex.com.au

Staff must retain receipts for processing of accounts.

Procedures for processing fuel card payments are;

- Accounts received
- Receipts by each project officer attached
- Expenditure allocated by vehicle registration
- Expenditure authorised

Caltex payments are automatically deducted from Account #1. The processing of accounts remain the same however at the end of each month the transactions to be attributed to other centres is attached to a single cheque requisition and recovered from other accounts.

If for any reason staff need to use their own car for work purposes they are entitled to make a claim. This should be authorised by the Executive Officer prior to undertaking the activity, mileage recorded and personal claim form completed.

5.7. ASSET POLICY / PROCEDURES AND LEASING

ACCs are responsible for purchasing, managing and disposing of the assets they acquire with Operational Funding. ACCs must implement an Assets Management System that sets out procedures for management of assets and a consistent approach is recommended that includes the following aspects:

- Purchasing
- Register of Assets
- Asset stock take
- Asset replacement account
- Asset disposal
- Method for calculating depreciation

The Operational Funding Contract details the obligations of ACCs in relation to assets when using funds provided for under the Operational Funding Contract.

5.7.1. Purchasing

The key things ACCs must comply with in relation to purchasing assets are: the Operational Funding Contract;

- ACCs wishing to purchase assets valued at more than \$1,000 using Operational Funding must first receive approval from the relevant DOTARS Regional Manager;
- ACCs cannot use Operational Funding to purchase or hire purchase motor vehicles either directly or through the use of salary sacrificing arrangements;
- ACCs must keep appropriate documentation for all asset purchases. Where a case to purchase an asset over \$1,000 has been put to DOTARS for approval, both the case and the approval should be kept on file; and
- Asset purchases are to provide value for money so it is important that quotes for purchases are obtained and kept on file.

5.7.2. Register of Assets

As outlined in the Operational Funding Contract, a Register of Assets must be maintained for all assets valued at over \$1,000.

Key components of a Register of Assets are:

- Asset number;
- Barcode or other identifier located on the asset;
- Asset type/class;
- Asset description;
- Capitalisation date;
- Type of lease (if applicable);
- Useful life;
- Expected expiration date;
- Contact;
- Location;
- Asset value;
- Annual depreciation based on accountancy standard methodology;
- Accumulated depreciation;
- Written down value;
- Disposal date;
- Disposal method; and
- Disposal receipt number.

The Register of Assets is to be updated whenever assets are acquired or disposed of by the ACC.

A sample Register of Assets that ACCs can adapt this for their own use can be found on the secure Member's section of the ACC website at www.acc.gov.au.

5.7.3. Portable and Attractive Items

In addition to maintaining a Register of Assets, ACCs can maintain a register of portable and attractive items. Portable and attractive items are those that:

- Cost greater than \$300;
- Cost less than \$1,000 (if they cost more than \$1,000 they classify as a standard depreciating asset);
- Have a high inherent risk of theft;
- Are easily transferable/portable; and
- Are attractive in terms of their personal use or for resale.

A sample Register of Assets for portable and attractive items can be found on the secure Member's section of the ACC website at www.acc.gov.au.

5.7.4. Stock take

ACCs are to complete a stock take of their assets every 12 months. During a stock take, ACCs will:

- confirm that all assets are correctly recorded in the asset register;
- check on the condition of the asset; and
- add any unrecorded existing assets to the register.

5.7.5. Asset Replacement Account

An important part of asset management is making provision for replacement of assets as their useful life expires. ACCs must budget for asset replacement from their Operational Funding and are to maintain an Asset Replacement Account. The value of funds in this account would normally reflect the accumulated depreciation recorded in the Asset Register.

Interest earned on funds in this account shall be treated as if the interest were part of the Operational Funding, as specified in the Operational Funding Contract. This account will be audited as part of the annual audit provided to DOTARS.

5.7.6. Asset Disposal

All ACCs must have clear procedures for the disposal of assets, to ensure that there is a fair return to the ACC on the asset and to avoid any appearance of bias or preferential treatment. Under no circumstances can assets be directly sold to an individual, particularly the ACC Chair, members or employees.

Assets must be sold either through a tender process or by obtaining quotes for the sale from local dealers. The process is to be clearly documented and the results recorded on the Register of Assets.

Profit from the sale (disposal price less any deduction for the depreciated value of the asset) of the asset is to be treated as part of the Operational Funding.

5.7.7. Method for calculating depreciation

The Department does not prescribe the method for calculating asset depreciation. However, a commonly used example for depreciation of assets over their estimated useful life is the straight line method which most organisations use, including the Department.

The Australian Accounting Standard 4 defines useful life as:

- the estimated period of time over which the future economic benefits embodied in a depreciable asset are expected to be consumed by the entity; or

the estimated total service, expressed in terms of production of similar units, that is expected to be obtained from the asset by the entity.

All non-current assets, except land have a limited useful life. Finance leases and leasehold improvements are depreciated over the lesser of the term of the lease and its useful life.

The Department uses the following general rates of useful life:

Buildings	25 – 60 years
Leasehold Improvements	Lease Term
Infrastructure	10 – 80 years
Plant and Equipment	10 years
Computer Equipment	5 years
Software	5 years
Office Equipment	10 years
Intangible Assets	3 years

ASSET POLICY / PROCEDURES AND LEASING

In accordance with our Operational Funding Contract with DOTARS, the NENWACC has taken on responsibility for purchasing, managing and disposing of the assets we acquire with Operational Funds. NENWACC's Assets Management Policy therefore sets out the procedures for management of our assets and includes the following:

- Asset Purchasing
- Register of Assets
- Asset Stock Take
- Asset Disposal
- Method for Calculating Depreciation
- Asset Replacement Account

Asset Purchasing

In relation to purchasing assets, the NENWACC will:

- Comply with the requirements of DOTARS' Operational Funding Contract
- Seek approval from the DOTARS Regional Manager when wishing to purchase assets valued at more than \$1,000 (if using Operational Funding)
- Not use Operational Funding to purchase or hire purchase motor vehicles either directly or through the use of salary sacrificing arrangements
- Keep appropriate documentation for all asset purchases. Where a case to purchase an asset over \$1,000 has been put to DOTARS for approval, both a record of the case and the approval will be kept on file
- Ensure that asset purchases provide value for money. Quotes for purchases will therefore be obtained and kept on file

Register of Assets

As outlined in the Operational Funding Contract, the NENWACC will maintain a Register of Assets for all assets valued at over \$1,000. The NENWACC will update its Register of Assets whenever assets are acquired or disposed of. As part of DOTARS Operational Funding requirements, the Asset Register will also be updated on 30 June of each year.

Portable and Attractive Items

The NENWACC asset register includes portable and attractive items such as those that cost greater than \$300 and less than \$1,000 (if over \$1,000, they classify as a standard depreciating asset), have a high inherent risk of theft, are easily transferable/portable and are attractive in terms of their personal use or for resale.

Asset Stock Take

The NENWACC will complete an annual stock take of their assets every 12 months (in conjunction with the annual audit process) to confirm that all assets are correctly recorded in the asset register, check on the condition of the asset and add any unrecorded existing assets to the register.

Asset Disposal

The NENWACC has clear procedures for the disposal of assets to ensure that there is a fair return to the ACC on the asset and to avoid any appearance of bias or preferential treatment. Under no circumstances will assets be directly sold to an individual, particularly the ACC Chair, a Committee Member or an employee.

1. Where an asset is to be sold, that must occur either through a tender process or by obtaining quotes from local dealers. The process is to be clearly documented and the results recorded in NENWACC Register of Assets. Profit from the sale of the asset (disposal price less any deduction for the depreciated value of the asset) is to be treated as part of NENWACC Operational Funding.
2. Where it is considered that the written down value of the asset is of such minimal value that it is not worth the expense/effort to sell the asset, the NENWACC will donate the asset to an appropriate not-for-profit community group/charity. In these cases, all the relevant circumstances will be documented and the decision will be recorded in the Minutes of the relevant Board meeting. Under no circumstances will any individual Board/staff Member be permitted to benefit directly from such a decision.

Method for Calculating Depreciation

Effective from 1 July 2004 and in conjunction with NENWACC’s accounting advisors and auditor, NENWACC’s utilises the straight-line method for calculating asset depreciation. The straight-line method seeks to calculate the depreciation amount based on the estimated useful life of the Asset.

The Australian Accounting Standard (AAS) 4 defines useful life as:

- The estimated period of time over which the future economic benefits embodied in a depreciable asset are expected to be consumed by the entity
- The estimated total service, expressed in terms of production of similar units, that is expected to be obtained from the asset by the entity

All non-current assets, except land have a limited useful life. Finance leases and leasehold improvements are depreciated over the lesser of the term of the lease and its useful life.

The NENWACC uses the following rates of useful life in determining depreciation charged with respect to Assets:

Leasehold Improvements	Lease Term
Computer Equipment	4 years
Software	4 years
Office Equipment	10 years
Intangible Assets (eg Goodwill)	3 years

Motor Vehicle Leases

NENWACC motor vehicles will only be acquired via an Operating Lease. The NENWACC accepts DOTARS requirements that vehicles cannot be purchased or hire purchased with Operational Funding under any circumstances as these leasing arrangements pose an unacceptable risk to the ACC and the Australian Government.

When selecting motor vehicles (and any other assets), or negotiating the vehicle leasing arrangements, the NENWACC will ensure that the following principles are upheld: value for money, open and effective competition, ethics and fair dealing, probity and accountability and reporting.

Asset Insurance

The NENWACC is responsible for the insurance of all assets owned or controlled by the ACC. NENWACC will also be responsible for the insurance of any motor vehicle (subject to the terms of the lease).

Asset Replacement Account

From 1 July 2004, the DOTARS Operational Funding Contract requires NENWACC to budget for asset replacement within our Operational Funding and to maintain an Asset Replacement Account.

The NENWACC recognises that an important part of asset management is making provision for replacement of assets as their useful life expires. As such, and within the confines of its Annual Funding Budget, NENWACC will seek to maximize the value of funds in this account to attempt to reflect the accumulated depreciation recorded in the Asset Register.

Interest earned on funds in this account shall remain in the account and be offset against future asset replacement provisions.

NENWACC FUNCTION & INCLUSIONS

ASSETS REGISTER

Serial Number of Identifier	Asset Description	Capitalisation Date	Type of lease (if applicable)	Expected Expiry Date	Location of Asset	DATE:				COMPLETED BY:				
						Asset Value	Annual Depreciation	Accumulated Depreciation	Written Down Value	Disposal Date	Disposal Method			

PERMITTED USE OF ASSETS

The NENWACC invests in assets to assist Project Officers and the Board to complete their business activities and must only be used for business purposes.

Digital Camera

Permitted Use of Camera

The digital camera should only be used for NENWACC and contracted activities and is to remain in the office unless signed out by a staff member. This is a valuable piece of equipment and care must be taken in using and maintaining it.

How to use the camera

1. To open the lens, push the sliding button on the front to the right.
2. To take a picture set the dial on the top right to the picture of the camera.
3. Point and shoot

To view photos move the dial on the top right to the picture that looks like an arrow, use the arrows on the back of the camera near the viewer to scroll through the photos you have taken.

To delete photos in this mode, press the menu button and use the arrows on the back of the camera to select the picture of the bin. Press select. Choose PICTURE to delete the picture on the screen, or choose ALL to delete all of the pictures on the camera.

To make a movie set the dial on the top right to the picture of the movie camera hold the silver button on the top down while filming.

To view the movie move the dial on the top right to the picture that looks like an arrow, press select to play and while the movie is playing select may be used to pause at any time. To restart the movie press select again.

The other button on the dial on the top of the camera is used to change camera settings such as display brightness, contrast, date and time etc.

The handbook and manual for the camera are kept in the camera's original box.

When you replace the camera in its cradle, reveal the connection on the underside again so that it fits in and can talk to the computer.

How to download images from the camera to the computer

1. Sit the camera in its cradle which should be plugged in to the computer tower
2. Open the lens shutter by sliding the button on the front to the open position.
3. Press the button on the base of the cradle. This should make the Kodak software on the computer activate automatically.
4. In the window that appears type in a name for your photo group (eg Softwood_Strategy). This name will become the title of a folder that will be located at Shared:\Kodak Pictures
5. Next to rename pictures add a picture name (eg Softwood). This name will become the title of the files in the above folder (eg Softwood1, Softwood2, Softwood3).
6. At the next step you may either choose All At Once, to download the photos all at once, or One At A Time, if you wish to save only a few of the photos on the camera, or rename them something more descriptive as you work your way through.

TIP: Do not tick Delete As Transfer, just in case something happens as the files transfer, such as the computer freezing or crashing.

Click Transfer. The transfer is complete and you may edit your pictures or exit.

To charge the camera - Sit the camera in the cradle. The red light will show that it is charging, and will go off once charging is complete.

Light-Pro

How to use the Light-Pro

1. Connect all cables
2. Turn Light-Pro on
3. Turn lap top on
4. Standby may be used to hide the screen image as you open your presentation
5. Open presentation on computer
6. Standby again to show screen image
7. Run presentation

Troubleshooting

1. Click Menu on the Light-pro and use the arrows to scroll across to ensure that screen image is turned ON.
2. Shut the Light-Pro and the laptop down and start again.
3. The manual is kept in the Light-Pro case.

Before you turn the Light-Pro off

1. The Light-Pro must be allowed to cool down before being turned off because of the stress that turning off puts on the light projector bulbs.
2. Once you have finished with the Light-Pro press Standby to cool down.
3. Let the Light-Pro cool down for at least 10 minutes before turning off.
4. You are able to disconnect your computer from the Light-Pro during this time, but be careful to not disconnect the power to the Light-Pro while you are doing this.

Contacts: Repairs and Servicing, Better Business Equipment - (02) 6766 8511

5.8. RELOCATING, REFURBISHING OR EXTENDING ACC PREMISES - POLICY AND PROCEDURES

It is recognised that there are a number of circumstances where ACCs will find it necessary to relocate, refurbish or extend ACC premises (eg. this could be in circumstances where premises are no longer available, or rent becomes exorbitant, premises are not adequate, or a location arises that is far better strategically positioned).

It is expected that in most cases, ACC relocations, refurbishment or extension to premises can be planned to occur when a lease expires and any of these activities that are proposed, should be discussed with the DOTARS Regional Manager well in advance.

5.8.1 ACC Relocation, Refurbishment or Extension to premises where there are no additional costs involved

The ACC should ensure the premises comply with Commonwealth legislation (such as disabled access) and advise their Regional Manager of the dates, the new ACC contact details and the cost of the activity and ongoing rental against the ACCs' current budget.

5.8.2 Relocation, Refurbishment or Extension to premises where additional costs are involved

The ACC is required to put a business case to the DOTARS' Regional Manager outlining the following:

- the reasons for the relocation, refurbishment or extension to premises;
- the benefits to be gained from the new location, refurbishment or extension;
- any savings to be gained from the new location, refurbishment or extension;
- advice that the premises comply with Commonwealth legislation eg. as ACC premises are funded by the Australian Government, they need to have disabled access;
- comparable rents in the area;
- the costs associated with the relocation, refurbishment or extension (removal costs, fit out, stationary, signage etc);
- the additional amounts the ACC seeks from DOTARS as a one-off amount and / or ongoing expenses (eg. higher rent);
- the costs the ACC is able to meet from within its current budget and from where;
- the Regional Manager will advise the ACC of the outcome and if successful, the amount the Department will pay;
- the ACC then undertakes the agreed activity, within the agreed budget;
- the ACC claims the reimbursement from DOTARS via a tax invoice to the Regional Office; and
- the ACC's operational funding contract will be varied by the agreed amount.

Note: Any ACC relocation, refurbishment, or extension to premises requiring additional funding will require approval prior to any arrangements being entered into.

DOTARS' National Office approval is required for all ACC relocations, refurbishment or extensions to premises where there is an additional cost involved. ACCs should not relocate, refurbish or extend their premises and seek reimbursement of costs retrospectively as there are limited funds available.

ADMINISTRATION AND OFFICES

The NENWACC currently occupies two offices in the Tamworth Serviced Office complex behind the Vault Restaurant, and is located at 19-20/429 Peel Street.

Network

Email and Outlook

What to do when your email won't work

If nobody's email is working, try the following solutions in the order listed:

Check in the server cupboard that the lights are showing on the server, the network hub and the modem. If not turn the relevant bit of hardware on. After a few minutes restart your computer and try to connect.

If that doesn't work...

Restart the server and try again.

If that doesn't work...

Ring Case Computers

aii) If everyone but you has working email, try the following solutions in the order listed:

Check that the blue networking cord is connected properly at your computer. Try connecting to the internet/email again.

If that doesn't work...

Shut down your computer. Restart. Then try connecting to the internet/email again.

If that doesn't work...

Ring Case Computers

Contacts: Lindsay, Case Computers, (02) 6761 2324

b) How to check your emails from the server or to check someone else's emails from your computer

Open Outlook

Follow the pathway Tools>Options>Mail Setup(tab)>Email Accounts>Add new email account>POP3

In the Display Name field type in the person's display name (Firstname Lastname)

Next>

Type in the person's email address

Next>

In the Incoming Mail field type mail.nenwacc.com.au

In the Outgoing Mail field type mail.nenwacc.com.au

Next>

In the Account name field type the person's login id and password

Test the account setting (it will tell you if it is working and send a test message to your inbox)

Next>

Finish>

c) How to stop your emails going to the server or receiving someone else's mail

Open Outlook

Follow the pathway Tools>Options>Mail Setup (tab)>Email Accounts>View or change existing email accounts

Highlight the account you wish to remove

Click remove

d) How to check the Server email's from your computer

As b) except

Incoming Mail type mail.bigpond.com

Outgoing Mail type mail.bigpond.com
 Account name: nenwacc
 Password: nenw466

Contact: Rebecca Cody, Impact Web Host & Design – (02) 6760 9998 or 0408 295 356

e) How to add a new email account (note this is a two-step process)

Open Internet Explorer

Enter page [https:// mc-au.server-secure.com/](https://mc-au.server-secure.com/)

Enter Username: vs97552 and password: NEnw4866

Click on User Mailboxes (left hand column)

Click on Create Mailbox or edit an existing account

Turn mailbox status on

Enter a name and email address for the account

Aliases allow emails to be sent to you even though someone might mistype or guess the address, eg for execofficer@nenwacc.com.au, exedofficer@nenwacc.com.au and rthomson@nenwacc.com.au

Enter a password

Write down the mailbox name (eg mb97552i) and password

Click save

Click on Show All to return to the original list of emails

Open Outlook Express on the computer on which the email address will be used

Follow the pathway Tools>Options> Mail Setup(tab)>Email Accounts>Add new email account>POP3

In the Display Name field type in the person's display name (Firstname Lastname)

In the Incoming Mail field type mail.nenwacc.com.au

In the Outgoing Mail field type mail.bigpond.com

In the Account Name field type your login id

Enter your password

Next>

Finish

Contact: Rebecca Cody, Impact Web Host & Design – (02) 6760 9998 or 0408 295 356

Phone System

The NENWACC has 6 phone lines.

