

Board Meeting No 109

20-21 August 2019

APPROVED minutes

In Attendance

Directors

Ms. Leslie Shirreffs Chair
MS Anne Clarke Director

Prof Iain Gordon Director (videoconference)

Mr. Phil Rist Director
Dr Leah Talbot Director
Mr. John Courtenay Director

Mr. Scott Buchanan Executive Director

Observers

Ms. Lyn Wallace Manager, World Heritage (Department Environment and Science)

Mr. James Newman Executive Director

Ms. Carmel McMahon Department of Environment and Energy (videoconference)

Mrs. Sarah Titchen Acting Director, Natural Heritage Section (videoconference)

Guests

Mr. Keith Noble Chair, Terrain NRM Board (videoconference)

Mr. Peter Faulkner Director, Terrain NRM Board
Mr. Peter Rowles Director, Terrain NRM Board
Prof Steve Turton Director, Terrain NRM Board
Ms. Megan Kadic Emerging leader, Terrain NRM

Ms. Carole Sweatman CEO, Terrain NRM

Authority officers

Ms. Rebecca Lagerroth Manager, World Heritage Connections
Ms. Lucy Karger Project Manager, Yellow Crazy Ants
Mr. Tim Wong Manager, Planning and Conservation

Ms. Julie Colman Principal Planner

Mr. Eli Taylor Senior Planning Officer
Ms. Ellen Weber Principal Policy Officer
Ms. M'Lis Flynn Acting Executive Officer

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Chair's introduction and welcome

The Chair Leslie Shirreffs acknowledged the Traditional Custodians of the Cairns region and paid respect to elder's past, present and emerging.

Leslie welcomed all Directors and participants and introduced Carmel McMahon from the Australian Department of Environment and Energy (DoEE) (by phone) and Lyn Wallace from the Queensland Department of Environment and Science (DES) to the meeting.

1.2. Apologies

Observers Angela Siggery (DES), Alison Webb of Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and Partnerships (QPWS&P) were unable to attend. Sarah Titchen (DoEE) was an apology for the first day and attended on the 2nd day.

Mr. Barry Hunter, Terrain NRM director was unable to attend the joint meeting between Terrain and the Authority's boards.

1.3. Conflict of interest

There were no conflicts of interest noted.

2. MINUTES AND ACTIONS ARISING

2.1. Endorsement of Board minutes No 108

Resolution

The Board endorsed the minutes for Board meeting No 108.

2.2. Actions arising

The Executive Director worked through the Actions Arising document with updates provided to items. All updates have been made to the Actions Arising table.

Resolution

The Board updated the actions arising.

3. REPORTS

3.1. Chair's report

The Chair, Leslie Shirreffs addressed the board. Leslie thanked the Authority's staff for their efforts in progressing the Wet Tropics Management Plan Review.

The Chair (with support of the ED) has held a series of briefings since board #108, including meeting with:

- Australian Shadow Minister for the Environment Ms. Terri Butler
- Warren Entsch MP, Federal Member for Leichhardt.
- CAFNEC Chair Denis Walls, Director Dirk Ludrop and outgoing coordinator Ms. Roz Walden to discuss the Cassowary Awards and the Management Plan Review.
- Stella Martin re Cassowary Awards
- Sheriden Morris, Chair of RRRC and of the CRC for Developing Northern Australia
- Bulmba Rangers and Barry Hunter Jr

Stella Martin to discuss the 2019 Cassowary Awards

In addition, the chair:

- attended the 2nd Wet Tropics climate adaptation workshop with the SAC, members of the CCC and other community representatives
- participated in the Australian Conservation Foundation's media family in the Wet Tropics. The
 media family was a direct response by the ACF to the Authority's climate statement and 10point plan, and included a visit to the Kuranda YCA infestation site with YCAEP team
 members, Djabugay Traditional Owners and Kuranda Envirocare. The chair gave thanks to
 the Authority's communications team and YCAEP field staff.
- Met with Senator Richard de Natale's office to discuss climate impacts and the regional jobs for the future inquiry.
- is awaiting responses from Australian Minister for the Environment Sussan Ley and Minister for Indigenous Australians Ken Wyatt
- received responses to letters re climate impacts from Australian Senator Murray Watt and Shadow Minister Terri Butler

Resolution

The Board noted the chair's report.

