

NRM Council

Aboriginal Statewide Advisory Committee

Minutes of Meeting No 6. Meeting held Friday 29th September 2006 from 12.00 pm-4:30 pm
At Level 17, 25 Grenfell Street, Adelaide

1. Welcome and Introduction

Present: Peter Buckskin (Chair), Fred Tanner, Andrew Johnson, Cherie Heyes, Debra Haseldine, Fraser Vickery, George Cooley, Lynette Crocker, Marilyn Ah Chee, Karina Lester

Apologies: Leonie Casey, Mitch Dunnet, Donald Fraser, Hughie Windlass, Derek Walker

In Attendance: David New, Pam Chapman, Molly Anderson, Tommy Smith

2. Minutes

The Committee resolved to confirm the minutes as a correct record. Lynette moved and Fraser seconded the minutes be accepted.

Business Arising From Previous Minutes

Kangaroo Management Reference Group

Three people were nominated for the Kangaroo Management Reference Group. ASAC is waiting on feedback from DEH in regard to the request to have more than one Aboriginal representative on the group.

Resource Manual for NRM Officer

A resource manual for NRM Officers engaging Aboriginal Communities in NRM is currently being developed by Rural Solutions SA on behalf of the DWLBC and funded by the Joint Commonwealth / State Steering Committee, which administers the Natural Heritage Trust (NHT) and the National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality (NAP).

Photo Approval Form

The NRM Council supported the use of a photo approval form, however wanted further clarification from the ASAC as to who could authorise the use of photos depicting Aboriginal people, activities and/or landscapes. It was not resolved as to who should provide authorisation, however it was made clear, that a photo approval form is not required for photos that currently depict Aboriginal people, activities and landscapes, but for future use.

Aboriginal Heritage Agreements/MOU's

In response to Aboriginal Heritage Agreements/MOU's in the minutes, Andrew Johnson informed the group that the NRM Council endorsed the ASAC to further investigate the scope and content of agreements/MOU's that could assist in building a positive relationship between heritage and NRM. It was resolved that the ASAC Chairperson would write to the Chairperson of the SA Aboriginal Heritage Committee and invite further discussion on this topic and discuss the potential for a state Heritage Agreement framework that could assist NRM Boards in going down the path of developing Heritage Agreements. This could facilitate recognition of heritage and NRM matters, and assist in establishing a common working relationship between the two systems. There was discussion around the need for ASAC to be proactive and make sure the NRM agenda reflects what Aboriginal people feel are important on their country, particularly in regard to Heritage, NRM and ILUA's.

Action: Peter Buckskin to write to Chairperson of State Heritage Committee and invite David Baker and select members to join in discussion on NRM & Heritage MOU's/Agreements at the next ASAC meeting.

It was also noted that NRM Council raised ILUA's as a critical issue for ASAC to address. NRM Council has asked ASAC to consider developing a policy on ILUA's for NRM Council and other Government agencies, whilst ensuring there is agreement between Heritage Committees and other Aboriginal Advisory groups. It was agreed that developing a policy would be a great opportunity for ASAC to demonstrate leadership and collaboration between groups. Further discussion on this issue was deferred to next meeting. It was acknowledged that ASAC has a role in setting frameworks and policy, to help NRM Boards move in the right direction, particularly in regard to investment.

Action: Ensure ILUA discussion on next meeting agenda.

State NRM Plan

Discussions were held around the draft state NRM Plan brochure for Aboriginal people, which was presented to the ASAC at July's meeting. The draft has progressed and Pam Chapman will disseminate for comment.

Action: Pam Chapman to send Cherie Heyes a copy of the draft state NRM Plan brochure for Aboriginal People. Cherie to follow up feedback from members.