6 phone lines which are set up on a rotary structure through the commander system which means that when the phone rings it just takes up the next available line. The lines appear on the phone bill as:

Line 1 – (02) 6766 4866

Line 2 – (02) 6766 4568

Line 3 – (02) 6766 2461

Line 4 – (02) 6766 4183

Line 5 – (02) 6766 4148

Line 6 – (02) 6766 4754 (Small Business Answers)

The 1800 number goes to the first available line when ever someone rings in on it and appears on the phone bill as 1800 240 086. Phone calls to this number are billed to us at approximately 69 ¹/₃¢ per call.

6. THE ACC AS AN EMPLOYER

6.1. OBLIGATIONS

The ACC, as an independent and legal entity, is required to meet its contractual and legal obligations as an employer. ACCs should seek professional and/or legal advice as necessary on all Human Resource Management issues such as recruitment and management (including contracting), wages and conditions, workplace relations such as grievance procedures, performance reviews, occupational health and safety, staff training, superannuation, employment taxes and more.

Organisations with a documented, effective, formal grievance procedure, that is open and accessible to staff, will have grievances surface earlier, be resolved earlier, and be less likely to find a grievance issue escalate to a difficult management problem. Unresolved grievances can be financially expensive to organisations because they result in increased absenteeism, increased leave due to stress, low morale within the workplace, higher turnover of staff and underperformance. All ACCs must implement a documented formal grievance procedure that enables the ACC to investigate and resolve staff grievances efficiently and effectively.

All States and Territories have Government websites that provide practical information on a range of employer legal responsibilities. For example, the fundamental features of a sound grievance process that directs the user to sample grievance procedures and guidelines can be found at www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/adb.nsf/pages/grievproc.

Comprehensive information on ACCs legal obligations to its employees can be found via the Business Entry Point website at www.business.gov.au or through the Australian Government Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources' website at www.industry.gov.au.

ACCs should also be aware of the constraints and requirements on ACC staffing which are included in the Operational Funding Contract.

6.2. JOB DESCRIPTION AND DUTY STATEMENT

The ACC must have job descriptions and duty statements, agreed by the Committee for all employee positions. Job descriptions should reflect the core business of the ACC in assisting with the Regional Partnerships programme.

A comprehensive duty statement is to be provided as part of staff employment contracts.

6.3. SELECTION OF ACC EMPLOYEES

The selection of ACC employees must be based on the merit principle and follow a transparent and public process. This means that selection decisions are based on the qualifications, skills and experience of candidates in relation to the duties of the position and that the process is, and is seen to be, fair and open with all candidates having an equal opportunity for success.

6.4. EMPLOYMENT ARRANGEMENTS

The ACC should agree the terms and conditions for the position of Executive Officer or their equivalent and any other ACC personnel. Job descriptions determine the selection criteria for positions.

A comprehensive duty statement should be provided as part of the employment contract. The Department of Workplace Relations and Small Business can provide examples of job descriptions, employment contracts and Australian Workplace Agreements to serve as a guide to ACCs. These can be found at www.business.gov.au.

Employment contracts must be derived through an independent process and endorsed by the full ACC. The use of an employment expert such as an Industrial Relations consultant, legal employment specialist, or the Office of the Employment Advocate is recommended.

Employment arrangements must be clearly documented and ACCs must ensure that each employee has a copy of the agreed terms and conditions prior to commencement of his or her employment.

6.4.1. Remuneration

The term of employment for ACC employees must correspond with the Operational Funding Contract period. ACCs must determine and document remuneration rates, including non-cash items and reimbursement of expenses for employees.

Increases in remuneration should be in line with CPI increases, and aligned with performance assessments, industry standards and local conditions, and be clearly documented.

6.4.2. Leave and Entitlements

As an employer, each ACC is responsible for complying with all relevant legislative requirements for employees such as annual leave, sick leave, long service leave, maternity leave and superannuation. ACCs are provided with funding to cover all employment costs.

As ACCs are funded on a financial year basis, the ACC is also responsible for ensuring that staff take their accrued leave within the Operational Funding period/period of their employment contract.

6.4.3. Staff Training and Development

The ACC should determine the portion of its budget it allocates for staff training and development. Individual staff development plans should be negotiated between the ACC Chair and Executive Officer or equivalent, or between the Executive Officer and ACC staff as appropriate. Specific training and development activities should be linked to each employee's performance agreement.

6.5. EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

Every ACC should have a Staff Performance Management Framework in place. Individual performance agreements should be negotiated between the ACC Chair and Executive Officer or equivalent, or between the Executive Officer and ACC staff as appropriate, and be linked to training and development activities, as well as increases in remuneration.

Performance reviews should be conducted regularly, preferably at 3 and 9 months into the employment contract. Performance reviews are an opportunity to provide two-way performance feedback, assess a staff member's overall performance, and identify strengths and weaknesses, to develop a plan to address weaknesses and to reward performance.

7. PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

Performance assessment for ACCs has 3 components – feedback against Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), Quality Assurance Assessments (QAAs) and audits. The Performance Assessment Framework aims to determine the effectiveness of ACCs in delivering against their Operational Funding Contract as well as to assist ACCs to implement continuous improvement in their operations.

7.1. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

ACCs are required to report on their effectiveness in delivering against their Operational Funding Contract using Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). KPIs are statements of those deliverables for which each ACC is accountable and take account of the ACCs' Strategic Regional and Annual Business Plans, Regional Partnerships funding and projects, and the ACC Charter and Ministerial Priorities. DOTARS will determine the assessment criteria and review the ACCs' feedback in consultation with individual ACCs.

7.2. QUALITY ASSURANCE ASSESSMENT (QAA)

QAAs are a standard administrative mechanism used by organisations to benchmark operations against best practice. ACCs will undertake a Quality Assurance Assessment (QAAs) of their operations against the QAA Checklist provided to ACCs in May 2004 and as amended from time-to-time.

The ACC shall provide a report on the findings to the Regional Manager in November each year against the Quality Assurance Assessment Checklist. This report is to be endorsed by the ACC Committee. Every two years the ACC shall engage an independent person or agency (agreed to in writing by the Department) to conduct the Quality Assurance Assessment of the ACC and to report to the Regional Manager on the findings. This report is to be endorsed by the ACC Committee.

Where a Quality Assurance Assessment Report recommends action on the part of the ACC, the ACC is responsible for implementing these recommendations.

The ACC shall, upon request from the Commonwealth, provide information concerning the steps taken to implement the recommendations of a Quality Assurance Assessment Report.

QAAs focus on a range of governance aspects of ACC Operations to assist ACCs to improve their processes and procedures. Results of the QAA assessments will be utilised to guide continuous improvement in individual ACC's, across the ACC Network and the Department's Corporate Governance framework for ACCs.

PERSONNEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

CODE OF ETHICS

At the New England North West ACC (NENWACC), we conduct our business according to the highest standards of honesty, integrity, respect and fairness when dealing with all of our clients and employees.

We require that all of our employees meet these high standards also.

NENWACC takes seriously its obligations to comply with all Australia, NSW and local government laws and regulations, as well as common law obligations, and again requires all employees to do the same.

The following Code establishes the standards of behaviour that should be met by all employees. Where these standards are not met, then appropriate disciplinary action will be taken. In cases where the breach involves serious misconduct, this may result in instant dismissal.

In cases where a breach of the policy involves a breach of any law, then the relevant government authorities or the police will be notified.

The standards noted below reflect the code of ethics of NENWACC:

- Treat all fellow employees and clients with courtesy and respect
- Do not engage in harassing behaviour towards other employees or clients
- Ensure that all dealings with all employees and clients are fair and equitable
- Do not discriminate on the basis of irrelevant characteristics, such as sex, race, disability, pregnancy, age, marital status, sexual preference
- Do not perpetrate, permit or fail to report violations of any Australian, State or Local Government law or regulation
- Ensure that you declare any conflict of interest between your role as an employee of NENWACC and your involvement in an outside activity
- Be aware of NENWACC policies as set out in its Personnel Policies and Procedures, the ACC and NENWACC Handbook (or elsewhere) and ensure that you comply with them
- Do not use illegal drugs on the premises or come to work while affected by same
- Alcohol may be consumed in a responsible manner for organised or business related occasions
- Do not use the Internet for personal use, except in accord with NENWACC policy
- Do not use the Internet to access sexually explicit material
- Do not use email to send sexually explicit, suggestive, or other harassing material
- Do not use NENWACC information or work time for private gain
- Maintain (during employment with NENWACC and after termination of employment), the confidentiality of any confidential information, records or those materials acquired during the course of employment with NENWACC
- Ensure honest dealings with all clients and stakeholders
- Do not misappropriate NENWACC funds or property
- Do not misappropriate funds or property of clients and stakeholders
- Ensure the highest standard of quality in service
- Do not falsify reports
- Do not breach copyright
- Always acknowledge other people's work and ideas
- Always put safety first and do your utmost to comply with health and safety requirements
- Ensure compliance with all environmental laws and standards
- Do not make any unauthorised statements to the media about the organisation's business (requests for media statements should be referred to the Executive Officer)

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY

This policy aims to provide guidance and assistance to all managers and staff who are involved in recruitment, selection and promotion of employees at NENWACC. It outlines the principles and procedures that are to be followed in the recruitment and selection process.

Merit Principle Applies

When recruiting and promoting staff, NENWACC aims to ensure that the best person for the job is chosen in each case. NENWACC is committed to ensuring that recruitment and selection decisions are based on the principle of merit. This means that persons will be selected on the basis of whether they have the right skills, qualifications and other talents that are required to do the job. Appointment decisions based on irrelevant factors, such as a person's sex, race, disability, age, sexuality etc, or personal biases or favouritism, do not result in the best person for the job being chosen and should not happen.

Any staff member who has a role in the recruitment of employees or in selection for promotion should do their utmost to ensure that the merit principle is applied in every case.

Equal Employment Opportunity

NENWACC is an equal employment opportunity employer and is committed to ensuring that all applicants for selection or promotion are not discriminated against on any of the grounds of discrimination contained in equal opportunity laws (see Equal Employment Opportunity Policy).

This means that no unlawful discrimination should take place in job advertisements, job interviews or the selection process.

The Selection Panel

A panel of at least two people should make all recruitment decisions.

The Executive Officer (EO) will determine the membership of the panel. Both sexes should be represented on the panel where possible. At least one member of the panel should have a detailed knowledge of the requirements of the job — preferably, the EO.

The Essential and Desirable Criteria

The EO will review the job description of the position in question and make sure that it is up to date and accurate. The level of remuneration attached to the position should also be reviewed and approved by the Chair of the Board. The Job Description will consist of essential and desirable criteria for the job.

The essential criteria are those, which are critical for the performance of the job. The desirable criteria are those that will help the applicant perform the job, and give them a competitive advantage. By determining the essential and desirable criteria of the job, the panel will have a standard for comparison of each applicant.

The Job Advertisement

The job advertisement should be written in clear, non-discriminatory language.

The advertisement must contain the title of the job, the essential criteria of the job and the key skills required. It should indicate that applicants should be able to address all of these criteria.

The advertisement is to specify that a full job description and application procedures are located on the NENWACC website.

The name of a contact person with contact details should be provided, as well as a closing date for applications. The advertisement should state that NENWACC is an equal opportunity employer.

Late Applications

Applications lodged after the specified closing date shall not be accepted.

Lodgement of Applications

Job applications are to be lodged in the manner specified in the advertisement, and unless otherwise stated, an application lodged in time by email shall be acceptable.

The Short List

The EO and/or relevant Project Manager should review the job applications and make a recommendation of the best applicants who meet the criteria for the position.

Arrangements should be made for interviewing those applicants who are short-listed.

The Job Interview

The selection panel should agree on the questions to be asked at interview.

These should be restricted to questions that are relevant to the job. Questions which may indicate an intention to show prejudice on any of the grounds of discrimination should not be asked — this includes questions that may constitute sexual harassment (for more information, see the Workplace Harassment Policy). A delegated Panel member should document each applicant's responses.

The panel should meet and agree on the successful applicant, who should be notified of the decision in initially by telephone by the EO and once accepted followed by a letter of offer with attached contract prepared by the EO. The EO should also notify unsuccessful applicants of the result in writing. The relevant manager may offer feedback to unsuccessful applicants.

Privacy

NENWACC respects and complies with its obligations under privacy legislation (see Personal Information and Privacy Policy).

Consequently, any personal information gathered about applicants that does not become an employee record relating to the successful candidates will be destroyed at the conclusion of the selection process, unless the permission or consent of the candidate has been obtained to keep any such information.

INDUCTION POLICY

NENWACC realises the importance of induction in helping a new employee settle into a workplace, but also as an appropriate forum for informing new employees of the NENWACC policies & procedures.

Phase 1 - Paperwork

The induction procedure basically occurs in two phases. The first part covers the paperwork, so that the new employee can be established on the payroll.

This phase should occur during the employee's first day of employment.

The paperwork will include completing:

- An employment tax declaration form
- Details of banking information
- A superannuation membership application form
- A complete set of NENWACC Personnel Policies and Procedures
- TRAX Access requested (New Employee will have computer access established by first day of employment)
- A Deed of Confidentiality document for signature

Phase 2 – Partnering with EO and/or Project Manager(s)

The second phase of the procedure involves meeting with EO and/or Manager to cover:

- A brief history of NENWACC
- A general outline of what NENWACC does and the future directions of the business including an outline of the various roles the organisation plays

- Occupational Health and Safety, including the emergency evacuation procedure and workers compensation
- NENWACC policies and procedures
- An outline of the computer network system used
- General overview of policies with particular detail on certain policies (such as office security arrangements, internet, mobile phone usage, motor vehicle usage and time in lieu)
- Schedule of meetings with various staff as necessary

Introduction to Staff

It is the responsibility of the EO to ensure the new employee is introduced to other employees in the workplace.

Agreement of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

KPIs and performance measures should be discussed and agreed upon by EO and staff member within two weeks of employment. All pages of the document should be signed and dated.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY POLICY

At NENWACC we are committed to providing a work environment in which employees feel that they are a valued member of the organisation, are treated fairly, and are given recognition for their contribution to NENWACC's success. We also aim to provide an environment that fosters good working relationships.

NENWACC is committed to ensuring that all employees enjoy Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO). This means that employees are treated fairly and equally when employment decisions are made and that unlawful discrimination does not take place.

EEO also means that each employee enjoys a harassment-free work environment.

What is Unlawful Discrimination?

Unlawful discrimination means treating a person less favourably because of a personal characteristic they have which is covered by equal opportunity laws.

Under State and Federal equal opportunity laws, discrimination based on the nominated attributes is unlawful. The following list alerts you to the attributes that can trigger the unlawful discrimination.

For precise provisions of Federal law, and State and Territories law, see http://www.hreoc.gov.au/info_for_employers/law/index.html

- Sex
- Race, colour, nationality, descent, and ethnic, ethno-religious, or national origin
- Family responsibilities
- Disability
- Age
- Weight
- Compulsory retirement
- Pregnancy
- Marital status
- Sexuality
- Transgender
- Racial vilification
- Sexual vilification
- HIV/AIDS vilification

These attributes are in most cases irrelevant to employment decisions, and it is NENWACC's policy to ensure that they are not taken into account when employment decisions are made.

It is also company policy that no employee be harassed because of any of the above characteristics.

What is Harassment?

Unlawful harassment is any behaviour which is based on one of the previously listed attributes and which is unwelcome, and offends, humiliates or intimidates the person being harassed.

The fact that no offence was intended is irrelevant. Harassment of any kind is unlawful and will not be tolerated at NENWACC (for further information, refer to NENWACC's Workplace Harassment Policy).

NENWACC Staff and Stakeholders

Our clients are also protected by the law from being discriminated against or harassed. All employees of NENWACC are required to ensure that they treat staff and stakeholders fairly and do not discriminate against them or harass them in any way.

When does EEO apply?

EEO applies to all aspects of the employment relationship, including: recruitment, promotion, employee benefits, conditions of employment, remuneration, transfer, discipline, training, work environment, supervision and termination of employment.

Who is Responsible for EEO?

All employees have a responsibility for treating each other fairly and with respect. The EO and all staff have a role to play in implementing EEO.

The EO and staff must ensure that they do not discriminate against or harass employees or clients when performing their jobs. If they observe discrimination or harassment happening they should take appropriate steps to stop it. Individual employees must also ensure that they do not discriminate against or harass other employees or stakeholders.

To ensure that NENWACC's EEO policy is properly implemented, an experienced staff member has been appointed the organisation's EEO Officer. Ms Jacki O'Toole has been appointed to this position and is responsible for informing all staff about EEO issues and liaising with both staff and the NENWACC Committee (via the EO) about EEO issues.

What Happens if you have been Discriminated Against or Harassed?

If you feel that you have been discriminated against or harassed you should:

- Talk to the EO who will tell you what your options are
- Use NENWACC's Grievance Handling Policy to make a formal complaint

Any complaint will be dealt with seriously and sympathetically. Confidentiality will be respected at all times.