Actions:

- Prepare a follow up letter to Minister Ley regarding the Authority's climate action

3.2. Executive Director's report

Scott Buchanan addressed the Board and provided an update on HRM and operational issues including:

- there are significant staff movements—Dr Paul Chantrill has taken medical retirement,
 Melissa McMahon has resigned, and Ellen Weber is in a temporary role to complete the climate change scoping project.
- Alistair Harris has been employed temporarily as a Strategic Communications Advisor, and Phil Brandel as the Media and Communications Officer. M'Lis Flynn is acting in the Executive Officer role and Bill Carrodus is on long service leave, with Chris Clerc acting in that role.
- Lucy Karger ran an effective process for recruitment to Yellow Crazy Ant Eradication Program (YCAEP) field staff positions and has recently recruited a field coordinator, Jochem van der Reijden. Jochem resigned from Biosecurity Queensland to accept the position and is already making an impact.
- the Authority is seeking new office accommodation by end of 2019-20 financial year to bring all three offices and operations into one space. Private and government options are being investigated to ensure the office is fit for purpose and can become carbon neutral.
- a staff workshop will be held in October and facilitated by Channel 7's Kim Skubris to develop staff's media and storytelling skills.

Other relevant strategic matters of interest to the Board include:

- Lucy Karger has been in discussions with the Commonwealth government to inform the YCAEP 3-year funding agreement, while S Buchanan is communication with DES to ensure YCAEP reporting is aligned. The DES are yet to advise whether the Governments and Strategyteam or QPWS&P will be responsible for administering the Queensland contribution
- World Heritage Gateway—the Queensland Department of Innovation and Tourism Industry Development (DITID) has taken a lead to facilitate alignment with their Cairns Global TourismHub. The Authority has been in discussions with DITID and Tourism Events Queensland (TEQ)about developing an iconic building which can highlight the stories of Australian World Heritage properties underpinned by the Australian First Nations story. Minister Kate Jones has been briefed by TEQ on the concept. Wet Tropics Tourism Destination Plan—the Authority is currently seeking input from Traditional Owners and the tourism industry for a term of reference to develop the plan. The ToR will specifically seek to target the style of tourism appropriate to world heritage areas.
- the DES provided \$145k in funding to scope out the 10-point plan into a collaborative plan of action

Resolution

The Board **noted** the Executive Director's report.

3.3. Director's issues

Anne Clarke

 Reported on the Reef and Rainforest program being delivered by the Steiner School in Kuranda. The experiential program focuses on the values of the world heritage areas, will be embedded in the curriculum, and be offered both nationally and internationally across the Steiner portfolio. Djabugay Traditional Owner Barry Hunter has been involved in developing the program.

Phil Rist

 Briefed directors on the Timber Creek (Northern Territory) compensation case and outlined that it changes the game significantly for Traditional Owners across Australia and including in the Wet Tropics

lain Gordon

 Recently published a paper in the Nature Sustainability Journal which draws deeply on learning landscapes and the Wet Tropics as a laboratory for adaptive management in a complex and transitioning system.

John Courtenay

• Has been seeking to facilitate a more cooperative relationship between the Authority and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA), particularly in terms of the positive

benefits of co-promoting tourism in the region.

Dr Leah Talbot

- Attended the Garma Festival in July and found it to be positive and inspiring.
- Is developing science priorities for Indigenous Australians collaboratively with Indigenous Australians in her role at CSIRO. This work aligns with the directions of IP Australia who are co-developing constitutional change.

Resolution

The Board **noted** the Director's Issues.