3. Correspondence

a. NRM Volunteer Committee

The recent change to natural resource management (NRM) structures in South Australia has necessitated a new look at the way volunteers are engaged in NRM. In lieu of this, the NRM Council prepared an NRM volunteer statement and framework to address improved engagement of NRM volunteers. The framework recommended the NRM Council establish a NRM Volunteer committee of the Council to facilitate interaction and partnerships at regional and state levels. Given the ASAC is one group linked to volunteering in NRM, members were asked to put forward nominations. Two members nominated and will be notified within the next two week as to the success of their application.

b. ASAC Video Conferences

Concern was raised by an ASAC member as to the use of video conferencing for ASAC meetings. It was felt those participating in meetings via video conference were being disadvantaged by a lack of inclusiveness with other members who are present at the main venue. It was raised that meeting policy should ensure resources are available to enable members from 'remote' locations to be present at the main venue for each meeting. Although members agreed that video conferences were not ideal, there was consensus that provisions already exist for members to attend meetings at the main venue if desired.

Action: Peter Buckskin to write a letter to Mitch Dunnett detailing ASAC's commitment to members to attend meetings.

c. DEH Indigenous Consultations for major planning and projects

A letter detailing DEH Indigenous consultations for major planning and projects was discussed. It was raised that DEH incorporates Indigenous consultations at the end of planning processes for major regional and state-wide initiatives rather than at the beginning. Members discussed this concern and felt the issue should first be raised to the local Eyre Peninsula NRM Board, who could then take it up with DEH at a local level. If the issue is not dealt with, then ASAC would take up the matter.

Action: Peter Buckskin to write to Mitch Dunnett and advise him to raise the issue of DEH consultations first with the Eyre Peninsula NRM Board.

Action: Peter Buckskin to write a letter to Dennis Mutton indicating that ASAC believes appropriate communication and consultation with Aboriginal people is important, and although an issue with DEH communications has been raised it is much broader than this. Peter will indicate ASAC is aware of these issues and the complexities of engagement, however believes engagement with Aboriginal communities and indigenous focus groups needs to be upfront and transparent.

On the issue of engagement, a member raised the question as to what Aboriginal projects are taking place in the region. It was unclear as to the percentage of funds directed towards Aboriginal project initiatives.

Action: Cherie to obtain an update from NRM Boards on current Aboriginal projects/programs.

4. Meeting Papers

a. NRM Transition Update- Skills Audit, Web site

David New, Rural Solutions SA, presented a paper on an Aboriginal NRM Internet site, which was circulated to members. The purpose of the paper was to inform members that the Aboriginal NRM Internet site will support and provide a communication conduit for NRM information flow to and from Aboriginal communities and individuals. David indicated that it would be an avenue for people to access the deliverables and tools from the Aboriginal NRM Transition project.

Members were informed that the internet site would:

- Incorporate Aboriginal involvement at all levels of NRM
- Display and communicate information for and from ASAC
- Make available a discussion forum for question and answers etc.
- Be a notice board for NRM information relating to regional focus / advisory groups
- Showcase NRM developments and good news stories across the state
- Incorporate other additional linkages nationally (NRM jobs, funding links, government sites, etc)
- House the Aboriginal NRM contact and capability database
- Develop and conduct various on line surveys
- House the working online skills audit tool (skills audit previously discussed)
- Have an automated email system

ASAC members provided in principle support for the development of such a web site however indicated they would like to be kept informed of future progress. Some concern was raised as to the availability of information technology and internet access in rural communities. Other members felt that information technology access is actually improving for Aboriginal communities, and this initiative would be a great opportunity for communities to better position themselves, and demand access to infrastructure, particularly after hours. Peter Buckskin indicated strong support for the proposed web site and commented that select universities in South Australia are working on projects that seek to ensure young people are more comfortable with information technology.

One member questioned whether the proposed web site would link to the NRM Tracker program. It was highlighted that at this stage, no links have been made and that the use of tracker is more for NRM Boards to inform funding bodies of the success of programs and achievement towards resource condition targets and management actions.

Discussions are underway as to who will manage/own the web site and ASAC will be kept informed. Fred commented that he was involved in the development of a web site for Aboriginal People about native title and local councils. The web site followed a 'tool box model', was easy to follow and used simple language. Fred will forward this link to David New.