It is important that you come forward with any complaint you may have. This will ensure that your rights are protected and that other employees are not subjected to the same discriminatory or harassing treatment. All reasonable attempts to resolve the matter satisfactorily will be made in-house.

If you are not satisfied with the manner in which your complaint was dealt with by the organisation, you also have the right to take it to an external agency, such as the Anti-Discrimination Board or the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, or your union. It is recommended that before proceeding to an external agency that the NENWACC Committee be given the opportunity to address the issue being raised. The EO can assist with this matter.

Further information about EEO

For further information about EEO, workplace harassment or related issues, please contact:

Anti-Discrimination Board of NSW
Ph: (02) 6268 5555

<http://www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/adb>

WORKPLACE HARASSMENT POLICY

NENWACC is committed to providing a work environment that is pleasant for employees to work in and conducive to good workplace relations.

This policy is aimed at ensuring that employees are not subjected to any unwanted workplace harassment or bullying. Harassment and bullying in the workplace decreases productivity, increases absenteeism, and is also against the law. For these reasons harassment will not be tolerated at NENWACC.

What is Workplace Harassment?

The most common form of workplace harassment is sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is behaviour of a sexual nature that is unwelcome and has the effect of offending, intimidating or humiliating the person being harassed. Typically, sexual harassment most often happens against women, but men can also be harassed.

Workplace harassment can also be based on other grounds including race, disability, age, pregnancy, marital status, homosexuality, transgender, or HIV/AIDS status.

For the purpose of this policy, 'harassment' also includes bullying.

Harassment in the workplace can create an unpleasant or even hostile work environment. Harassment makes work difficult for everyone - the person being harassed, as well as employees witnessing the harassment. The harasser is also neglecting their work when he/she engages in this type of behaviour.

Workplace harassment usually consists of a pattern of unwelcome behaviour, however, it can consist of just one act if it is of a serious nature. Also there is no requirement that the harasser intend to offend or harm in order for it to be unlawful. All that is required under the law is that a reasonable person would consider that the person being harassed would be offended, humiliated or intimidated by the behaviour in question.

The key element of sexual harassment is that it is unwelcome behaviour. It has nothing to do with mutual attraction, or private, consenting friendships; whether sexual or not.

Examples of Unlawful Harassment Include:

- Suggestive comments about a person's body or appearance
- Demands that revealing clothing be worn
- Tales of sexual performance
- Gender based insults or taunting
- Sexist or racist jokes
- Pornographic or nude posters in the workplace
- Homophobic abuse
- Verbal or written abuse directed at a transgender person
- Touching a person in a sexual way
- Sexual assault (criminal offence)
- 'Flashing' (criminal offence)
- Obscene telephone calls (criminal offence)
- Asking repeated questions about a person's sex life
- Requests for sex where these are unwelcome
- Making jokes at the expense of a person with a disability
- Verbal abuse or derogatory comments about a person's age or race
- Bullying

In some instances the harassment might take place outside the workplace: at the office Christmas party for example, or when an employee makes unwelcome phone calls to another employee at their home or follows them home from work.

If an employee goes to another workplace in the course of your work there, it is also against the law to harass someone who is working there.

NENWACC recognises that workplace harassment may involve comments and behaviours that offend some people and not others. The management of NENWACC accepts that individuals may react differently to comments and behaviour. That is why a minimum standard of behaviour is required of employees. This standard is, as far as is possible, respectful of all employees.

Workplace harassment should not be confused with advice or counselling on the work performance or work-related behaviour of an individual or group, which might include critical comments indicating performance deficiencies. Feedback or counselling on work performance or work-related behaviour differs from harassment, in that feedback or counselling is intended to assist employees to improve work performance or the standard of their behaviour. Feedback or counselling should always be carried out in a constructive way that is not humiliating or threatening.

If You Need More Information

If you need any more information about workplace harassment (or bullying), contact:

Anti-Discrimination Board of NSW

Telephone: (02) 9268 5555

<http://www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/adb>

BULLYING POLICY

Bullying includes physical abuse and psychological abuse. Violent behaviour is a highly objectionable form of bullying. Note, however, that it can be manifested in more subtle ways that impact on the health and well being of the victims of bullying. Bullying in the workplace is harmful to the victims and the workplace culture. NENWACC's clear policy is to totally oppose bullying without differentiating between levels of staff. In other words, if the EO and a junior employee are both guilty of bullying then no favouritism will be shown to the EO compared to the junior.

Are You Suffering Harassment or Bullying?

If you believe that you are being harassed or bullied there are a number of important steps you should take:

- Tell the person that their behaviour is unacceptable, and that it must stop. It is important to say these things to the harasser otherwise they may interpret your silence as consent. If you would feel too uncomfortable saying these things to the harasser, this will not mean that you don't have a valid claim
- Report the behaviour or incident to the EO
- You may wish to lodge a grievance under NENWACC's Grievance Handling Policy
- If the alleged perpetrator is the EO then report the EO to the NENWACC Chair
- Keep your complaint confidential - this will avoid idle gossip and the possibility of defamation proceedings against you or the organisation

What will NENWACC do?

NENWACC has a legal responsibility to take reasonable steps to prevent harassment and bullying from happening in the workplace. This involves educating employees about harassment and bullying, putting in place this policy, implementing grievance procedures and ensuring compliance by all in the workforce.

If you make a complaint of workplace harassment or bullying it will be taken very seriously and will be dealt with sympathetically and in a confidential manner.

The complaint will be investigated and, if found to be proved, appropriate warnings or other disciplinary action will be taken against the harasser. In serious cases the harasser may be dismissed.

An employee will not be victimised or treated unfairly for making a complaint.

The EO can (through the NENWACC Chair) seek an independent investigation of the complaint by a Board Member or an independent third party.

If you are not satisfied with the way in which the organisation has dealt with your complaint, you can seek further advice from an outside agency such as the Equal Opportunity Commission of Victoria or other relevant government agency.

EOs' Role

The EO has an important role in the prevention of workplace harassment and bullying. Firstly, the EO must ensure that staff do not harass or bully employees or stakeholders. Secondly, the EO must ensure that staff understand the Workplace Harassment and Bullying Policy. If the EO observes discrimination or harassment or bullying, he/she should take steps to stop it and warn the person of the consequences if the behaviour continues. If a person approaches the EO with a complaint about harassment or bullying, the EO should take appropriate steps to resolve it. If this is not resolved or it is inappropriate for the EO to be involved, then the ACC Chair should be informed.

Employees' Role

Each employee must ensure that they do not engage in harassing or bullying behaviour towards other employees, the EO or NENWACC stakeholders.

Employees should be aware that they can be held legally responsible for their unlawful acts. Employees who aid, abet or encourage other persons to harass or bully can also be held legally liable.

If You Need More Information

If you need any more information about bullying (or workplace harassment), contact:

Anti-Discrimination Board of NSW

Telephone: (02) 9268 5555

<http://www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/adb>

GRIEVANCE HANDLING POLICY

NENWACC aims to foster good relations amongst employees and between employees and management. We acknowledge that the enjoyment you experience in your job is reflected in how well you work and how well you relate to your colleagues and clients.

We also acknowledge that problems can arise at work that may sometimes cause you to feel aggrieved. These problems can arise from the behaviour or decisions of management or other employees.

The purpose of this policy is to allow you to have such problems, referred to as grievances, addressed in-house in a timely and confidential manner. This can avoid the need for employees to go outside the company for assistance.

What is a Grievance?

A grievance can be about anything done, or not done of a serious nature, by management or another employee or employees, which you feel affects you unfairly or unjustly.

A grievance can also be about discrimination, harassment, or any other employment related decision or behaviour which you think is unfair, unjust or upsetting.

This grievance handling policy gives you advice about what to do if you have a grievance and what will happen if you make a formal complaint.

How will your Grievance be Handled?

If you come forward with a grievance it will be treated with the utmost confidentiality. It is important that you also maintain confidentiality in order to avoid idle gossip and the possibility of defamation proceedings.

If you decide to go ahead and make a formal complaint (see below), it will be taken seriously and investigated in an impartial manner. This may mean that you, the person complained about, and any witnesses will be interviewed. Again, confidentiality will be assured. No decision will be made until the investigation is complete.

If you do come forward with a complaint, you will not be treated unfairly or victimised as a result.

If a complaint is made against you, be assured that you will not be prejudged. You will have an opportunity to tell your side of the story. You may bring someone with you at the time to give you some support.

Each complaint will be dealt with in as short a time as is possible in the circumstances.

What are your Options if you do have a Grievance?

- Speak to the person causing the problem. While this may not be appropriate in many cases, it may be the easiest way of resolving the issue if you do feel comfortable with speaking to the person. You can tell them that their behaviour, decision, actions, etc was unfair, offensive, discriminatory etc, and why you believe this to be so. The person may have been totally unaware of the affect of their behaviour or decision on you. By telling them you will give them a chance to redress the situation.
- If you do not want to speak to the person directly, you can tell the EO about your grievance. He/she will tell you what your options are. With your agreement, the EO may approach the person complained about and talk to them informally about your grievance. Alternatively you may decide to make a formal complaint.
- If you do decide to make a formal complaint, this can be done by putting the complaint in writing and reporting it to the EO. You may have a fellow employee or support person attend the meeting with you when you report the complaint. The written complaint should contain a description of the incident(s), decision, behaviour in question, the time and date of the incident(s) etc, the names of any witnesses, your signature; and the date of the complaint.
- If the complaint is between the EO and a member of staff, the complaint can be referred to the Chair of NENWACC. The processes remain the same.
- In all instances of a formal grievance, the EO will notify the Chair of NENWACC of the dispute and the Chair will decide whether to provide a Board representative (or independent third party) to assist with the resolution of the dispute. The person chosen will report directly back to the Chair on the matter.

The Investigation

- Once a formal complaint is made, the matter will be investigated by the EO. In the case of the complaint being against the EO a Board member (or an independent third party) may conduct the investigation.
- The EO will then interview you, any witnesses and the person against whom the complaint is made. You and the person against whom the complaint is made may have a support person when the interview is being conducted.
- If the complaint is substantiated, the appropriate action will be taken (see below).
- If the complaint is unsubstantiated, both parties will be given an explanation as to why that finding was made.
- If the complaint involves the EO, the investigation may involve an independent third party or a Board Member nominated by the NENWACC Chair.

Notification of a Grievance to the NENWACC Committee

The EO will communicate all grievance matters to the NENWACC Committee. Employees should not contact the Board directly unless the complaint is against the EO.

Possible Outcomes following Complaint Investigation

- If the investigation reveals that a complaint is a valid one, a number of actions may be taken, depending on the nature of the complaint. The person against whom the complaint is made may be required to give you a written apology; he/she may be given a written warning, counselling, demotion, or be dismissed.
- If the investigation is inconclusive (eg. the complaint cannot be proved due to lack of evidence), NENWACC may nevertheless take a number of actions. These may include training of all staff, and/or monitoring behaviour of all staff. An independent mediator may also be provided to resolve the issues.

- If the complaint is found to have been fabricated, appropriate action may be taken against the complainant, including counselling, and/or a written apology to the person complained about, an official warning, demotion, or dismissal, depending on the seriousness of the allegations.

Outside agencies

If you are not satisfied with the way in which your grievance was handled you may take it to an outside agency, such as the:

Equal Opportunity Commission of NSW
Ph: 9281-7110
<http://www.eoc.nsw.gov.au/>

ATTENDANCE & ABSENTEEISM POLICY

Regular attendance is essential to the efficient workflow and productivity of NENWACC. Standard working hours are 80 hours per fortnight (unless otherwise negotiated).

Attendance times are 9am -5.30pm or 8.30am to 5pm Monday to Friday with a 30-minute lunch break. As employees are frequently working out of the office, it is important for staff to notify their whereabouts in advance on the staff director.

In the event of illness or family emergency, employees should notify the EO directly as soon as practicable, indicating the extent of the anticipated absence. Other types of leave should only be taken in accordance with the Leave Policy. During prolonged absence employees should contact the EO on a regular basis (or as arranged with EO).

Where an employee finds that they cannot return to work as scheduled, they must notify the EO prior to the scheduled day of return.

Repeated late attendance or absence from work without valid reason will be cause for disciplinary action.

LEAVE POLICY

Our leave policy allows the EO a lot of flexibility to approve leave to meet your personal, family, work and community commitments, without compromising the achievement of NENWACC's business objectives. The policy applies to all employees.

Types of leave

This policy covers the following types of leave:

- Annual
- Bereavement
- Carer's
- Emergency services
- Jury service
- Long service
- Parental
- Sick
- Without pay
- Time in Lieu
- Study Leave

Annual Leave

Full time employees are entitled to annual leave of 20 working days for each year of service. For part time employees, leave accrues at a pro-rata the full time rate. The EO has the discretion to approve the taking of annual leave before the first year of service has been completed. Leave loading is paid on a fortnightly basis and is included in your salary.

Accumulation of more than 30 days annual leave is discouraged and may result in mandatory leave requirements. Our work is demanding, so staff should use their leave. Annual Leave must be notified in writing one-month prior to leave taken unless agreed by EO.

Bereavement Leave

Employees will be granted up to two days leave on full pay in respect of the death of a member of your immediate family. Bereavement leave may be taken in conjunction with other leave.

Sick Leave

Full time employees are also entitled to a maximum of 10 days sick leave per annum (which also accrues on a pro-rata basis over the year). For part time employees, leave accrues at a pro-rata the full time rate. If all paid sick leave entitlements are taken, further sick leave would need to be taken without pay. The employee's fortnightly payslip will show the rate of which leave accrues.

Employees are required to notify the EO as soon as possible when they are absent due to illness or injury and to indicate how long they expect to be absent. No payment will be made for unused sick leave. Absence from work on sick leave for 2 or more consecutive working days (including Friday and Monday) needs to be supported by a medical certificate to the satisfaction of NENWACC. If the full period of sick leave is not taken in any year, the whole or any untaken portion shall be cumulative from year to year. However, NENWACC is not bound to credit an employee for sick leave that accrued more than twelve years before the end of the last completed year of service. Part time employees shall be entitled to a proportionate amount of sick leave.

Carer's Leave

To help employees to reconcile work and family responsibilities, greater access to existing paid leave entitlements has been allowed. Carer's (or family) leave is an arrangement under which you are able to take leave to care for family members who are ill. Sick leave and bereavement leave can be converted into Carer's leave. Paid carer's leave is a maximum of five days a year and may be taken in periods of less than one day. For Carer's leave absences longer than 2 days, a medical certificate is required.

Emergency Services Leave

If an employee is a member of the Emergency Services, they may be granted up to 10 days leave on full pay each calendar year to respond to emergencies (with the agreement of the EO). This leave does not accumulate.

Jury Duty

Employees will be paid their normal salary while serving on a jury. If they serve on a jury while on annual leave, the days served will be recognised for accrual of annual leave. All jury fees received are to be remitted to NENWACC.

Long Service Leave

An amount of 13 weeks long service leave applies for full time employees after 10 years of continuous service. For part time employees, leave accrues at a pro-rata the full time rate. For all employees who have served ten years, ongoing pro rata entitlements apply (at the same rate) until termination. Employees receive their ordinary pay whilst on leave.

Parental Leave

Maternity leave is unpaid leave. A full-time or part-time employee who has completed a minimum of 12 months continuous service is entitled to a maximum of 52 weeks unpaid leave (within the confines of NENWACC's annual funding contract) provided that the leave shall not extend beyond the child's first birthday.

Employees are entitled to the Parental Leave conditions provided in the Workplace Relations Act - 1996.

Leave Without pay

Applications for leave without pay may only be approved by the EO. In the case of the EO, with the approval of the NENWACC Chair.

How to apply

All applications for leave are made on the Leave Application Form and forwarded to the EO.

Time in Lieu

NENWACC acknowledges that there may be peak periods when a staff members work in excess of their normal working hours. A Time In Lieu arrangement is in place for this reason. If a staff member has accrued additional hours and wishes to take Time In Lieu, the staff member must:

- Seek approval from the EO prior to taking any Time In Lieu leave
- Have diarised additional hours worked for auditing purposes

If the staff member is finding that his/her work is requiring excessive additional hours to their contracted hours of work this issue should be brought to the attention of the EO as soon as possible for discussion re possible workload solutions.

Study Leave

- Study Leave approval is on a semester-by-semester basis. Approval of one semester does not guarantee ongoing approvals. The employee will need to provide academic results before any additional applications are considered
- Study Leave is subject to approval by the EO and is based on workload demands and capacity of employee to manage both commitments
- Study leave can only be taken for the period of lectures and/or tutorials plus half an hour travel time to and from the Training/Educational Institute. Study leave may also be granted for attendance at exams
- As a general guide study leave should be no longer than 4 hours per week (this includes travel time)
- All costs incurred by the employee in relation to study are to be paid by the employee. NENWACC holds no liability for costs incurred
- Employees are expected to manage their workload when granted study leave and maintain Employment Contract requirements
- Workers Compensation coverage will apply whilst on study leave

Application Process for Study Leave:

1. The study needs to be relevant to the ACC role and provide benefit to NENWACC in achieving its Strategic Regional Plan
2. Information about the course must be provided by the employee to the EO prior to course commencement, including hours per week (including day of week), course content, institution, accreditation and total duration of training/education
3. Application for study leave needs to be made after each semester/term and /or if days or hours of study leave vary
4. Approval is based on operational requirements and capacity of employee to manage both commitments - it is not a basic employee right

ABANDONMENT OF EMPLOYMENT POLICY

Employees are generally considered to have abandoned their employment if they are absent from their employment continuously for three working days without notification or the employer's consent.

In the absence of direction from an applicable award, the following guiding principles will be used by NENWACC in determining whether employees have abandoned their employment:

- The EO must first establish that the employee's absence is unauthorised by checking NENWACC records

- The EO must then attempt to contact the absent employee either personally or by registered post to determine the reason for the absence and whether or not the employee intends to return to work

If within five days from the first date of absence, the employee gives a reasonable explanation for the absence, then the presumption of abandonment of employment may be reversed (an example of a reasonable explanation would be if the employee had been in hospital).

If no reply is received within the five day period or the excuse for the absence is unsatisfactory, the EO can take steps to terminate the employee's employment.

If it is not possible to terminate the employment of an employee in person, a registered letter should be sent to the employee's address. Termination of employment should not take place over the telephone.

Alternatively, the EO's initial letter of inquiry may state that failure to return to normal duty or to give an acceptable explanation for the absence within the five day period, will be regarded as the employee terminating his/her employment, without notice, on the date of his or her last day of attendance at work.

WORKERS COMPENSATION & RETURN TO WORK POLICY

What is Workers Compensation?

Workers compensation provides injured workers with weekly payments (and other payments) to cover loss of earning capacity, payment of medical expenses and vocational rehabilitation expenses, where necessary, to assist them return to work. All employers are required to have a workers compensation policy to protect them from financial claims when a worker suffers a work-related injury, including stress.

Improving injury and claims management and resolving disputes quickly

NENWACC aims to have the best possible safety record, so workers compensation claims are likely to be very rare events.

When a compensable injury or illness does occur, the employee should report to the EO and complete relevant documentation as a matter of priority.

Injured employees will be given relevant information about how to progress their claims and their rehabilitation at that time or soon after.

NENWACC aims to meet deadlines and other requirements of workers compensation legislation. The cooperation of all employees in this respect is required.

Legal Obligations of Workers and Employers

A summary of employee rights and responsibilities in relation to workers compensation can be found at:

<http://www.workcover.nsw.gov.au>

Steps to take if an employee is injured at work can be found in Appendix 1.

Employees are encouraged to contact the EO immediately if they feel they are at risk of suffering any work related injury/stress.

Return to Work

Under both Occupational Health and Safety and Workers Compensation legislation, an employer is required to establish a workplace return to work program that is consistent with the insurer's injury management program to assist injured employees return to work.

Occupational rehabilitation aims to provide an early and safe return to work for employees suffering from work related injury or illness by using the workplace itself as a vital part of the rehabilitation process.

NENWACC's Commitment

NENWACC is committed to the prevention of illness and injury by providing a safe and healthy working environment (see Occupational Health and Safety Policy). NENWACC aims to manage the process of rehabilitation in the workplace to ensure that all injured employees have the opportunity to recover and return to work by:

- Ensuring that a return to work as soon as possible is a normal practice and expectation
- Ensuring early access to rehabilitation services, eg accredited rehabilitation providers [or similar professionals] for all who need them
- Providing suitable duties for an injured employee as an integral part of the rehabilitation process
- Consulting with employee (and where applicable, any industrial union representing them) to ensure that the rehabilitation program operates smoothly and effectively
- Informing employees of their rights in relation to a workers compensation claim including the choice of doctor and accredited rehabilitation provider
- Ensuring that participation in a return to work plan will not of itself prejudice an injured employee
- Prepare a return to work plan and nominate a return to work coordinator for any injured employee with an incapacity for work no later than 10 days after a claim being accepted or determined in the worker's favour, or of becoming aware that the employee's period of incapacity is likely to exceed 20 days
- Offer pre-injury equivalent or suitable employment to an injured employee within 12 months of the claim being accepted or determined in the employee's favour

Return to Work Co-ordinator

A Rehabilitation Co-ordinator maybe appointed by the EO. The role of the Return to Work Co-ordinator is to:

- Determine the injured employee's needs
- Identify suitable duties for the injured employee
- Co-ordinate and monitor return to work plans
- Liaise with all parties including the Rehabilitation Provider where appropriate
- Provide information and support to the injured employee
- Maintain confidentiality

Confidentiality

The confidentiality of rehabilitation records shall be maintained. Reports and records will only be available on a 'need to know' basis.

Procedures to be Followed

The procedures for the management of injured employee are:

- If any work related injury or illness occurs it must be reported to the EO, an accident form completed and treatment arranged
- NENWACC will notify the insurer of any 'significant injury' within 48 hours and within 7 days for any other type of injury. All other injuries are to be notified within 7 days
- Claims for compensation are to be forwarded to the insurer within 7 days of receipt of the claim
- NENWACC will arrange for the EO, or where this is not practicable, their workers compensation insurer, to provide advice to the injured employee to:
 - Assist in filling out Workers Compensation forms
 - Explain rights, obligations, benefits and rehabilitation procedures to the injured employee
 - Ensure that the worker is offered the help of an accredited Rehabilitation Provider who shall be given reasonable access to the workplace (the injured employee, in consultation with the employer, may select the Rehabilitation Provider to be used)
- Where appropriate, arrange a return to work plan on the advice of the treating doctor or the accredited Rehabilitation Provider in consultation with the treating doctor

Providing suitable Duties/Employment

When the injured employee is, according to medical judgment, well enough to return to work on suitable duties NENWACC shall, as far as practicable, provide suitable duties/employment. Suitable duties/employment shall be

approved by the treating doctor or by the accredited Rehabilitation Provider in consultation with the treating doctor. Rehabilitation Providers can help to identify suitable duties in the workplace.

Consultation

NENWACC will consult with the injured employee and other relevant staff members in relation to the rehabilitation process.

Resolving Disputes

If any disputes arise, every effort will be made to resolve them in a spirit of cooperation through discussion with the employee and the EO.

Rights and Responsibilities of Employees

Every employee shall:

- Take reasonable care, in the performance of their work, so as to prevent injuries to themselves and others
- Co-operate in reasonable workplace changes designed to assist in rehabilitation of fellow employees
- Notify NENWACC of an injury as soon as possible
- Co-operate in reasonable efforts by NENWACC to rehabilitate any injured staff member

Each worker who sustains an injury shall have the choice of treating doctor and of accredited Rehabilitation Provider.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

NENWACC is committed to providing a safe and healthy work environment for all employees.

NENWACC will make every reasonable effort to prevent accidents, protect employees from injury, and promote the health, safety and welfare of all employees.

The organisation will make available appropriate resources to ensure that it complies in all respects with relevant occupational health and safety legislation, and to ensure that the workplace is a safe and healthy workplace.

Occupational Health and Safety Representative

As required by law there is an OHS representative on site, namely the EO. He/she is there to assist all employees with all aspects of occupational health and safety including

- OH&S briefing at induction
- Emergency procedures
- Reporting and recording of incidents, accidents, injuries and illnesses
- Provision of information to employees

Responsibilities of the EO

The EO has the responsibility to:

- Identify hazards, assess risk and implement control strategies to minimise risk of injury to people and property
- Ensure the relevant Acts and Regulations that apply to working conditions and the work environment are observed and enforced
- Encourage consultation in addressing safety issues
- Design, purchase, install and maintain a safe site and equipment
- Develop and implement safe systems of work
- Provide adequate safety information
- Ensure that the workplace is safe and without risks to health — the EO will always be held accountable for identifying any unsafe conditions or behaviour
- Ensure that the behaviour of all persons in the workplace is safe and without risk to health
- The EO will be held accountable for taking prompt remedial action to eliminate any unsafe conditions or behaviour, once aware of the situation

Responsibilities of Employees

All employees have the responsibility to:

- Adhere to safe work practices, instructions and rules
- Immediately report any unsafe work condition or equipment to the EO
- Not misuse, damage, refuse to use, or interfere with anything provided in the interest of occupational health and safety
- Perform all work duties in a manner which ensures individual health and safety and that of all other employees
- Encourage fellow employees to create and maintain a safe and healthy work environment
- Co-operate with all other employees to enable the health and safety responsibilities of all employees be achieved
- Bring any potential OH&S issue to the attention of the EO

SUPERANNUATION POLICY

All employees of NENWACC are entitled to nominate a superannuation fund of their choice. The fund chosen however must have the provision for monthly employer payments.

Employees are entitled to receive compulsory superannuation in line with the Commonwealth Government's Superannuation Guarantee Scheme. In addition, employees may make further optional contributions or, with the approval of the EO, enter into 'salary sacrifice' arrangements.

TRAVEL & EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT POLICY

NENWACC's policy is to make sure that employees are not financially disadvantaged as a result of travelling on ACC business.

Reimbursement

Employees will be reimbursed for any approved expense by cheque once a month.

Private Vehicle Expenses

When employees use their own car on ACC business (in circumstances approved by the EO) expenses are paid per kilometre (to include petrol, oil, repairs, tyres and maintenance) at the rate indicated in the ACC Operating Manual. Mileage sheets must be completed and signed by the EO for payment processing.

An employee's car must be registered and covered by comprehensive motor vehicle insurance or third party property damage insurance before it may be used on ACC business. The employee must also provide the EO with a copy of their driver's licence.

Claimable Kilometres

Business kilometres are the kilometres the car travelled in the course of using it for work related purposes. To substantiate any claim, employees must record details of each business trip and write down:

- The date of journey
- The car's odometer readings at the start and end of the journey
- How many kilometres the car travelled on the journey
- The reason for the journey

Employees may only claim the cost of trips between home and work where:

- They travel from the normal workplace to another location for work purposes and back to the normal workplace or directly home
- They travel from home to another location for work purposes and then to the normal workplace or directly home

Traffic/Parking Fines

NENWACC is not liable and will not pay traffic and parking fines. These are the employee's responsibility.

Other Expense Reimbursements

All expenses must relate directly to the activities of NENWACC and are to be authorised by the EO prior to expenditure.

MOTOR VEHICLE POLICY

The EO is provided with a motor vehicle and is entitled to use it for both business and reasonable personal use (within the kilometre limitations imposed by the vehicle lease). Consequently, the EO may authorise other persons to drive the vehicle from time to time (in accordance with NENWACC's comprehensive insurance policy).

NENWACC will pay all taxes, insurance premiums, running costs, maintenance and repair expenses associated with the running of the car. The cost of routine car washes must be met by the EO.

Maintaining the Leased Vehicle

The obligations with respect to the leased vehicle are:

- To take good care of the car and ensure that it is properly and responsibly maintained and serviced
- To ensure that the provisions of any insurance Policy relating to the car are observed
- Not to fit any accessories to the car without prior written approval from the ACC Chair
- To pay all parking and traffic infringement penalties relating to use of the car
- To ensure that the car is securely locked when left unattended and that any alarm system fitted to the car is turned on
- To ensure that the car is properly garaged at night
- To ensure that the car is kept clean, polished and in a condition which is a credit to NENWACC
- To ensure the vehicle is serviced at required times
- Not to drive the car if intoxicated through alcohol consumption or drug-taking
- Not to smoke or permit smoking in the vehicle

If any staff member is involved in any accident as a result of alcohol consumption, unlawful drug taking, negligence or recklessness, he/she must pay any excess on the insurance and any other amount not covered by the insurance. A breach of these requirements entitles the ACC to withdraw the motor vehicle. The ACC is entitled to inspect the motor vehicle at any time without notice in order to ensure the compliance with these requirements.

In the interests of safety and recognising the necessity to travel long distances to service the region, it is recommended project officers do not travel more than 6 hours or 600km in a day. The NENWACC recommends staff make arrangements for overnight accommodation and catering, to be paid for by the NENWACC should a staff member expect to be travelling more than 6 hours or over 600km in a day.

MOBILE PHONE POLICY

The aim of this policy is to provide employees with guidelines regarding the appropriate use of an NENWACC supplied mobile phone.

Eligibility

An employee will be eligible to have a mobile phone if it is deemed necessary to their position; for example, if the employee's duties require them to spend time out of the office and/or to be contactable outside the normal hours of work.

Use

The mobile phone is provided primarily to allow contact with the staff member by other staff or clients. Employees with a mobile phone should be conscious of the costs mobile phone calls incur and use the phone responsibly.

The use of a mobile phone while driving is illegal. If necessary, earpieces will be provided. However, it needs to be recognised that concentrating on phone calls while driving is a high-risk activity.

Staff should regularly check messages after long car trips and ensure messages are returned promptly.

International calls on mobile phones are not permitted.

Private Use

Mobile phones are issued for work related purposes. Therefore, private usage of a mobile phone should be kept to an absolute minimum. If it is found that an employee is using his or her phone excessively, then the employee may have the phone removed or be requested to reimburse NENWACC for personal calls.

Use of Mobile Phones in the Office

In circumstances where a fixed telephone is available to make outgoing calls then use of the mobile for that purpose is discouraged.

Private mobile phones are not to be used in the workplace during working time except where mutually agreed between an employee and EO. In some instances staff may be permitted to use their mobile phone for work purposes. In this case the amount can be claimed on presentation of their personal phone bill.

Mobile Phones in Meetings

It is common courtesy to switch mobile telephones off before entering a meeting.

NENWACC understands that extenuating circumstances may exist that require staff to leave mobile phones switched on during meetings. If this is the case then staff should inform the chairperson prior to the commencement of the meeting that they may be expecting a call.

Lost or Broken Phones

NENWACC expects employees who have been allocated a mobile phone to take the utmost care and responsibility for them.

If a phone is lost, it should be reported to the EO as soon as it is noticed missing. Depending on the circumstances in which the phone was lost, NENWACC will be responsible for replacing the phone unless carelessness on the part of the employee can be shown as the cause of the loss. In circumstances where it has been shown that the employee's carelessness contributed to the loss of the phone then the employee may be required to meet all or part of the replacement cost.

If the phone is faulty, the employee should notify the EO as soon as possible so a replacement phone may be supplied.

Termination of Employment

On termination of employment, the employee must return the phone to the EO. Any battery chargers or other accessories supplied for use with the mobile phone must also be returned. If this does not occur, final termination payments may be withheld or adjusted accordingly.

Occupational Health and Safety

The use of mobile phones in certain parts of the workplace and in leased vehicles can create unsafe situations or potentially unsafe situations.

The EO is authorised to issue general notices or particular notices to staff regarding the use of mobile phones if they perceive a real or potential occupational health and safety risk.

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

NENWACC's internet and email services are provided for official use and should be confined to business matters only. Employees should be aware however that the internet and email has a tendency to be used inappropriately because of its speed, convenience and informality.

Inappropriate use of Email & Internet

Personal use of the e-mail or internet is to be only on an infrequent and limited basis.

- Email is not to be used to convey comments on a political issues, or to distribute the latest games software
- Employees must not use email, discussion forums or web pages under their control, to provide or communicate obscene materials, or that threatens, harasses, intimidates or singles out individuals or groups for degradation or harassment in violation of Federal or State law
- Employees must not display on screens images, sounds or messages, which could create an atmosphere of discomfort or harassment to others
- NENWACC's internet and email services must not be used to send material that is libellous, defamatory abusive, obscene or in bad taste

Employees should be aware that messages can never be deleted. Computer experts can always retrieve them. Employees should assume that any message they send is permanent and could be forwarded elsewhere without their knowledge or consent.

Email Housekeeping

Employees should:

- Check their email regularly; ignoring a message is discourteous and confusing to the sender
- Delete messages as soon as they have been read or answered, or the issue resolved
- Develop an orderly filing system for messages that need to be retained - keep the messages in the inbox and sent mail folders to a minimum
- Try to avoid sending large file attachments as they can cause email servers and gateways to fail
- Always sign off their message with NENWACC's standard email footer as it reassures the reader that the message is genuine and has not been truncated

SECURITY POLICY

No ACC property may be removed from NENWACC premises or designated storage places without the permission of the EO. Where the EO has a substantial reason for believing that an employee has removed NENWACC property or is in unauthorised possession of NENWACC property, the EO will conduct an investigation.

Unauthorised Possession of NENWACC Property

The procedure for investigating the removal or unauthorised possession of NENWACC property is as follows:

- The EO will ask the employee to explain the incident
- The employee involved will then be asked whether they agree to an interview if their explanation is not satisfactory
- The employee may ask for the attendance of a nominated colleague to be present at the interview
- At the interview, the employee will be asked about the relevant NENWACC property and may be asked to give consent to the search of their possessions
- Under no circumstances shall an employee be subject to physical or body contact or body search by the EO
- If an employee does not co-operate in the security process and/or if the EO on reasonable grounds believes that the employee has committed an offence, the police may be called and the employee supervised until the police arrive
- If an employee is convicted of an offence by police, that employee may also be subject to disciplinary action (including dismissal)

- If, after an investigation, it is found that an employee has removed NENWACC property without permission or has been found in the possession of NENWACC property without permission, then the employee will be subject to disciplinary action (including dismissal)

Personal Security at Work

If working alone in the office, an employee should keep external doors locked at all times.

Building Security

All NENWACC employees are issued with an office door entry key (which cannot be copied). This key is signed for on receipt and return (at the cessation of employment). All employees are expected to keep the key secure at all times, and under no circumstances may an employee loan the key to any other person, or use it to allow any unauthorised access to NENWACC's premises. Should such action occur, the employee will be subject to disciplinary action (including dismissal)

When an employee is the last person to leave the office, they should:

- Turn off heating, computers, the photocopier and all office lighting
- Lock external doors and bolt the rear door
- Activate the security alarm using a personalised staff code
- Activate the telephone answering machine

PERSONAL INFORMATION & PRIVACY POLICY

Personal Information

Personal information concerning employees is confidential and will only be used for purposes for which the information is relevant. Personal information may only be used for purposes other than for which it was collected:

- With the consent of the person concerned
- To prevent a serious threat to a person's health or life
- As required or authorised by law
- Where reasonably necessary for the enforcement of criminal or revenue law

Access

All employees have access to the personal information held by NENWACC about them. They may also make corrections and additions to personal information to make sure that the information is accurate, up to date and complete.

Privacy

NENWACC's Privacy Policy complies with the National Privacy Principles (NPPs) established by the Privacy Act 1988 and which was subsequently amended by the Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2000 (which came into operation on 21 December 2001).

The Act regulates the way private sector organisations can collect, use, keep secure and disclose personal information. For the first time, it gives individuals the right to know why organisations collect information, what information an organisation holds about them, how it will use the information and to whom it is disclosed as well as a right to correct that information if it is wrong.

Information Privacy Principles (IPPs)

There are special rules that apply to Australian Government contractors (such as NENWACC) to ensure that personal information is protected when outsourced.