3.4. Queensland and Commonwealth Department reports James Newman (QPWS&P)

- QPWS&P Indigenous staff developed an Indigenous Employment Strategy which was launched in NAIDOC week. Much positive feedback has been received since its launch.
- the Daintree Plan recently received a government excellence award. It is the first codeveloped strategic plan in Queensland.
- \$2.5m is being allocated to the Madja Boardwalk renewal.
- \$1m is being allocated to review and upgrade visitor car parking and improve aesthetics of the visitor node at Mossman Gorge. QPWS&P will work with the Authority and Douglas Shire Council
- The final report on the 2016-19 Partnership Agreement has been completed. QPWS&P now developing a simplified agreement with the Authority for 2019-2022.
- QPWS&P are negotiating a custody lease with Mandingalbay Yidinji Aboriginal Corporation (MYAC) for East Trinity, which once signed will allow the release of \$1.1m funding from DITID.
- Early discussions are underway with Education Queensland to rejuvenate the junior ranger program in particular in remote Indigenous communities.

Lyn Wallace (DES)

- Riversleigh WHA recently celebrated 25 years since listing.
- A review of the structure and governance of the advisory committees of Queensland world heritage properties is in progress. Revised committees will include more Indigenous representation.
 - K'gari—seeking approval from Minister Enoch to combine the SAC and CCC into one committee, with an option to create subcommittees for specific issues and as required.
 - o Gondwana—progressing slowly. Improving relationships with Traditional Owners is required to enable progress.
 - o Riversleigh WHA no progress to date.

Strategic plans for all properties are being reviewed and updated

Dr Sarah Titchen (DoEE)

- In the 2018–19 Budget, the Australian Government announced the Australian Heritage Grants (AHG) program. The Government is providing \$5.3 million each year until 2022-23 forthe new program which replaces two grants' programs, Protecting National Historic Sites and the National Trust Partnership Program.
- The AHG provides funding to National Heritage List places to strengthen recognition, conservation and preservation of the listed place's values, and to enrich appreciation of the values of listed National Heritage places through improved community engagement. All 116 places currently included in the National Heritage List are eligible to apply for AHG funding
- The 2019-20 funding round will open in late August 2019 and close in the latter part of October. Details and application forms will be available from the Business Grants Hub in late August at: https://www.business.gov.au/assistance/australian-heritage-grants
- further information is available at: https://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/grants-and-funding/australian-heritage-grants

Resolution

The Board **noted** the Queensland Government reports.

3.5 Correspondence report

Date	From / To	Purpose	Action	
Incoming				
25 Jun 2019	Kuranda Envirocare	Response to WTMA letter dated 18 June re: issues regarding 2019 Cassowary Awards	L Shirreffs met with representatives from KurandaEnvirocare to discuss concerns	
28 Jun 2019	CAFNEC	Issues regarding 2019Cassowary Awards	Tim Wong, and then L Shirreffs and S Buchanan metwith CAFNEC CEO and Chair L Shirreffs and S Buchanan met with Stella Martin	
1 Jul 2019	Lisa O'Mara	Issues regarding 2019Cassowary Awards	T Wong discussed content with Lisa	
16 Jul 2019	Nicholas Dametto MP – State Member forHinchinbrook	Request for more information re: climate statement	Responded in writing with information	
Outgoing				
15 Jun 2019	Media outlets	Media release – Announcing Cassowary Award winners		
18 Jun 2019	CAFNEC	Issues regarding 2019Cassowary Awards	None required	
26 Jun 2019	Minister Ken Wyatt – Minister forIndigenous Australians	Congratulations on his appointment and introduction to key Wet Tropics issues	None required	
2 July 2019	Dr Ian Poiner – Chair GBRMPA	Thank you forshared dinnerwith GBRMPAboard and invitation to collaborate infuture	S Buchanan to meet with CEO Josh Thomas	
8 Jul 2019	All 2019 Cassowary Award sponsors	Thank you later,	None required	

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Date	From / To		Purpose	Action
1 Aug 2019	Nicholas Dametto MP – State Member forHinchinbrook		Response to request for data supporting the Authority's statement on climate change	None required
5 Aug 2019	All media outlets		Media release – YCA programupdate in lightof NAMAC taskforce	None required
6 Aug 2019	The Hon Warren EntschMr. Shane Knuth MP Mr. Michael Healy MP Michael Berkman Senator Larissa Waters	Senator James McGrath Mr. Dale Last The Hon CurtisPitt Minister CraigCrawford	Thank you forsupport for Yellow Crazy Ant Eradication Program	None required
8 Aug 2019	Mr. Kenn Parker		Thank you letter for tribute to Margaret Thorsborne in 2019 CassowaryAwards	None required
13 Aug 2019	Mr. Stephen Palethorpe		Extra information re:Senate Inquiry on faunal extinction	None required

Resolution

The Board **noted** the correspondence report.

4. STRATEGIC ISSUES

4.1. Climate focus

Tim Wong briefed the board on the progress of the Wet Tropics Climate Adaptation Plan (CAP). The plan:

- is the result of Dr Sandra Abell's hard work and research and will be approximately 8 pages in length?
- has been informed by the comments, outcomes and directions put forward by participants at the July climate workshop
- will be launched in late October or early November

There was considerable discussion amongst board directors about the July 2019 climate workshop. It was noted that there were some strong views put forward by a diverse group of participants including some useful feedback on the draft CAP principles. This feedback assists in further refining the principles. Participants were enthusiastic and feedback indicated that the workshop was meaningful and worthwhile.

Directors highlighted the need to ensure young people's voices are integral to the climate work so that they can drive the agenda forward. Directors were advised that Authority staff will seek to ensure there is an integrated delivery of actions between the climate and education streams of work.

Ellen Weber briefed directors on her current role to develop an investment prospectus for the 10-point climate plan. She outlined her workplan for the next six months including undertaking a stakeholder analysis and mapping exercise to ensure activities align with and can influence our partners. There is also a proposal in development for funding under the State Government's Land Restoration Fund.

Tim Wong outlined the Authority's progress in implementing the 10-point plan including:

- working with QPWS&P on monitoring mountain-top species and to update planned burn guidelines for the Wet Tropics
- discussing investment in pest management with Sheriden Morris at RRRC
- · continuing the student research grant program
- supporting partners working in threatened species management
- further investigating of the Land Restoration Fund proposal

The chair briefed directors on the results of the survey undertaken by the Australian World Heritage Advisory Committee's (AWHAC) climate change working group. The survey focused on the impacts of climate change on world heritage values across all Australian world heritage properties. The survey found:

- its findings are consistent with the 2017 IUCN Outlook Report
- climate change is a common topic at most properties
- more than half the properties were concerned that climate change would impact on tourism
- some properties are not reporting any climate impacts, however many properties are not actively monitoring
- Shark Bay is the only property to have completed a climate vulnerability assessment.

Resolution

The Board:

- noted progress in finalizing the Wet Tropics Climate Adaptation Plan
- approved the distribution of the Wet Tropics Climate Adaptation Plan to communities of interest for comment prior to final board endorsement and public releases
- noted the project timeline and budget for climate focus activities

Actions

- Send the draft Climate Adaptation Plan for comment to board directors, Commonwealth and State government representatives by 30 August
- Establish a date and venue in consultation with the State and Commonwealth Ministers' offices for the launch of the Climate Adaptation Plan
- Collaborate with Girringun and other ranger groups on how to include practical climate activities in ranger workplans.

4.2. Yellow Crazy Ant Eradication Program – project plan and update on funding agreement

Lucy Karger briefed directors on the status of the Yellow Crazy Ant Eradication Program (YCAEP) outlining that there is now only one third of the infestation area under broadscale treatment and much fewer ants are being seen. Most new infestations are being found along sugar cane train lines or within cane areas. Lucy highlighted that Wes Moller's powerful engagement work with the cane industry has been very positive and has led to the drafting of collaboratively developed machinery movement protocols.

Lucy also advised that the YCAEP:

- has reduced the field team from 16 to 9 staff and will supplement with contractors when required
- will soon engage an odour detection dog and handler to support ant detection
- have sent three staff on exchange to the Christmas Island yellow crazy ant program
- are in discussions with Dawul Wuru Rangers about working with the YCAEP

Directors and observers expressed their congratulations to the YCAEP and outlined how positively the program is viewed both locally and nationally.

Resolution

The Board **noted** the update on the activities and future planning for the Yellow Crazy Ant Eradication Program.

Actions

 Provide a copy of the independent review and recommendations document to board directors.

4.3. 2019-20 Annual Business Plan

Scott Buchanan advised directors that the Annual Business Plan approved at Board Meeting 108 has since had costing allocated and some minor refinements. Annual operating plans (AOP's) for each of the five strategies outlined in the Annual Business Plan have been developed collaboratively and are reviewed regularly at staff 'stand-up' meetings.

Scott detailed current potential risks for some projects including:

- SAC and CCC recruitment—a significant body of work required to complete a review of the terms of reference and operational guidelines and run the process for expressions of interest, in a short period of time
- Wet Tropics Plan review—resource heavy and requires substantial adaptability. Once the new plan is complete there is a significant work in updating related policies and guidelines
- QPWS Partnership Agreement—still in negotiation
- office relocation—will require considerable staff resources

Directors discussed the 2019-20 workload and advised that the Authority must ensure there are contingencies in place to address staff redundancies and frameworks for staff to take leave and manage stress. Scott agreed that staff redundancies are a challenge and outlined that financial resources have been set aside to cover contingencies and to ensure certain pieces of work are completed, including updating the Digital Assets Library and the website.

Resolution

The Board **noted** the updates to the 2019-20 Annual Business Plan.

4.4. 2019-20 Budget and outline of board review timelines for 2020-21 Annual Business Plan and Budget

Scott Buchanan briefed directors on the operational budget and broadly outlined the intended use of each allocation. In 2019-20 the Authority has also signed a \$90k Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Terrain for the provision of secretariat support to the TOLG.

Resolution

The Board endorsed the 2019-20 budget.

5. JOINT BOARD MEETING WITH TERRAIN NRM

Authority Chair, Leslie Shirreffs welcomed all to the second meeting between the boards of the Authority and Terrain NRM. Leslie congratulated Terrain on its connections and meaningful work with the community and outlined some of the successful collaborations of the two organisations.

Terrain Chair, Keith Noble highlighted the shared responsibilities and aspirations of Terrain and the Authority outlining the challenges of ensuring sustainable livelihoods and managing and protecting the region from the impacts of climate change and other threats.

The Authority's Executive Director Scott Buchanan and Terrain NRM's Chief Executive Officer Carole Sweatman generated discussion amongst directors about the future directions, goals and underpinning principles of each organization. Both boards recognise the challenge in responding to impacts beyond their direct control like climate change but agreed that formal collaboration between the two bodies has already brought increased protection of our region's natural and cultural resources and improved broader landscape management outcomes.

The boards reaffirmed their collaborative approach to land restoration and threatened species recovery as well as ensuring a rights-based approach with Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples and enhanced and meaningful participation in land management across the wet tropics. They also committed to continue proactively aligning skills, connections, knowledge and resources to deliver common land management and community objectives. Together, the boards recognize that:

- Terrain NRM and the Authority are in a unique position to ensure meaningful management of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area for the benefit of all
- there is a need to identify and initiate more collaborative projects between Terrain and the Authority
- addressing climate change requires a whole-of-region approach and should start with bringing all voices together, including youth
- there are practical approaches to building climate resilience to which both organisations can contribute by continuing to innovate and develop transformative, out-of-the-box solutions
- Traditional Knowledge and western science need to be better incorporated and interwoven to be at the core of each organisation's work.