Action: Fred to find the link to the native title website and send to David New.

David informed members that the website will have multiple users and will include individuals, community and NRM Boards.

b. SA Aboriginal NRM Officer Forum, Barmera

A paper prepared by Rowena Brown, Regional NRM Liaison Officer, was circulated to members. The purpose of the paper was to:

- Inform ASAC about outcomes from the South Australian Aboriginal NRM Officer forum at Barmera in March 2006
- To invite feedback from ASAC regarding outcomes
- To extend an invitation to an ASAC representative to participate in future discussions and/or provide input into development of the SA Aboriginal NRM Officer Network.

ASAC members noted and supported the work and initiative of the South Australian Aboriginal NRM Officer Network. ASAC members agreed to be a link between NRM stakeholders and be a 'sponsor' for future activities of the network. ASAC could provide support and direction for the development of future forums. It was agreed that Lynette would continue to be the ASAC representative to the network, attend meetings when relevant and report back to the ASAC. It was also resolved that the Aboriginal NRMO network provides the ASAC with information as to what is going on in the regions, particularly in regard to on-ground works and programs.

Action: Peter Buckskin to write a letter to Rowena, indicating ASAC's support for the SA Aboriginal NRM Officer Network

Action: Lynette to continue to be the ASAC representative to the network and report back to ASAC when appropriate.

c. Launch of Aboriginal Engagement Protocols Document

A discussion paper was prepared by Jason Downs, Rural Solutions SA and circulated to members. The purpose of the paper was to discuss the official launch of the Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges Aboriginal Protocols and Tools of Knowledge document. Four nations within the Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges region have worked together to develop a document that describes how they wish to be engaged by people in NRM.

ASAC members noted and supported the concept of launching the protocols document at the next ASAC meeting in November. It was agreed that the Minister for Environment and Conservation, Gail Gago, would be an appropriate delegate to launch the document.

Action: Peter Buckskin to inform Jason Downs that the ASAC support the launch of the protocols document at the upcoming ASAC meeting, and would recommend the Hon. Minister for Environment and Heritage, Gail Gago to officially launch the document for public use.

5. General Business

- a. ALT Interest in attending meetings

Action: Peter Buckskin to write to the ALT and indicate they are welcome to attend ASAC meetings at any time as observers, however to become formal members, appropriate protocol must be followed.

- b. NRM Ministerial Council

Andrew Johnson informed members about two proposed national initiatives which will be presented to the NRM Ministerial Council in November. A further update will be provided to members at the next ASAC meeting.

6. Presentations

- a. Presentation by Tommy Smith, Australian Government, DEH and DAFF

Tommy provided an outline of National Indigenous Employment Training Pilot Programs, Cross Cultural Awareness Training, details of survey results on Indigenous engagement in NRM in South Australia, Indigenous engagement opportunities and challenges for engagement.

Members highlighted that many of the challenges presented during the presentation are currently being addressed in South Australia. For instance, the ASAC has been established under the NRM Act, the Aboriginal NRM Network is up and functioning, the AW NRM Board has a regional plan of which many issues are promoted at a statewide level, focus groups have been established and the State NRM Plan has been launched. The ASAC members agreed that progress had been made.

Action: Cherie to send members a copy of Tommy's presentation.

- b. Presentation by Molly Anderson, DEH (SA)

Molly provided information on the role of the Aboriginal Partnership Unit within the Department for Environment and Heritage and current programs. He spoke about the Aboriginal Heritage Handbook Strategy, Co-management arrangements of parks, native title, ILUA's, cultural awareness, management of biodiversity, reconciliation initiatives and employment and training opportunities.

Action: Cherie to send members a copy of Molly's presentation.

Action: Molly to send Cherie a copy of DEH Corporate Plan.

7. Next Meeting

Next meeting will be held on 28th November 2006. Following the meeting will be a social activity with NRM Council and AW Board Members. More details to come.

8. Close

The Chairperson closed the meeting at 4:30pm.

CONFIRMED:

CHAIRPERSON:

DATE: