

**NSW LAND BASED
AQUACULTURE CONSULTATIVE
GROUP**

Operational Guidelines

July 2010

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1. Introduction

The NSW Land Based Aquaculture Consultative Group (Group) has been established to provide expert advice on issues vital to the future development of viable and sustainable land based aquaculture industries in NSW.

The membership of the Group is structured to provide representation for the various NSW land based aquaculture sectors, supporting industries and officers from I&I NSW including Aquaculture, Biosecurity, Compliance the NSW Food Authority and other relevant government agencies.

This manual contains the terms of reference for the Group, information about membership, conduct of members and meeting procedures.

2. Terms of Reference

The Group will advise the Minister for Primary Industries, I&I NSW and relevant stakeholders on current and future sustainable development and management of the NSW land based aquaculture industries, particularly in relation to:

- Day to day management issues,
- Government policy,
- Industry development initiatives, and
- Other matters that may be referred by the Minister, I&I NSW or other stakeholders.

3. Legislation

As the Group is a non statutory consultative group no sitting fees are paid to members and all expenses incurred in attending meetings are met by the individual or the organisation the individual represents.

Members of the Group should familiarise themselves with the relevant provisions of the *Fisheries Management Act 1994*, associated Regulations and published policies.

4. Role and Function

The Group is expertise-based advisory/consultative group providing advice on issues of importance to the management, future viability and sustainable development of land based aquaculture in NSW. Members draw on their knowledge and experience to provide advice to I&I NSW on issues of cross sector wide nature and to advise the Minister on issues affecting the NSW aquaculture industry.

Provide advice and contribute where requested to the activities of other relevant aquaculture committee (eg Aquaculture Research Advisory Committee).

The Group operates on the basis of consensus rather than voting on particular issues. Also the Group may provide or seek advice with any advisory council which has been established under the *Fisheries Management Act 1994* and associated Regulations.

5. Membership

5.1 Role of Members

It is the responsibility of a Group member to:

- Put their views clearly, concisely and with respect,
- Negotiate to achieve the best outcomes for NSW land based aquaculture industries,
- Contribute to the ongoing development of a viable, sustainable aquaculture industry in NSW,
- Actively seek solutions that result in the best possible outcomes for NSW's land based aquaculture industries through consensus-based discussion, notwithstanding issues that might not directly benefit their interest group, organisation or region,
- Observe confidentiality, and exercise tact and discretion when dealing with the Group's business,
- Make the necessary commitment of time to ensure they have an understanding of the background to issues being discussed by the Group, and
- Consult with the relevant industry sector through the appropriate regional and industry associations.

5.2 Composition of the Group

The members of the Group are to represent specific land based aquaculture sectors, State or regional aquaculture associations, support industries and relevant government agencies.

5.3 Chairperson

The Minister may appoint a Chairperson of the Group.

5.4 Selection of members

Appointments to the Group may be made following a call for expressions of interest in membership of the Group.

The Chairperson in consultation with I&I NSW may decline or accept the nomination of any candidate.

5.5 Terms of Appointment

A member of the Group may hold office for a term not exceeding three years and is eligible for re-appointment..

5.6 Inability to Attend a Meeting

In the event that a member is unable to attend a meeting, a member may (a) request the Chairperson to convey their views on a particular agenda item, or (b) nominate a deputy to attend the meeting subject to Chairperson's approval.

Every attempt should be made by members to advise the Group's Secretariat at least ten working days before a scheduled meeting if they wish to activate either option, so that the necessary arrangements can be made.

5.7 Filling a vacancy

If a Group position becomes vacant, the Chairperson may call for expressions of interest for the position or appoint a person who was previously nominated for the position.

6. Meetings

6.1 Chairperson

The Chairperson's role is to ensure that meetings are conducted in a professional manner and to:

- Provide sound leadership at meetings and develop consensus on complex and potentially divisive issues,
- Offer balanced advice and consideration of novel solutions to problems,
- Convey the importance of industry unity during government consultation,
- Ensure agreed outcomes and outputs are achieved to the satisfaction of government and industry, and
- Develop the confidence and respect of industry by committing to the prosperity and vigour of the NSW aquaculture industry.

In the absence or incapacity of the Chairperson, a meeting of the Group is to be chaired by an I&I NSW representative.

6.2 Notice of a meeting

Notice of a meeting and call for agenda papers will be given to all members no less than six weeks prior to a meeting. The notice shall state the time and date of the meeting and venue.

If members wish to propose items for discussion, the items must be nominated to the Chairperson no less than four weeks before the meeting. The inclusion of agenda items will be subject to the approval of the Chairperson. Inclusion of items will have regard to the items currently and previously listed for discussion. Any proposed agenda item must be accompanied by an agenda paper containing a concise written explanation of the matter for discussion and, where appropriate, a proposed outcome for the Group's consideration. It is the responsibility of the member that raised an agenda item to provide an agenda paper on that item.

The proposed agenda, including agenda papers will be sent to all members at least three weeks prior to a scheduled meeting.

Reports, correspondence, statistical statements etc. will be sent out with the agenda for a meeting.

6.3 Agenda

The agenda will take the following format unless otherwise agreed by the Chairperson and members present at a meeting:

- Chairperson's welcome and apologies
- Confirmation of minutes from previous meeting
- Business arising from minutes
- Correspondence

- Business Items
- Other Business
- Meeting close.

6.4 Rules of Discussion

Conventional rules of debate apply. Meetings will be conducted in an orderly fashion, with good manners and common decency. All debate is to be through the Chairperson. The Chairperson has the right to request any disruptive member to leave the meeting for a specified period. Repetitive disruption may lead to the person being asked to leave the meeting for the remainder of the day.

6.5 Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests

A member who has a direct pecuniary interest in a matter to be discussed by the Group, or whose interest appears to conflict with the proper performance of the member's duties, must disclose the interest to the Chairperson. If the Chairperson so decides following any such disclosure, the member must not be present or participate in any such deliberation.

6.6 Out-of-session meetings

Out-of-session meetings may be called by the Chairperson to discuss matters. These may be in the form of face-to-face meetings with all or selected members of the Group, video or telephone hook-ups or by email. Alternatively, the Chairperson can request members to provide written submissions on a matter.

6.7 Record of the Meeting

As the primary role of the Group is to advise the Minister on any matter referred to it by the Minister, I&I NSW and industry the recommendations of Group are the key outcome of the meeting.

Draft meeting outcomes from the meeting will be prepared by the Secretariat as soon as possible after the meeting and forwarded to the Chairperson of the Group for approval. Members will then have two weeks to provide comment to the Executive Officer on the draft outcomes.

The outcomes of the meeting will be in the following format:

- Attendance
- Chairperson's Welcome and Apologies
- Correspondence
- Business Items, detailing Outcomes (not verbatim Minutes)
- Other Business
- Next Meeting

A short summary of the Group's meetings will be produced following meetings and made available to stakeholders and other interested groups on the I&I NSW website and in the aquaculture newsletter sent to all aquaculture permit holders. This will assist in facilitating communication from the Group back to stakeholders by summarising the outcomes of the meeting. As required, quarterly updates on the status of actions will be provided to the Group.

6.8 *Invited Guests*

The Chairperson may invite guests to attend meetings and provide specialist advice to the group.

6.9 *Support for the Group*

I&I NSW will provide Secretariat support to the Group. The Secretariat will:

- organise meetings;
- prepare the meeting agenda in consultation with the Chairperson;
- prepare and circulate any background and/or agenda papers;
- assist the Chairperson in preparing correspondence and reports relevant to the business of the Group;
- maintain files and records of meetings; and
- prepare, under the supervision of the Chairperson, a record of the recommendations of the Group for the Minister.

7. *Communication*

The Chairperson, with administrative assistance from the Secretariat will prepare reports and correspondence to the Minister on behalf of the Group. The reports and correspondence will reflect the Group's views, and any dissenting views will be recorded.