Government agencies (such as DOTARS) are required in their contracts to ensure that subcontractors (such as NENWACC) do not commit any act or practice which would breach an Information Privacy Principle (IPP) as if it were done by the agency itself and also, to ensure that their contracts do not authorise any practices or acts which

would breach an IPP. Consequently, NENWACC has a privacy clause (Protection of Personal Information) in our Operational Funding Contract that ensures we comply with the IPPs (Appendix 2) in the same way that DOTARS does.

NENWACC also requires all staff to sign a Deed of Confidentiality (Appendix 3) whereby they agree to respect and protect all personal information that they come into contact with in relation to, or in connection with, the performance of their duties.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT POLICY

NENWACC's Performance Management Policy aims to promote the skills and motivation of employees by:

- Helping employees to stay results-focused by setting performance-based objectives and targets in each individual employment contract
- Translating NENWACC's Strategic Regional Plan into achievable individual objectives and work-related activities
- Reviewing employee performance (six monthly) for training, development and workload management purposes
- Reviewing employee performance annually for the purposes of contract renewal, salary review (within financial constraints) and job re-design (as necessary)

Why have a Performance Management Policy?

The performance management policy provides on-going feedback on individual performance, which allows employees to monitor performance and identify aspects of their performance that require further development. The policy formally documents and plans:

- Individual position descriptions and accountabilities
- Progress towards individual achievement of, and progress towards key result areas
- Feedback on performance
- Identification and progression of individual training and development needs
- Appropriate remuneration for performance

The Employment Contract

The Employment Contract is an integral part of the performance management system. An Employment Contract is written for each position in NENWACC and includes:

- Background statement and statement and position context
- Specific duties of the position
- Generic duties of the position
- Key Performance Indicators
- Conditions of Employment
- Probationary period details
- Notice of termination details

The employee and the EO both agree and sign the Employment Contract. A signed copy is filed on the employee's personnel file.

Performance Planning

Performance planning is the process of determining the contribution all staff need to make to help NENWACC to achieve its objectives. The objectives of the performance management plan are:

- To ensure that all employees receive regular feedback on their work performance
- To give all employees an opportunity to express their feelings about their job and their aspirations about work preferences
- To systematically review the current performance of individual members of staff

- Identify employees with the potential and willingness to accept different types of responsibility
- To gather information which will assist in setting remuneration
- To identify the training and development needs of individuals;
- To ensure that individual employee's performance and goals accord with organisational objectives

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

The Key Performance Indicators describe what good performance is. These should be clearly spelt out and included in the employee's employment contract/job description. KPIs should include:

- The key results areas of each job
- What is good quality performance and how that will be measured
- The feedback system which will provide data relevant to each performance indicator

DISCIPLINE & TERMINATION POLICY

This policy is designed to ensure that when discipline or termination issues arise, employees are treated fairly and equitably. It also aims to ensure that the manager involved in the disciplining and termination of an employee meets industrial law standards for termination of employment. This applies both to the reason for the dismissal and the manner in which the dismissal is carried out.

Grounds for terminating an employee

Lawful reasons for dismissing an employee include:

- Redundancy (i.e. the position no longer exists)
- Performance (eg where the employee is unable to satisfactorily complete the inherent duties of the job set out in the Employment Contract)
- Conduct (eg consistently late for work)
- Serious misconduct (eg fighting, drinking on the job)

Performance

An employee's performance is considered to be inadequate if the employee is not meeting the inherent requirements of the position as set out in the Employment Contract, or has not achieved a satisfactory rating in one or more key result areas of his/her performance plan over a six month period.

Misconduct

Misconduct includes:

- Actions involving harm (or the real possibility of harm) to any employee;
- Dishonesty
- Verbally abusing a person at the workplace
- Harassing or discriminating against an employee
- Sexual harassment
- Inefficiency, neglect of duty or malingering

Verbal Warnings

Where the EO has concerns about an employee's performance or conduct (excepting serious misconduct – see below), the EO should explain to the employee the manner in which the employee's conduct or performance is not meeting the required standard. This standard may be set in the Employment Contract relating to the position, or in one or more of NENWACC's Personnel Policies and Procedures.

The EO will in the first instance, verbally counsel the employee by informing him/her of the area(s) in which they are not meeting the required standard of performance or conduct expected of them. The employee will be given an

opportunity to respond to the EO's concerns and will be given an opportunity to rectify his or her performance or conduct within a reasonable period of time, depending on the circumstances. The EO should also state that if the problem is not remedied within a specified time, the employee will then be issued with a further warning and may ultimately be dismissed. The EO will make written note of the verbal warning.

Second and Final Warning

If the employee fails to rectify his or her conduct or performance within the required period, the EO will then require the employee to attend a meeting at which a second (and final) warning will be given. The EO will provide this warning in writing.

If the employee's continued performance or conduct is such that it would be unreasonable for the EO to allow the employee the allotted time to remedy the problem, then the EO will institute the meeting prior to the specified time expiring.

The EO will inform the employee prior to the meeting of their concerns with the employee's conduct or performance, and state that the employee is allowed to have a colleague of their choice accompany them to the meeting.

At the meeting the EO will outline the nature of the problem(s) and allow the employee an opportunity to respond. However, if the employee has not adequately explained his/her failure to remedy their poor performance or conduct, that continuing poor performance or conduct may lead to dismissal.

Note that it is not a legal requirement that a second written warning be issued.

Steps Leading to Dismissal

Following the issuing of the second warning, if the employee fails to remedy the fault within the allotted time, or it would be unreasonable for the EO to allow the employee to continue working out the allotted time, the EO should then initiate dismissal proceedings.

Such proceedings involve requesting by letter that the employee attend an official meeting. That letter should state:

- That the employee's conduct or performance has not improved
- The steps the EO has taken to remedy the problem in the past
- That the employee is entitled to be accompanied by a colleague of their choice
- That unless the employee can adequately explain his or her conduct or performance, then the EO may dismiss the employee

Again the employee may have a colleague of their choice with them at the meeting. The EO should start by outlining the concerns he or she has with the employee's performance or conduct. It is then very important that the EO listen to the employee's responses as objectively as possible. If the employee's response is considered to be adequate, the EO should inform the employee that they will remain employed but that the employee's performance and/or conduct will continue to be closely monitored for a specified period of time (eg three months).

If the employee's response is considered inadequate, the EO has two options:

1. Issue the employee with a third and final written notice
2. Orally inform the employee that he or she is to be dismissed and then follow that up with a written notice of termination. That notice should state the reasons for the dismissal (i.e. performance or conduct), and the history of warnings given previously.

Dismissal for Serious Misconduct

The EO is entitled to instantly dismiss an employee in circumstances where that employee has committed an act of serious misconduct.

Serious misconduct can include:

- Fighting
- Breaches of the drug and alcohol policy
- Deliberately spoiling or damaging the property of the organisation
- Refusal to carry out the lawful instructions of the EO

Other acts may also constitute serious misconduct and it is up to the EO to determine when an act is serious misconduct. In cases where the employee's act of serious misconduct is witnessed by the EO, and where the act is blatant and inexcusable, the EO is entitled to dismiss the employee on the spot. An example of this is where an employee assaults another employee.

In most cases however, the EO will conduct an investigation into the incident or behaviour. The employee concerned may be sent home on full pay while the investigation proceeds. The EO should endeavour to uncover all of the facts before a decision to dismiss any employee is made. The EO must interview all those people who could assist the investigation, including the offending employee.

An employee dismissed for serious misconduct is not entitled to payment in lieu of notice and other benefits may be in jeopardy.

Dismissal on the Grounds of Redundancy

NENWACC recognises that from time to time positions at NENWACC may become redundant where alternative employment within NENWACC is not available, the employee will be made redundant on the terms set out in this policy.

What is Redundancy?

A redundancy occurs where the employee's position genuinely no longer exists for reasons related to the operation of the business. Redundancy does not involve questions of performance or conduct of the employee or employees being made redundant.

Consultation

When it becomes apparent that a job or jobs will be made redundant, the EO shall consult with the employee(s) involved.

Notice

The employee(s) will be given at least one month's notice of the date from which the redundancy is to take effect.

Severance Pay

The entitlement to severance pay is dependant on the application of any Federal Awards or Certified Agreements. In the absence of such Awards or Agreements, employees will be covered by the minimum safety net provisions contained in Schedule 1A of the Workplace Relations Act 1996. It should be noted that these minimum requirements currently provide no entitlement to severance pay.

Application for Leave Form

Employee Name:

- Annual Leave
- Sick Leave
- Leave Without Pay
- Time in Lieu
- Maternity/Paternity Leave
- Other (Please Describe):

Reasons for Leave Request:

Contact Details While on Leave (For Any Longer Than 1 Week):

Date Leave To Commence:

Date of Return to Work:

Additional Materials Supplied (eg: Medical Certificate, Course Details):

Signature:

Date:

Approved/Not Approved by EO/Chair:

Date:

Reasons (If Not Approved):

Information Privacy Principles Applying to NENWACC
(Taken from Section 14 of the Privacy Act 1988)

Information Privacy Principle 1

Manner and Purpose of Collection of Personal Information

1. Personal information shall not be collected by a collector for inclusion in a record or in a generally available publication unless:
 - a. the information is collected for a purpose that is a lawful purpose directly related to a function or activity of the collector; and
 - b. the collection of the information is necessary for or directly related to that purpose.
2. Personal information shall not be collected by a collector by unlawful or unfair means.

Information Privacy Principle 2

Solicitation of Personal Information from Individual Concerned

Where:

- a. a collector collects personal information for inclusion in a record or in a generally available publication; and
 - b. the information is solicited by the collector from the individual concerned;
- the collector shall take such steps (if any) as are, in the circumstances, reasonable to ensure that, before the information is collected or, if that is not practicable, as soon as practicable after the information is collected, the individual concerned is generally aware of:
- the purpose for which the information is being collected;
 - if the collection of the information is authorised or required by or under law-the fact that the collection of the information is so authorised or required; and
 - any person to whom, or any body or agency to which, it is the collector's usual practice to disclose personal information of the kind so collected, and (if known by the collector) any person to whom, or any body or agency to which, it is the usual practice of that first-mentioned person, body or agency to pass on that information.

Information Privacy Principle 3

Solicitation of Personal Information Generally

Where:

- a. a collector collects personal information for inclusion in a record or in a generally available publication; and
 - b. the information is solicited by the collector;
- the collector shall take such steps (if any) as are, in the circumstances, reasonable to ensure that, having regard to the purpose for which the information is collected:
- c. the information collected is relevant to that purpose and is up to date and complete; and
 - d. the collection of the information does not intrude to an unreasonable extent upon the personal affairs of the individual concerned.

Information Privacy Principle 4

Storage and Security of Personal Information

A record-keeper who has possession or control of a record that contains personal information shall ensure:

- a. that the record is protected, by such security safeguards as it is reasonable in the circumstances to take, against loss, against unauthorised access, use, modification or disclosure, and against other misuse; and
- b. that if it is necessary for the record to be given to a person in connection with the provision of a service to the record-keeper, everything reasonably within the power of the record-keeper is done to prevent unauthorised use or disclosure of information contained in the record.

Information Privacy Principle 5

Information Relating to Records Kept by Record-keeper

1. A record-keeper who has possession or control of records that contain personal information shall, subject to clause 2 of this Principle, take such steps as are, in the circumstances, reasonable to enable any person to ascertain:
 - a. whether the record-keeper has possession or control of any records that contain personal information; and
 - b. if the record-keeper has possession or control of a record that contains such information:
 - (i) the nature of that information;
 - (ii) the main purposes for which that information is used; and
 - (iii) the steps that the person should take if the person wishes to obtain access to the record.
2. A record-keeper is not required under clause 1 of this Principle to give a person information if the record-keeper is required or authorised to refuse to give that information to the person under the applicable provisions of any law of the Commonwealth that provides for access by persons to documents.
3. A record-keeper shall maintain a record setting out:
 - a. the nature of the records of personal information kept by or on behalf of the record-keeper;
 - b. the purpose for which each type of record is kept;
 - c. the classes of individuals about whom records are kept;
 - d. the period for which each type of record is kept;
 - e. the persons who are entitled to have access to personal information contained in the records and the conditions under which they are entitled to have that access; and
 - f. the steps that should be taken by persons wishing to obtain access to that information.
4. A record-keeper shall:
 - a. make the record maintained under clause 3 of this Principle available for inspection by members of the public; and
 - b. give the Commissioner, in the month of June in each year, a copy of the record so maintained.

Information Privacy Principle 6

Access to Records Containing Personal Information

Where a record-keeper has possession or control of a record that contains personal information, the individual concerned shall be entitled to have access to that record, except to the extent that the record-keeper is required or authorised to refuse to provide the individual with access to that record under the applicable provisions of any law of the Commonwealth that provides for access by persons to documents.

Information Privacy Principle 7

Alteration of Records Containing Personal Information

1. A record-keeper who has possession or control of a record that contains personal information shall take such steps (if any), by way of making appropriate corrections, deletions and additions as are, in the circumstances, reasonable to ensure that the record:
 - a. is accurate; and
 - b. is, having regard to the purpose for which the information was collected or is to be used and to any purpose that is directly related to that purpose, relevant, up to date, complete and not misleading.
2. The obligation imposed on a record-keeper by clause 1 is subject to any applicable limitation in a law of the Commonwealth that provides a right to require the correction or amendment of documents.
3. Where:
 - a. the record-keeper of a record containing personal information is not willing to amend that record, by making a correction, deletion or addition, in accordance with a request by the individual concerned; and
 - b. no decision or recommendation to the effect that the record should be amended wholly or partly in accordance with that request has been made under the applicable provisions of a law of the Commonwealth;

the record-keeper shall, if so requested by the individual concerned, take such steps (if any) as are reasonable in the circumstances to attach to the record any statement provided by that individual of the correction, deletion or addition sought.

Information Privacy Principle 8

Record-keeper to Check Accuracy etc. of Personal Information Before Use

A record-keeper who has possession or control of a record that contains personal information shall not use that information without taking such steps (if any) as are, in the circumstances, reasonable to ensure that, having regard to the purpose for which the information is proposed to be used, the information is accurate, up to date and complete.

Information Privacy Principle 9

Personal Information to be Used Only for Relevant Purposes

A record-keeper who has possession or control of a record that contains personal information shall not use the information except for a purpose to which the information is relevant.

Information Privacy Principle 10

Limits on Use of Personal Information

1. A record-keeper who has possession or control of a record that contains personal information that was obtained for a particular purpose shall not use the information for any other purpose unless:
 - a. the individual concerned has consented to use of the information for that other purpose;
 - b. the record-keeper believes on reasonable grounds that use of the information for that other purpose is necessary to prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to the life or health of the individual concerned or another person;
 - c. use of the information for that other purpose is required or authorised by or under law;
 - d. use of the information for that other purpose is reasonably necessary for enforcement of the criminal law or of a law imposing a pecuniary penalty, or for the protection of the public revenue; or
 - e. the purpose for which the information is used is directly related to the purpose for which the information was obtained.
2. Where personal information is used for enforcement of the criminal law or of a law imposing a pecuniary penalty, or for the protection of the public revenue, the record-keeper shall include in the record containing that information a note of that use.

Information Privacy Principle 11

Limits on Disclosure of Personal Information

1. A record-keeper who has possession or control of a record that contains personal information shall not disclose the information to a person, body or agency (other than the individual concerned) unless:
 - a. the individual concerned is reasonably likely to have been aware, or made aware under Principle 2, that information of that kind is usually passed to that person, body or agency;
 - b. the individual concerned has consented to the disclosure;
 - c. the record-keeper believes on reasonable grounds that the disclosure is necessary to prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to the life or health of the individual concerned or of another person;
 - d. the disclosure is required or authorised by or under law; or
 - e. the disclosure is reasonably necessary for the enforcement of the criminal law or of a law imposing a pecuniary penalty, or for the protection of the public revenue.
2. Where personal information is disclosed for the purposes of enforcement of the criminal law or of a law imposing a pecuniary penalty, or for the purpose of the protection of the public revenue, the record-keeper shall include in the record containing that information a note of the disclosure.
3. A person, body or agency to whom personal information is disclosed under clause 1 of this Principle shall not use or disclose the information for a purpose other than the purpose for which the information was given to the person, body or agency.

DEED OF CONFIDENTIALITY FOR THE NEW ENGLAND NORTH WEST ACC STAFF & MEMBERS

This Deed of Confidentiality is made on the.....day of....., 200_

BETWEEN..... as an employee of New England North West Area Consultative Committee

AND the New England North West Area Consultative Committee Inc., ABN 96 264 663 080, an association incorporated in the State of NSW under the Associations Incorporations Act and having it's registered address at 429 Peel Steet Tamworth NSW 2340.

Agreement Clause

Protection of Personal Information

1. The Recipient agrees with respect to all activities related to or in connection with the performance of the ACC or in connection with the performance of their duties:
 - to comply with the Information Privacy Principles in section 14 of the Privacy Act 1988 (which concern the collection, security, access, data quality, relevance, use and disclosure of Personal Information) to the extent that the content of those principles apply to the types of activities the Recipient is undertaking under this Contract, as if it were a record-keeper or collector as defined in the Privacy Act 1988;
 - not to transfer Personal Information held in connection with this Contract outside Australia, or to allow parties outside Australia to have access to it, without the prior approval of the Department of Transport and Regional Services;
 - not to use or disclose Personal Information held in connection with this Contract for direct marketing, unless the use or disclosure is necessary to meet (directly or indirectly) an obligation under this Contract;
 - to co-operate with any demands or inquiries made by the Privacy Commissioner or the Department of Transport and Regional Services in relation to the management of Personal Information by the Recipient or breaches or alleged breaches of privacy;
 - to ensure that any person who has an access level that would enable that person to obtain access to any Personal Information is made aware of, and undertakes in writing, to observe the Information Privacy Principles referred to in paragraph (a) above;
 - to comply in so far as is practicable with any policy guidelines laid down by the Commonwealth or issued by the Privacy Commissioner from time to time relating to the handling of Personal Information;
 - to comply with any reasonable direction of the Programme Delegate to observe any recommendation of the Privacy Commissioner relating to any acts or practices of the Recipient that the Privacy Commissioner considers breach the obligation in paragraph (a) above;
 - to comply with any reasonable direction of the Programme Delegate to provide access for the purpose of monitoring the Recipient's compliance with this clause;
 - to indemnify the Commonwealth in respect of any loss, liability or expense suffered or incurred by the Commonwealth arising out of or in connection with a breach of the obligations of the Recipient under clause 14 or any misuse of Personal Information by the Recipient or any disclosure by the Recipient in breach of an obligation of confidence whether arising under the Privacy Act 1988 or otherwise;
 - to ensure that any record (as defined in the Privacy Act 1988) containing Personal Information held in connection with this Contract is, at the expiration or earlier termination of their employment contract, either returned to New England North West Area Consultative Committee or a statutory declaration is provided to New England North West Area Consultative Committee by the Recipient that the record has been deleted or destroyed;
 - to the naming or other identification of the Recipient in reports by the Privacy Commissioner; and
2. The indemnity referred to in clause 1(i) survives the expiration or termination of this Contract.

Dated thisday of200.....

Name:.....Signature:.....

Countersigned on behalf of the New England North West ACC

Name:.....Signature:.....

Title:.....

7.3. AUDITS

DOTARS' annual internal audit plan includes independent audits of some ACCs each year. The purpose of the audits is to ensure accountability and transparency in ACC operations and in the management of Australian Government funds. The results of the audits assist ACCs and the Department in continuous improvement to achieve these operational standards both on an individual ACC level and across the national network of ACCs.

AUDITS

Information required to be presented to the auditor includes;

FINANCIAL YEAR AUDIT INFORMATION

√ **A copy of the Constitution**

Copy of the NENWACC constitution is provided with amendments made in the previous years.

√ **Funding contracts**

- (1) Department of Transport & Regional Services (DOTARS)
New England North West Area Consultative Committee (ACC)

*Account #1
Funding received*

- (2) VARIOUS

- (2.1) Department of Employment & Workplace Relations (DEWR)
Indigenous Development Officer (IDO)

*Account #2
Funding received*

- (2.2) Department of Industry, Tourism & Resources
Small Business Assistance Program (SBA) July to December 2002 (SBAO)

*Account #2
Funding received 6 August 2003*

- (2.3) Department of Transport & Regional Services (DOTARS)
New England North West Skills Analysis (Skills)

- (3) Department of Industry, Tourism & Resources
Small Business Answers Program (SBA) January to June 2003 (SBA)

*Account #3
Funding received 15 April 2003*

- (4) Department of Transport & Regional Services (DOTARS)

*Account #4
Funding Received*

√ **File correspondence including statements of payments**

√ **Minutes of Committee and Sub-Committee meetings**

√ **Reconciled cash books or computerised transaction listing**

√ **Bank Statements and monthly reconciliations**

√ **Cheque butts**

√ **Receipt books**

√ **Bank deposits**

- √ **Tax invoices and other supporting documentation for payments made and filed in order of issue, marked 'paid', state of payment and cheque number and any other supporting documentation of monies received.**
- √ **Direct Debits**
- √ **Pay records and year end group tax reconciliations**
- √ **Asset register – completed for acquisitions and disposals for the year**
- √ **Accounts included in the current audit year transaction listings that are the previous or following years expenses and income.**

Balance date 30 June 2003 schedules for;

- √ Accrued Annual Leave
- √ Any unpaid salaries or wages at year end
- √ Creditors
- √ Debtors
- √ Funding received in advance
- √ Funding received from the previous financial year
- √ **Year end estimated results for all funding categories**

Information to be provided to Departments providing funding for positions is detailed in the funding contract.

8. COMMUNICATION

8.1. FEEDBACK TO THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT

A primary function of ACCs under the ACC Charter is to provide feedback to the Australian Government on regional issues and Australian Government policies. The first point of contact for this feedback is the relevant DOTARS' Regional Office. The Department will brief the relevant Minister(s) on significant issues involving or identified by ACCs.

8.2. MARKETING AND BRANDING

ACCs are required to follow the designated protocols when using ACC or Commonwealth branding or logo and the tagline. The designated protocols and guidelines can be found on the secure Members' area of the ACC website at www.acc.gov.au

8.3 NAMING OF ACCS

The Minister has determined that all ACCs shall use the acronym "ACC" in their name preceded by up to 5 words that accurately reflect the ACCs regional location. The ACC Operational Funding Contract specifies this obligation and the requirements in the contract Schedule.

8.4. COMMUNICATION WITH THE MEDIA

ACCs must follow the Guidelines for Media Contact by ACCs which has been distributed to ACCs and can be found on the secure area of the ACC website at www.acc.gov.au

The media is an important stakeholder and should be treated as such. ACCs are to maintain good relations with the media in all its forms, including print, radio, and television, and are to use the media to promote the Committee, its activities and DOTARS' Regional Partnerships programme.

When dealing with the media, the ACC must maintain the good reputation of the Australian Government. If the ACC is dissatisfied with policy or programme decisions made by the Department, the ACC must contact the DOTARS' Regional Office to achieve a resolution of the issues rather than approach the media.

8.5. LAUNCHES, SEMINARS OR OTHER PUBLIC EVENTS

ACCs must follow the guidelines for launches in the ACC internal procedures manual for Regional Partnerships, at Section 3 of the manual June 2004, called 'Invitations to Openings/Launches'. A template from the manual is at Appendix C.

8.6. ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

ACCs are required to develop and maintain an Internet site, providing information about the ACC, its work and contact information. The site must include a link to the Australian Government website for ACCs at www.acc.gov.au. In addition, ACCs must maintain an email account for electronic communication with DOTARS.

DOTARS

- OFFICIAL MINISTERIAL INVITATION TO ATTEND DEPARTMENTAL EVENT -

INVITATION TO:**OFFICIAL EVENT TITLE:****DAY AND DATE OF FUNCTION:****EVENT DESCRIPTION:** Launch Project Announcement Other**DETAILS:****FEDERAL ELECTORATE:****FEDERAL MEMBER:****ENDORISING AREA CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (ACC):**

Amount of Federal Government Funding:

Other: Co – funding:
In kind:**Project Proponent:****Project Background:****Project Description:****Project Outcomes****VENUE:**

ROOM/LOCATION/BUILDING:

STREET ADDRESS:

SUBURB/TOWN:

CONTACT AT VENUE:

DETAILS OF INVOLVEMENT:

PLANNED TIME OF ARRIVAL:

PLANNED TIME OF DEPARTURE:

EXPECTED ROLE OF MINISTER: Speech Presentation of Certificates
 Other**OTHERS INVITED TO ATTEND:****CONTACT OFFICER FOR EVENT:****Title & Name:****Organisation Name:****DEPARTMENTAL CONTACT OFFICER:**

Phone No:

Fax No:

Mobile No:

NOTE: ALL INVITATIONS SHOULD BE SUBMITTED TO YOUR REGIONAL OFFICE IN ORDER TO REACH THE MINISTER AT LEAST 21 DAYS PRIOR TO THE EVENT

COMMUNICATION

The communication and marketing strategies for the New England North West ACC are developed annually with an understanding of the annual budget allocations.

Marketing Plan

The marketing plan should include;

- Introduction to the activities of the New England North West ACC
- Vision Statement
- Situation Analysis of the Market Position
- Target Markets
- Marketing Goals
- Marketing Activities
- Budgeted expenditure

As a guide the following can be considered to be a summary of ACC activities;

- Regional consultations and meetings
- Media Releases
- Corporate Image
- Newsletters and promotional material
- Website maintenance and development
- Activities and sponsorship
- Networking and involvement in cross-sectoral meetings
- Weekly grant emails and distribution

FEEDBACK TO THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT

The Board of the New England North West ACC provides feedback to the Australian Government in a number of ways.

- 'Messages to Government' is a standing item on the Board meeting agendas
- Direct response to requests from DOTARS
- Immediate response from community situation providing local knowledge or feedback

MARKETING AND BRANDING

The branding for the New England North West ACC was developed in 2002 and evolves with product or items developed within the marketing campaign.

Branding is important to ensuring the New England North West ACC and all partners receive recognition for projects and initiatives, the message of ACC activities can be communicated and the branding becomes recognised.

Protocols and guidelines for using Australian Government can be found on the secure Members' area of the ACC website at www.acc.gov.au

Forms of logos are available on the shared network at Shared:\Jo\Jo's Pictures\Logos\

APPROVAL PROCESSES

All marketing and promotional material must be approved by DOTARS and any other funding partner. All material should be provided for approval at least 5 days from the expected release.

Marketing Tools

Marketing is an essential component of the ACCs activities. In the Charter for the National Network of ACCs the fourth priority 'Informing the community, business and Government' indicates the importance of establishing and maintaining communication between the Australian Government, business and the community.

The following tools have been provided to aid in promoting and disseminating information on Government policies and programmes for the benefit of business and the communities.

The ACC Marketing Tool Kit provides a brief introduction to the concepts of marketing, guidance on how to develop a marketing strategy, advice on how to use the media, an outline of a range of promotional or marketing tools, with some advice on how to use or implement them, as well as guidelines on style for ACC activities. The guide does not contain an exhaustive summary of all possible promotional ideas and methods.

Introduction

Marketing is not a single activity. It is a combination of factors. On the one hand are the very visible, active components of selling, advertising, public relations and associated activities: on the other hand, and most importantly, are a quality product or service, how it is delivered, how it meets customer needs, and cost. All of these affect the extent to which people use a business or service.

In the 'selling' of information about government programs and services, recent research has indicated very clearly that people take more notice of information that relates specifically to their area or region and when it is presented by someone they know and trust or who can, at the very least, demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of their particular needs.

This research emphasised the critical importance of local-level marketing. It showed that people want to know what, how and where they can access government services (not be wooed by generalised platitudes about the benefits of a particular program). It also showed that their principal sources of information were national television, the local paper, local television and local radio, in that order.

The following pages provide a brief introduction to the concepts of marketing, guidance on how to develop a marketing strategy, advice on how to use the media, an outline of a range of promotional or marketing tools, with some advice on how to use or implement them, as well as guidelines on style for ACC activities. The guide does not contain an exhaustive summary of all possible promotional ideas and methods.

At the local level

- Effective local-level marketing needs to provide clear, consistent messages reflecting the themes of any relevant national marketing.
- People want to know "What's in it for me?"
- Our job is to tell them what programs are available for them locally, what their benefits are, how easy they are to use and where or who they can go to for more advice.
- In all our marketing activities we must be aware of Australia's cultural diversity, making sure that indigenous Australians and people from non-English speaking backgrounds also receive our messages in a form they can easily understand.

The marketing concept

Proactive marketing at the local level has the potential to significantly increase the effectiveness of ACCs in both the short and long term by better targeting resources and maximising returns on the effort expended. Many people think of marketing as selling, advertising or public relations, but these are only a part of marketing. Marketing is about what the product or service offers, where it is provided, how much it costs and how it is delivered - all of which affect the extent to which people will use a product or service.

There are many definitions of marketing but almost all have the same fundamental focus - meeting the needs of the customer or client. If we are unable to meet their needs, we will be unlikely to get their business. There are a number of specific elements that together comprise marketing. This planned, systematic approach is a fundamental advantage of marketing and, properly applied, can result in better management of resources, increased ability to meet operational plan targets and better satisfied clients.

These elements involve:

- Market analysis - the starting point for understanding the needs of our clients and for identifying opportunities. Market analysis (also referred to as the situation analysis or environmental audit) is the starting point for identifying marketing opportunities such as growth areas, labour market gaps, etc. The analysis should consider the environment we operate within (both internal - staff resources, budget, expertise, etc, and external), how our clients perceive us and potential opportunities.
- Objectives - which set the directions for marketing activity by indicating what we expect to achieve and identifying any issues which may affect the attainment of these objectives. The objectives should be measurable, achievable, realistic and time bound.
- Target markets - are those sectors of the generic market that provide the most opportunities for new business or which we want to hear our message. Using market analysis and market segmentation (the identification of customer groups that respond differently to other customer groups), you can identify those sectors of the market that will provide the most potential for marketing opportunities.
- Marketing strategies - outline the methods you plan to use to meet the stated objectives and to communicate your message. This generally involves using a mix of marketing 'tools'. The development of marketing strategies and some of the tools used to achieve them are addressed in this guide.
- Plan of action - the implementation component of a marketing plan, is a crucial and often overlooked step. Without careful implementation, all of the analysis and planning could be wasted and the marketing plan unlikely to achieve its objectives. A detailed plan of action or timetable should identify, tasks, action officers, timing, resources, review and performance indicators.
- Review/evaluation - regular reviews to check that the plan is meeting its objectives and, if not, how it can be rectified.

The marketing strategy

Marketing strategies outline your plan for meeting your stated objectives and to communicate your message. What information is communicated depends on the needs and attitudes of the target market and how the information is delivered depends on what the best communications channels (marketing tools) are for reaching your target audience.

Your marketing strategy is a very useful document. It:

- provides a document for management approval;
- allows all parties involved in the delivery of the plan to know what is expected of them and when they are required to deliver it;
- helps to identify and resolve critical or conflicting resource and timeframe issues;
- enables coordination with other relevant ACC marketing plans; and
- aids coordination with external community agencies.

The message and the audience

The first issues to be addressed when you start to develop your marketing strategy are:

- your message; and
- the target audience for that message.

It is most important that you are very sure of the key message or messages you want to impart. It is equally important that you are clear about who should receive and understand that message. It is well worth putting time and effort into defining your key message or messages, and your target audience, because this work will form the basis of your marketing strategy.

With this information at hand, you will be able to decide which marketing tools to use and when to do so. Indeed, it will underpin the success or failure of your strategy.

First!

- Define your message.
- List your target audience.

Likely audiences for ACCs

As an ACC, among the audiences you should consider for your marketing strategies would be:

- funding partners, eg State and Local Governments, Australian Government agencies
- indigenous communities, ATSIC, land councils
- Employer associations, eg Chambers of Commerce, Australian Industry Group, business organisations and networks, etc.
- service clubs, eg Rotary, Lions, etc
- Regional and Economic Development Boards
- regional tourism bodies
- community organisations
- individual employers
- local media
- local Members of Parliament (State and Commonwealth)
- (in some instances) training organisations, youth bodies, schools

Framework for marketing strategy

When you are developing your marketing strategy, you may find the following headings and questions useful. In fact, you will need to answer these questions concisely when seeking clearance from your State ACC Coordinator for any marketing activities so it would be a good idea to attach the list of questions with short answers to your submission.

- Marketing strategy framework
- Background
Setting the scene
- Objectives
What do you want to achieve from this strategy?
- Target audiences
Who is the strategy designed to motivate/inform?
- Key message/s
What is the message you want to get across to your target audiences?
- Strategy approaches
What approaches will the strategy take to achieve its objectives?
- Communication mix or activities
What marketing activities will be implemented to reach the objectives of the strategy?
- Evaluation
What steps will you take to determine the success or failure of the strategy?
- Budget
What will be the cost of implementing the strategy?
- Timeframe
When will the strategy/activities be implemented?

Publicity and public relations

In the context of marketing, the aim of publicity is to attract positive attention to the organisation, or its products or services, without having to pay media costs.

Publicity through the media provides an excellent opportunity to communicate with both current and potential clients and can be an effective part of any marketing strategy.

This is where public relations activities come in. Proactive public relations activities are usually done to gain media coverage for something positive, for example the launch of a new initiative, although they can also be done for reactive reasons.

Some examples of public relations activities are:

- the 'event'
- workshops/seminars
- job drives
- displays
- direct mailing

The paid component of publicity is advertising.

No matter what your public relations activity is, it will inevitably lead you to the media.

Meet the media

Australia has a broad media base. There are more than 700 newspapers, 270 radio stations and in excess of 60 television stations, with television aggregation providing multiple services to regional areas.

It is estimated that 75 per cent of the population reads a metropolitan newspaper every day, while more than 10 million people turn to the 550 regional, rural and suburban newspapers for local news.

In addition there are more than 100 multicultural newspapers and well over 1000 magazines and newsletters.

Almost every population centre in the country is serviced by radio and television. You can find out all about the media outlets in your area - distribution, target audiences, publication times, advertising rates - through a range of media guides. For more information ask you ACC State Coordinator.

All these media outlets have one thing in common - they need a constant supply of news stories. This provides your ACC with a very good link to the public, provided you develop and implement appropriate strategies and proper media management plans.

Dealing with the media

Your contact with the media may include:

- responding to media questions;
- media alerts and media releases;
- as a guest on talkback radio;
- press or radio interviews;
- media events, such as launches, seminars, etc;
- giving background information to journalists;
- articles written for magazines and newspapers.

This contact can be either planned or reactive. Planned activities can include media conferences, talkback radio, media interviews and media events. Reactive activities can include responding to media coverage or requests for information from the media, media releases in response to coverage of an issue and interviews at the request of the media.

Planned or unplanned, we don't have full control over the messages that go out to the public through news media. The media can interpret or edit the information we give them, insert comments from other people or create its own messages about an issue.

If you can help the media, and do so in a professional manner, you will gain their respect and this will be to your benefit. Alternatively, if they don't know you and if you are not professional in the way you handle media issues when they arise, you will virtually guarantee poor or negative media coverage.

The media is always looking for news stories. If you can provide your local media with a story they will welcome it. If you become a regular source of stories and you are also what the media call 'good talent', the media will seek you out as a source of information.

The media is interested in anything which is new, unusual and which, in their judgement, will interest their readers, listeners or viewers.

Naturally, media are interested in conflict. It is your role to understand how you can use this to your advantage. Hence, you need a strategy for dealing with any situation that may arise, to maximise positive exposure and minimise negative coverage.

A critical point to remember is that a blanket 'no comment' always engenders mistrust.

Be pro-active in your relationship with the media. Seek the media out. Get to know your local journalists and editors - but don't waste their time. Get to know their deadlines and the issues they are interested in. The media outlets are always short on resources. The more you can help them with a story, the better.

As ACC boundaries will not necessarily reflect media coverage areas, it is essential that you work with other ACCs abutting your own. Be sure you are not individually approaching the same outlets with the same message. Plan your approaches to these overlapping media outlets, dividing them if necessary.

To get the best possible media coverage, carefully plan and manage your media activities. To react effectively to the media, you need to have a good knowledge of the subject in question and a broad knowledge of strategic issues that may arise in the course of an interview.

Because the media is primarily interested in news, it's important to provide information quickly and accurately. It's of no use to the media, if your information takes too long to be delivered and misses the journalist's deadline. When answering media inquiries, ask the journalist for a deadline and meet it!

Alert the media

A 'media alert' is an invitation to the media to cover your event, launch, seminar or issue. It provides the media with all relevant information regarding the event: the time, the place, the date, the name of the principal speaker, any photo opportunities and the name and telephone number of a contact person for more information.

- The more interesting and relevant you can make your event sound, the better the chances of it being covered.
- Fax the media alert to the news editor or chief-of-staff a couple of days before the event so there is time for it to be included in a diary.
- Confirm that the media alert has been received the day before the event.

Maximise the use of your media releases

The media release is a very useful tool. It can be used to inform the media about a broad range of issues such as 'good news stories' about your products or services, new programs, change of address, in fact anything that is newsworthy.

A media release is different from almost anything else we write.

It has one main purpose. It is designed to make an audience read it and thus digest its message. It is not normally issued simply as a matter of record. So, the first attribute of a media release is readability.

The media receives a great many items of 'copy' on any news day. Your media release will simply be one more competing for space, so it must contain something of interest and that something of interest must be expressed interestingly.

Media release check list

- Answer WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHY and HOW, in the first few paragraphs
- Put the most newsworthy part of the story first and try to produce a short (around 25 words) interesting news lead.
- Give your media release a punchy heading.
- Prepare the media release so it could slot straight into the page of a newspaper (an old subediting adage is to cut from the bottom, so keep that in mind!).
- Make it clear, accurate and readable.
- Sentences must be short and of active tense, paragraphs of one sentence.
- Avoid slang, acronyms and jargon.
- Write in the third person: "He said ..", "Ms Smith replied .." not "I said .."
- Use simple, direct quotes but always attribute them to an appropriate person.
- Use full titles of people the first time, then Mr Smith, Professor Jones, etc
- Try to fit the media release on one A4 page or at most on one-and-a-half pages.
- Always date your media release and include a contact name and telephone number
- Acknowledge Commonwealth funding.

Media release style

Try to follow normal newspaper style (most are similar). You can best do this by reading newspapers circulating in your area and noting common points of style. Television and radio may 'lift' quotes directly from your release or use it as a basis for further development.

Some dos and don'ts to remember are:

- don't use underlining - underlining is an editor's instruction to produce those words in italics;
- spell out numbers from one to nine except for dates, times, prices, weights and measures, then use figures until they become unwieldy thousands or millions when it is better to say, for example, \$10 million;
- do not use the % sign, spell out per cent as two words;
- do not use an ampersand (&);
- limit the use of capitals;
- remember a fact should speak for itself. If you want to quote someone saying "it's a most exciting concept", that's fine. But don't try to state it as a fact if you want your release to remain credible.
- stipulate the timing of the release if not for immediate use, for example 'embargoed until 12 noon, 25 December 2001';
- the release heading, or title, should accurately summarise the subject of your release.

Tips on timing and targeting

- Write your release with the reader in mind - the news editor or journalist.
- Know the copy deadlines of your target media outlets.
- Find out the best person to send your release to - usually the news editor or chief-of-staff.
- Don't send your release to the same newspaper, radio or television station more than once - more is not best, it only confuses and annoys.
- For morning newspapers and television, the earlier in the day you distribute a release the better.
- For a daily newspaper, a release issued on Monday or Tuesday has a better chance of being used than one sent on Friday.
- Set up a fax and phone list of all you local media. Call relevant journalists every so often to tell them what is going on or just to stay in touch. (Make sure you don't call close to deadline times!)

Make the most of media interviews

Media interviews are usually organised in response to a call by a journalist who wants to discuss a particular issue.

Be careful, quite often the journalist wants comments on a negative or controversial subject.

Don't be drawn into commenting immediately and don't agree to an interview if you are not familiar with the issues.

Then:

- find out precisely what the journalist wants, why and when;
- discuss, and clearly define, the subject boundaries to be covered in the interview - don't ask for a list of written questions but clarify the general line of questioning;
- ask who else is to be interviewed on the issue;
- tell the journalist you will call back in 20-30 minutes or arrange a time for the interview, reply promptly and reiterate the agreed subject and boundaries;
- plan your response: gather facts and arm yourself with information on the subject;
- decide what you want to achieve from the interview and identify two or three key positive points on the subject that you want to communicate during the interview.

Some tips for a successful interview

- Make sure you are well briefed.
- Repeat your key points on several occasions.
- Keep your answers to the point, concise (no more than 12-15 seconds per answer) and interesting but avoid 'yes' and 'no' answers.
- Keep the journalist to the agreed subject matter.
- Don't be trapped into using emotive language to provide a good quote.
- Avoid 'off the record' comments, they are fraught with danger, and rarely 'off the record'.
- Sound interested in what you are talking about.
- Avoid using jargon and acronyms.
- Answer questions in a positive and friendly manner.
- Don't speak louder than usual, the microphone will be adjusted to your voice level.

And especially for television

- Avoid too many colours, loud ties and ostentatious jewellery.
- Look at the interviewer, not the camera and maintain eye contact.
- Relax and avoid nervous gestures or mannerisms.
- If the interviewer becomes argumentative, keep your voice calm.

The essence of advertising

Make the most of your local-level advertising by developing messages which are consistent with any relevant national advertising but are tailored to your local needs.

Target key industries or employers in your area.

Consider featuring local business testimonials in your advertising: these provide human interest or a local angle. Don't make these advertisements exaggeratedly positive: the most believable testimonials use honest quotations and names!

Paid advertising can be used to create awareness, inform, change attitudes and influence behaviour. The most commonly used advertising media include newspaper, radio, television and magazines/trade journals. When dealing with regional, rural and suburban newspapers, you can sometimes get free editorial space when placing an advertisement with a media outlet. Raise this possibility when booking your advertisement.

Be imaginative and look for other methods of advertising - billboards, window displays, etc. Increasingly the internet is also being used for advertising.

Each of these media has advantages and disadvantages that should be considered carefully before making any commitments. The following table gives some basic information to help your assessment.

MEDIA	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
Radio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Good for awareness raising ▪ Easy access ▪ Moderate to low cost ▪ Good for simple messages ▪ Interested in topical/local issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Can't handle complex info ▪ Needs repetition, but too much can be irritating ▪ Seek advice for an effective campaign ▪ Phone numbers difficult to remember ▪ Difficult to reach a specific audience
Newspapers (regional/suburban)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Can convey detailed information ▪ Keen for local success stories ▪ Can be interested in editorial / news contributions ▪ Focus on local news ▪ Strong local appeal ▪ Moderate to low cost 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Limited readership ▪ Not always read by employers ▪ Less authority than metropolitan newspapers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Can have 'throw-away' image ▪ Short life ▪ Be aware of lead times
Television	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Not really applicable to local-level marketing, excepting through indigenous television to indigenous target 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ National expensive, regional can be on par with local radio costs
Magazines / Trade journals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reach specific target markets ▪ Can convey detailed information ▪ Looking for good editorial / news items ▪ Professional endorsement ▪ Long life ▪ Will allow for inserts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Long lead times ▪ Can be expensive ▪ Questionable circulation ▪ Often read months after issued ▪ No control over editorial comment, may be unfavourable

Make your advertising work

- Identify your objectives clearly: what do you want to get from the advertisement - more inquiries from employers, increased awareness of programs and services or better understanding?
- Identify your target market: employers, job seekers, local community, etc.
- Consider your time frame carefully.
- Identify the most appropriate media: this will depend on a number of factors, including your target audience/s, your objectives, and the funds available.
- Book your advertising space well in advance.
- Prepare your material carefully and proof read the final version which will be sent to you by the publication.
- Be prepared for any inquiries about your advertising messages and the extra workload this may entail.

Put a face to your organisation

Most people value personal interaction because it puts a 'face' to the organisation they are dealing with and the opportunity to have their questions answered. In a face-to-face meeting you can give individual attention to the issues they consider important in their selection of a product or service.

Make sure you have the appropriate person for meeting - should it be conducted by the ACC Chair, the Executive Officer or a Board Member? Does your ACC have a guide or protocol for representing the organisation? Are you complying with the requirements set out in the ACC Handbook?

Face-to-face meetings are time-consuming but highly effective. However, you need to have a thorough knowledge of the programs and services you are promoting and the skill to "sell" them.

To get the most from these visits plan the exercise carefully:

- set clear objectives for the visit;
- make an appointment - and make sure it's with the appropriate person;
- organise promotional material;
- take sufficient stock;
- know the person's business, industry, occupation, skills, etc; and
- be prepared to answer any questions about the programs or services you are promoting and be able to clearly explain their benefits.

Remember

- Get the person's attention: first impressions are important so make sure you convey the image you want to present.
- Create interest: by drawing out information from them and then presenting the benefits of the product or service.
- Be prepared to handle detail: skilful use of your knowledge will help you to choose the benefits which best meet the person's needs.
- Generate action.
- Follow up your visit with a telephone call to confirm details, answer questions, etc.
- Make sure you follow up any undertaking given during the visit.

Publishing

In this section the term 'publishing' is used in its widest sense, that is, to make publicly or generally known in a printed form and encompasses both paper and electronic publishing, including publishing on the Internet.

Publishing is one of many ways of communicating with clients. Generally, where a target audience is large or dispersed, publishing information materials like newsletters, booklets, pamphlets and posters is an appropriate way of getting your message across.

However, publishing should be part of an integrated communication strategy. Merely producing a booklet or web-page does not fulfil an obligation to communicate effectively.

Publishing involves a series of inter-related steps.

Determining the need

As with all other communication tools, there must be a clear definition of the audience you want to reach and the message you want to send. An understanding of your target audience's information needs and their preferred means of communication is an essential part of effective communication. This information will help you to decide what type of publication you will use.

Writing

Different publications require different styles of writing. If, for example, you have decided to produce a fold out pamphlet, you cannot then write 50 pages of information - it wouldn't fit! Text for a pamphlet should be written clearly and succinctly; you could expand it a little for a brochure or booklet; but would have to reduce your message to a very few words for a poster.

Whatever your publication, remember to date it!

Obligations

Make sure the language you use is non-discriminatory. Also consider how your publication can be accessed by people with a disability, particularly those with a visual impairment or intellectual disability, and people from a non-English speaking background.

Editing

For a professional publication your text should be well edited. There are varying levels of editing: style editing (ensuring appropriate use of language in the document), structural editing (rearranging major elements of the manuscript) and copy editing (checking for spelling, punctuation and consistency of language). For a good result use a professional editor.

Your manuscript should be edited after all clearance procedures have been completed and corrections and alterations made but before it reaches the layout stage and definitely before it goes to the printer.

Employing an editor doesn't mean you lose control of the project, just as with design and layout, the author always retains ultimate control and responsibility for the material.

Design

Design is a specialist skill. It is the process of establishing the look of the publication and covers all aspects including choice of typeface, page size, illustrations, photography and paper stock. Design can have a major impact on the acceptability, readability, as well as the cost of a document.

For example, the use of colour in a document can enhance readability, but it also increases costs substantially. As a rule of thumb, a two-colour publication is 40 per cent more expensive to print than a single colour publication. A four colour publication is often more than twice as expensive as a two-colour publication.

Layout

Layout is placing the text of the manuscript into the agreed page design, placing illustrations, including graphs, and preparation of the material for printing.

When the layout is complete a final proof will be provided for you, the author, to check. This is not the time to edit the document - the proof is provided to make sure the text flows correctly, photographs are in the right place and any editing corrections are included. You should also check page numbers, contents pages and the index.

Making major editorial changes at this stage can be expensive.

Quantity

For paper publishing, a key question will be how many booklets, pamphlets or whatever need to be printed. This depends on many things including:

- the size of your audience;
- the life of your publication - i.e. if your publication is to be revised in six months, you would only need to produce a minimum quantity: if your publication will have a demand over several years, it is generally cheaper to print greater quantities;
- commercial printing is changing, but generally, print runs of less than 500 units are uneconomic.

Printing

Printing is the process of reproducing, binding and finishing the publication. Before a document is printed, a final proof will be provided to you for final checking. This is not the time to make major editorial changes, but is the last opportunity to check the material. Making changes at this stage can be very expensive.

Distribution

The delivery of the printed publication into the hands of the intended audience is an essential final step in the publishing process. This can be done directly, through direct mail, or by promoting the published work through

other means such as advertising and media activities. A number of external suppliers provide professional storage and distribution services. When planning your publication it is essential to consider the means and cost of distribution.

Evaluation

It is important to know how your readers respond to your publication. This is done through an evaluation that measures both whether it was understood and had the desired effect. Asking readers about their views can also influence how you prepare, produce and distribute further publications.

Electronic Publishing

Electronic publishing - either diskette, CD-ROM or publishing on the World Wide Web has many advantages over paper publishing. It is cheaper, quicker and more flexible than paper publishing. However, it carries with it its own design and presentational problems.

When designing a publication for the Internet consideration must be given to the system limitations of the end user.

Don't use elaborate graphics or applications that take up too much memory and are slow to load. The department's research into the preferences of users of our sites revealed that users are far more interested in being able to find the information they want quickly and easily than in the visual appeal of a site. Many find slow loading animations very annoying.

Modern web sites have consistent designs and colour schemes from page to page. Users should be able to navigate to the information they want intuitively and with a minimum number of mouse-clicks.

Long documents can be presented in pdf (Acrobat) format and a link to access the Acrobat reader should be provided on the site.

Don't use frames on web sites. Unframed sites can be accessed using Braille readers but framed sites, while providing very good scope for design and presentation, cannot be accessed as easily.

All ACCs have been asked to develop their own web sites which will be linked to the national site at www.acc.gov.au.

One of the major concerns regarding internet publishing is one of equity. Australia's usage of the internet has increased rapidly. However, there are many in the community who may have difficulty accessing material.

These include:

- those who do not have access to the internet;
- current text readers and Braille output devices are not able to deal with information or links presented only in graphics or photographic format;
- material provided only in audio format will not be accessible to deaf people or some people with hearing impairments unless an alternative is provided
- although users can determine many aspects of colour, size and print font of output for themselves, some approaches to text form or colour will render access difficult or impossible for users with impaired vision (and in some cases many other users also);
- not all people with disabilities have access to appropriate computer technology, and even where it is technically feasible it may not occur in practice. Agencies should ensure that a hard copy in accessible formats is also available.

It is technically feasible to remove many barriers to equal access for people with a disability in this area and this may be done in a way which does not detract from the usefulness or attractiveness to other users of web pages. In many cases improved accessibility actually benefits all users.

There are [HREOC guidelines](http://www.hreoc.gov.au/disability_rights/standards/www_3/www_3.html) available on this matter.

http://www.hreoc.gov.au/disability_rights/standards/www_3/www_3.html.

Newsletters

A newsletter can be a very effective communication tool. It can be used to inform a broad audience or a very specific audience. Produced regularly, it can be used to up-date your audience on issues such as legislation, government programs or the latest developments in an issue of interest or to inform and educate them.

Newsletters can be single page or up to several pages long. They contain short articles that are focused on the particular needs or interests of the readers.

Like any other communications tool, you must first establish the need and applicability of a newsletter. Know your local market - is it saturated with newsletters? Is a newsletter the most effective tool to reach your audience? Does it fit within your overall marketing strategy?

A newsletter is developed and produced in the same way as any other publication.

However, the way it is written and designed will prove most important to its usefulness.

You must be very clear about the target audience for your newsletter. This will affect both the way you write copy for the newsletter and its design. In general, write your newsletter in a similar style to media releases. Keep your stories short and to the point but make sure they answer the questions: who, what, where when and how?

Include photographs but make sure their captions are correct - people don't like having their names spelt incorrectly and they definitely don't like being called by someone else's name!

Plan your newsletter by developing a dummy layout, placing your stories, pictures and graphs where you think they fit best. Put your most interesting story on page one (with a picture) - not some esoteric column or letter from a dignitary, with your second most important story on page three. Cut your stories to fit the space you have allowed for them - don't add pages to accommodate them and don't simply move them about to fit a space unless they are of equal importance to the story with which they are being swapped.

Develop a specific distribution list for your newsletter and keep the list up-to-date, people don't like continually receiving publications they are not interested in nor do they like missing copies of those they are interested in.

The cost of your newsletter will depend on how elaborate you make it. A photocopied, one-page, black and white publication will cost very little, a twelve-page, full colour newsletter on high grade paper will obviously cost much more.

Seek feedback on your newsletter so you can constantly improve its relevance to your audience.

Handouts, giveaways (sales promotions devices)

Handouts are always attractive to the public, especially children, but you need to be careful when using them that they are appropriate to your target groups and marketing messages.

If you expect the event that you are attending to attract a lot of children, make sure that you have something that they can take away, without breaking your budget or losing your core target groups. Children can be a sure way of bringing their adult minders to your display, so don't discount their importance even if they are not part of your target group.

Favourite items at events seem to be stickers, posters, pens, rulers, magnets, plastic bags, and balloons. Increasingly, items such as post-it notes, mouse pads, coffee cups, presentation folders and calendars are making their impact felt in the handouts market. The nature of the items is only really limited by your creativity, your budget but most importantly your target markets and marketing message.

In considering designing handouts or giveaways you need to remember that sales promotions devices:

- can't work alone in meeting your marketing objectives;
- can't compensate for problems in other areas of your marketing strategy;
- aren't permanent and can't establish your 'brand'/identity within the community;
- they can reinforce other elements of your marketing strategy;
- they can facilitate the introduction of your 'brand'/identity within the community;
- can help build the morale of your staff and Board members (your key sales force in promoting your identity); and,

- that a cheap gimmick can work against your marketing message - be clear what your strategy is and stick to sales promotions devices that enhance your message.

Handouts and giveaways can be used at many times, but as with all strategies, they need to be appropriate to your message and the environment and target markets you are working with - be aware of a saturated market and of ensuring that your handouts and giveaways are not lost in a cluttered marketplace.

Displays can be effective

Displays and exhibitions can showcase your organisation or demonstrate your products and services to an assured audience. Displays can be mounted at a variety of venues such as shopping centres, openings, launches, presentations, conferences, trade shows/expos, etc.

When preparing a display, it is important to answer two questions:

- what will your organisation get from mounting this display; and
- what will the viewing public take away from the display.

If the answer to one or both of these questions is nothing, the decision to mount the display should be reassessed.

- To be effective, your display should be:
- relevant to the viewers;
- interactive or memorable in some way;
- informative;
- up-to-date; and
- of a standard befitting your organisation.

Steps in planning a display

Audience

Decide precisely who is your target audience. If your display is to be part of a larger 'event' what proportion of its audience will be from your target audience, what do they know/not know, what do they think, their attitudes/comments.

Budget

If you decide to mount a display, one of the first steps is to establish your budget.

Most display areas will charge a fee which may or may not include the display shell. Display stands can be hired from shopfitters and professional display companies.

The display should incorporate more than a static component. TV and video are standard additions which can put forward your message effectively. Other alternatives include computer display/touchscreens, games/quizzes, providing special speakers/lecturers, and providing handouts, giveaways, show bags and the like. If you are going to use electricity, find out who is paying, you or the organisers.

Don't forget to budget for staff time, especially if it entails overtime.

Select and book a site early to get a good position, although you may pay more for a premium site. Above all, allow time to plan.

Advertising

You may also need to undertake associated advertising to promote your presence at the event. This may include the official guide to the event, associated special supplements in the newspaper, posters on community notice boards, etc.

Design

The object of the display stand is to attract visitors, hold their attention and interest them enough to want more information.

The design should reflect your key messages and theme.

Make sure your display:

- is functional;
- has a clear message/theme;
- has readable signage;
- is individual/unique;
- is visually attractive; and
- is simple and unthreatening.

Special effects

A memorable display will reap huge benefits.

Interactive displays are usually the most effective. Holding a snake at an environment and conservation display is far more memorable than looking at pictures and words on a display wall. Similarly, you are more likely to remember stamping your fingerprints at a police display or having your blood pressure taken at a health display than a row of posters.

Staffing

The selection of people to staff the display is critical.

Make sure these people are drilled well in customer service so clients will be satisfied that their questions will be answered, even if someone has to get back to them the following week.

An unstaffed, static stand is hardly better than not being represented at the event at all.

A stand using electronic equipment must have someone there at all times to ensure the equipment runs properly.

Make sure that arrangements are in place for staff to have lunch breaks, tea break etc, and extra help during busy times. A roster is a good idea.

Display staff can make all the difference

- Be proactive and approach customers.
- Show a willingness to communicate.
- Use positive body language and eye contact - do not read, sit, gather in a group, chat, stand with arms folded.
- Monitor traffic coming through your stand and keep a tally of enquiries, who made them and any follow up action that may be needed.

Handouts, giveaways

Handouts are always attractive to the public, especially children, but be careful they do not all go into the backpacks of children and none to your target group. Be selective. If the overall event is one likely to attract children, perhaps you could design handouts that are attractive to them (remember no points, sharp objects, etc) with more informative products for accompanying adults.

Favourite items with everyone seem to be stickers, posters, pens, rulers, magnets, plastic bags, balloons. You can be more creative and try things like post-it notes, mouse pads, coffee cups, and nice presentation folders depending on your budget.

Other things to consider

- Your display may need to be mounted and dismantled out of normal hours.
- Take plenty of business cards.
- If using electronic equipment, make sure
 - you have access to electricity

- you have all the double adaptors, extension leads, spare bulbs etc you require
- your set-up staff know the ins and outs of the equipment eg tuning videos, setting up computers.
- Take a store of handy items such as pins, tape, scrap paper, pens, blutac, velcro spots, scissors, and screwdriver etc for running repairs.
- Have a mobile phone handy.
- Make sure you have a table to put things on, a chair, and somewhere safe for your valuables.
- Make sure you organise a vehicle that will transport all your equipment to the venue in one go.
- If heavy equipment/stands are used, ensure your staff have the muscle power to carry and install it.

Evaluation

Evaluate your presence at the event. This need not be a complicated, expensive process. There are simple, inexpensive ways of capturing relevant information: make an inventory of the products taken to the display and measure against those left at its conclusion; ask for registrations for distribution of a newsletter; develop a simple competition. Include word of mouth reports from the staff who were actually on the stand, statistics from event organisers and results of your show specials or follow-ups.

Analyse whether it would be worthwhile attending again next time. Recommend changes that would make the display more interesting/relevant/easier etc. Discuss any problems, either with the organisers or staff, and recommend ways to eliminate them next time.

Most events will send you an evaluation form to complete and send back. Do not hesitate to offer constructive criticism. This will help the event to be better run next time.

Make sure staff follow up any enquiries or leads. This is often the most fruitful part of the promotion. By promptly following up on all enquiries you are demonstrating your service standards and efficiency.

Direct mailing

Direct mail advertising is flexible, can be specifically targeted and is measurable. In essence, it is selling directly to customers via their mail boxes. It comes in many forms, but usually includes an outer envelope, a letter and/or a brochure and a way to respond.

Direct mail is particularly effective in getting an initial, brief message to a specific, contained audience calling for an action by the recipient. The method of response must be simple, convenient and provide an opportunity for the receiver to access your product or service, for example, by sending in a coupon or dialling a phone number. Whether you are sending a simple postcard, promotional brochure or a letter campaign, the key to success with direct mail is to secure your target audience. Accurate mailing lists need to be used so your direct mail piece is delivered directly to potential clients, by name and title. You can get help to do this.

There are literally thousands of mailing lists currently on the market. To help you find the one best suited for your purpose you can use a mailing house or 'broker' who can zero in on your target audience using demographic and geographic information.

Direct mail is also versatile, there is no limit to the size, shape, format, content, etc of your message, and the mail can be filed by the receiver for future reference.

However, direct mail can be expensive for quality messages and packages, the response rate can be very low, it is labour intensive and it can be associated with junk mail. Also, privacy considerations are increasing.

Direct mail check list

- Plan - identify your objectives, outcomes and target market. Settle the budget. Specify the time frames.
- Develop a mailing list - existing database or external listing.
- Prepare and print envelopes and inserts - with envelopes show readers' names and addresses correctly: with inserts, make them professional, keep them simple, focus on needs of clients, not your organisation, include a response mechanism.
- Develop processes for handling responses - make sure you can follow-up enquiries/leads quickly and efficiently. The quality of this part of the campaign is particularly important.
- Monitor the progress of the campaign.
- Evaluate the campaign - this needs to be undertaken to assess the effectiveness of the direct mail campaign and the extent to which the objectives were met.

The 'event'

Promotional events or functions provide an opportunity to communicate your messages to a captive audience.

As well as getting your message across to invited guests, these organised 'happenings' can attract broader publicity if the media is alerted and invited to attend.

Events and functions are very effective for launching new services or changes to current services and for celebrating success. Such events can bring together current and future clients and could include sponsorship of cultural or sporting activities.

Presentations and seminars can be used to promote programs that are community based or have a strong appeal to a broad cross-section of the community. They are effective for complex subjects because the interactive format allows for discussion and clarification.

Whether your event is a launch or an industry dinner, the processes involved in staging it follow the same basic structure as for other promotional activities.

For an event to remember

- Identify your objectives and the outcomes you expect to achieve.
- Identify your target audience, don't make it too broad because different target audiences have different needs.
- Identify the most suitable type of function and a theme that relates to the objectives and the target audience.
- Consider timing, resource requirements and budget issues.
- Find a guest speaker who is known to and will attract your target audience.
- Approach the guest speaker or speakers with plenty of time to spare (so you have time to find someone else if they are not available).
- Decide on a venue, considering location, room size, capacity for audio/visual requirements, acoustics, refreshments, car parking, etc.
- Draw up a guest list and arrange for invitations.
- Prepare thoroughly in terms of staff, agenda, equipment, etc.
- Organise publicity/media.
- Follow up and evaluate.

9. SUPPORT FROM THE DEPARTMENT

9.1. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT AND REGIONAL SERVICES

The Australian Government Department of Transport and Regional Services (DOTARS) is responsible for policy development and implementation of a range of regional programmes and the administration and support of the ACC network. As part of this responsibility, the Department monitors, supports and assesses ACC performance to ensure the Department's programmes are addressing the priorities identified by the Government and achieving the required outcomes.

DOTARS provides support to ACCs in a number of ways including:

- Consultation - the provision of consultative forums to promote partnership, discussion and two-way feedback between the Australian Government and ACCs;
- Development and support - the provision of day-to-day assistance and advice to ACCs on strategic and operational matters;
- Training – the development and delivery of training for ACC Chairs and Executive Officers through conferences and workshops;
- Infrastructure support - the provision of practical support such as the ACC Internet site and promotional material such as ACC banners and pamphlets; and
- Administration - support for and advice about sound governance practices including the implementation of a programme of ACC Audits, Quality Assurance Assessments, ACC contract management and financial management of the ACC Network and Regional Partnerships.

SUPPORT FROM THE DEPARTMENT

ACC

The New England North West ACC reports to the Orange Regional Office of DOTARS for assistance with functions and approvals.

Contact Details: Department of Transport & Regional Services
Street
PO Box 1786
ORANGE NSW 2800

Telephone: 02 63934 000
Facsimile: 02 63603765
Email: <first>.<last>@dotars.gov.au

Contacts and Responsibilities:

Maree Cooper	Regional Manager	(02) 63 934001
John Bowmer	Manager Assessment Team	(02) 63934002
Donna Michell	NENWACC Assessments	(02) 63934003
Anne Simpson	Administration	(02) 63934000

SMALL BUSINESS ANSWERS

The New England North West ACC reports to the Canberra division of DITR for contractual arrangements for this contract.

Contact Details: Small Business and Industry Programs
AusIndustry
Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources
GPO Box 9839
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Telephone: 02 6213 7982
Facsimile:
Email: Bronwyn.Shirley@industry.gov.au

Bronwyn Shirley	Assistant Manager	
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SMALL BUSINESS ENTERPRISE CULTURE PROGRAM

The New England North West ACC reports to the Canberra division of DITR for contractual arrangements for this contract.

Contact Details: Small Business Enterprise Culture Program
AusIndustry
Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources
GPO Box 9839
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Telephone: (02) 62137306
Facsimile: (02) 62137388
Email: Paul.Treloar@industry.gov.au

Paul Treloar	Assistant Manager	
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9.2. ACC INTERNET SITE

The ACC website is maintained by DOTARS to enhance communication and the dissemination of information between individual ACCs, regional communities and DOTARS. The site is located at www.acc.gov.au. The ACC website provides direct links to individual ACC homepages and other relevant reference sites.

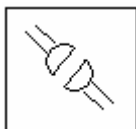
9.3. COMMUNICATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT

The Regional Offices of DOTARS are the primary points of contact for ACCs. As noted in the Operational Funding Contract, all communication with the Australian Government by an ACC shall be directed to the Departmental Liaison Officer or as directed by DOTARS.

ACC Website

a) How to open our website in Dreamweaver for editing

Follow the pathway Programs>Macromedia>Macromedia Dreamweaver MX
 In the right hand Files fly-out ensure that the drop down menus read NENWACC and Remote View



Then click on the connect icon to the left of the drop-downs.
 A file directory containing all of the website files will appear.

b) How to find a web-page file

Amongst the file directory, the most important files are the ones with the dreamweaver logo alongside them, which are the web pages. All of the other files are the pictures and links and all of the other code that goes together to make a working website. The files you will want to open to edit are below. To open a web page file, just double click.

ass-engine.asp =	Search Engine
index.html =	NENWACC home page
sitemap.html =	Website Map
acc_members.html =	Board members and staff
charter.html =	Charter
business.html =	Business Plan
srp.html =	Strategic Regional Plan
krp1.htm =	Key Regional Priority 1 – Co-ordination and Planning
krp2.htm =	Key Regional Priority 2 – Our Communities
krp3.htm =	Key Regional Priority 3 – Indigenous Development
krp4.htm =	Key Regional Priority 4 – Investment in Regional Development and Business
krp5.htm =	Key Regional Priority 5 - Infrastructure
krp6.htm =	Key Regional Priority 6 – Healthy Environment
krp7.htm =	Key Regional Priority 7 – Support for the Namoi Valley
krp8.htm =	Key Regional Priority 8 – Education and Training
krp9.htm =	Key Regional Priority 9 - Employment
regional.html =	NENWACC Projects
projectarchive.html =	Projects from previous years
grants.html =	Grants page
nen_column.html =	Newsletter and media releases
mediaarchive.html =	Media Releases from previous years
sbao.html =	Small Business Answers
iep.html =	Indigenous Development
NVAP Page.html =	Namoi Valley
links.html =	Links

c) How to change the content on your page

Updating the content on your page - the text only - is really easy. It is just like typing into a word document or anything else. You can also copy text from a document and paste it into the webpage to save you retyping it.

To make what you have changed actually appear on the live website you have to upload it.

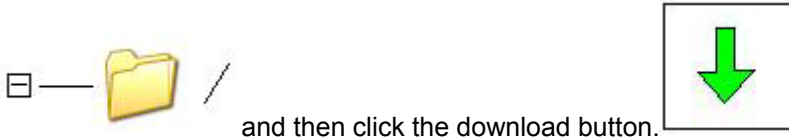


To do this, highlight your file in the directory in the File fly-out and then press the upload icon.

You will be told that you have made changes to the document and do you want to save them. Click OK.

To back-up the changes you also need to download the changes to the local files (the files on the Server).

To do this, highlight the very top file in the directory which looks like this:



and then click the download button.

d) How to create a link

To create a link, type in the text that will be the link and highlight it.

In the Properties fly-out on the bottom of the screen, click on the folder icon next to the Link textbox. Choose the file you wish to link to from the Server or your computer etc.

To link to another page just type in the name of the page to link to in the Link textbox eg regional.html

To link to an email address type into the Link textbox mailto: followed by the email eg <mailto:sbao@nenwacc.com.au>

If you are linking to a live website external to the NENWACC site (eg the DSRD site) remember to type http:// in front of the web address.

When you have done this, the text you highlighted should turn blue. This means the link is activated.

The font should also automatically change to the same text as the other links throughout the NENWACC webpage, if it doesn't, highlight the text and right click on it. Then choose SSC and MenuWhite.

Remember to upload your changes to the website and download to the local files to include your linked file in the webfiles directory (see c in this section).

e) How to create an anchor

On pages such as the Newsletter page, anchors are used. Usually, links in a website take the viewer to a different page. An anchor is just a way of linking a viewer to a different spot on the same page.

Click the mouse where you would like the anchor to be (which is where the link should take the person). This is usually the start of the title at a new section on the page.

From the file menu choose the pathway Insert>Named Anchor and give it a name (the title of the section will do but spaces are not allowed).

Now go back to the text that you want to be the link to the anchor. Highlight the text. In the Link textbox in the Properties fly-out at the bottom of the page type # followed by the name you gave the link.

f) How to edit pictures on the site

To edit a picture, just click on the picture to highlight it. Then in the Properties fly-out at the base of the page click Edit. The picture will be opened in another box where you can make changes to it and changes will be automatically applied on the site, when you close the editing window.

g) How to make a new page

On the file menu choose the pathway Modify>Templates>Apply Template to Page
A dialogue box will appear
Highlight main and click Select
The new page will appear. Add text, pictures and links etc.

h) How to change the template

All of the NENWACC pages are created on a common template that contains the header, footer, page tabs and basic layout.

The template is located at Templates/main.dwt in the main directory.
Choose the common tab (found along the top of the page) to edit the template

The most useful keys to change the template are the tables and split cells keys (Properties fly-out)

To set an editable region where no table exists, Choose the template tab (along the top of the page), click on the

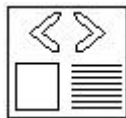


page where the next textbox should to and then click on the icon.

i) How to set line spacing

This is the trickiest bit because you have to work with the code rather than on the page.

All web pages automatically default to a large gap when you press Enter, so to make it only a single space, reveal



the HTML code by clicking the icon.

Then on the page put the cursor at the end of the row immediately preceding the big space you want to get rid of. The code should also move to show you where you are. You should be able to follow the text of the line in the code and find the next `<P>` or `</P>`. In the code delete the `<P>` or `</P>` and replace it with a `
`.

The page should change to a single spaced line.

Contacts: The Dreamweaver Manual
Philip Seifert, Computer Nerds, 1800 661 000

Email Accounts and Logins

Identity	Email address	Login name	Password
Impact Web Host		mb97552a	
Rebel Thomson	execofficer@nenwacc.com.au	mb97552b	angus
Donna Karam	nwprojectofficer@nenwacc.com.au	mb97552c	angus
Ildu Monticone	sbao@nenwacc.com.au	mb97552d	angus
Paul Craigie	ido@nenwacc.com.au	mb97552e	angus
Joanne Stead	projectofficer@nenwacc.com.au	mb97552f	angus
Undesignated	*@nenwacc.com.au	mb97552g	angus
Undesignated	*@nenwacc.com.au	mb97552h	angus
Undesignated	*@nenwacc.com.au	mb97552i	angus
Undesignated	*@nenwacc.com.au	mb97552j	angus
Undesignated	*@nenwacc.com.au	mb97552k	angus
Server	nenwacc@bigpond.com	nenwacc	nenw466

Contacts: Computer problems, Lindsay, Case Computers – (02) 6761 2324
 nenwacc addresses, Rebecca Cody – (02) 6760 9998 or 0408 295 356 or codyr@impact-web.net
 Bigpond account, Telstra Technical support – 133 933