Resolution

The Authority and Terrain Boards endorsed the joint communique pending final edits.

Actions

- Finalise joint communique, seek final comments from directors and distribute

6. WET TROPICS PLAN REVIEW / STRATEGIC PLAN

Tim Wong addressed directors and outlined the intent of proposed amendments to the plan, the potential and ongoing risks of proposed amendments and final changes to zoning maps

Tim advised that the Authority has addressed and has a position on every issue raised in every submission.

Eli Taylor briefed directors on the outcomes of the draft *Report on the Wet Tropics Management Plan Phase 2 Public Consultation* and extensively detailed the key issues which were raised in Phase two submissions. Key issues related to:

- the New Wet Tropics Strategic Plan 2020-2030
- an improved zoning system
- enabling appropriate visitor infrastructure
- reducing impacts of community service infrastructure on values of the Area
- amendments to regulation of domestic activities
- recognising Rainforest Aboriginal tradition
- roads in the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area—a simpler system
- undesirable plants and animals
- reconfiguration or subdivision of an allotment

Directors responded by seeking clarification, asking targeted questions and proposed a series of minor suggested changes to the draft *Report on the Wet Tropics Management Plan Phase 2 Public Consultation*.

Tim Wong guided directors through a series of final amendments to the Strategic Plan and directors offered a series of suggestions and minor changes.

Julie Colman and Tim Wong then detailed:

- proposed changes to the regulatory plan including those relating to the reconfiguration of a lot and cooperative management agreements
- the drafting instructions to the Office of the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel (OQPC)
- final changes to zoning maps
- potential risks and strategies to mitigate them
- next steps in the process, including timelines

Resolution

The Board:

- noted the outcomes of the draft Report on the Wet Tropics Management Plan Phase 2 Public Consultation
- approved the public release of a modified version of the draft Phase 2 consultation report including de-identification of submitters, minor typographical edits and some minor changes to the table including 'not agreed' to 'no change made'
- approved the final amendments to the Strategic Plan subject to the Board reviewing changes

to the footnote, and amended wording in Strategic Actions 4.4 (Support increased diversity and quality of natural and cultural tourism opportunities in the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area) and Strategic Action 5.3 (Cooperative Management Agreements)

- approved the table of drafting instructions for Office for Queensland Parliamentary Council (OQPC)
- approved final changes to zoning maps
 - except that in regard to HQ Plantations, retain as zone c and ascertain operating directions (i.e., commence negotiations of a CMA or legal remedy)
- approved the submission of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Plan to Ministerial Council
- noted a number of risks, and strategies to manage risk
- noted the next steps, including timelines, and
- fulsomely **praised** the Executive Director and the entire Planning team for their efforts, extent of community engagement and hard work over the past two years.

7. GENERAL BUSINESS

7.1. Update on the Wet Tropics of Queensland Regional Agreement

Postponed until board meeting 110 due to time constraints.

7.2. Cassowary Awards—2019 review and planning for 2020

Postponed until board meeting 110 due to time constraints.

7.3. Review of CCC and SAC and future composition

The terms of both the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) and the Community Consultative Committee (CCC) will expire at the end of November 2019. In mid-2019 members of each committee were invited to complete a survey to provide feedback on the operation, outcomes and processes of the CCC and SAC. The chairs of the CCC and the SAC briefed directors on their use of the survey results and the draft Strategic Plan to inform their review and amendment of terms of reference, operating guidelines and expressions of interest for each committee.

Directors also discussed the future composition of the committees and agreed that committees need to reflect the diversity of our communities and ensure representation across gender, cultural, youth, industry sectors as well as be aligned to our strategic goals.

Resolution

The Board **noted** the progress in seeking new appointments to the SAC and CCC.

7.4. Future composition of the board

The Board considered a paper about potential future composition of the Board. The Chair, Leslie Shirreffs outlined the changed management landscape of the World Heritage Area, whereby Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples now have a greater say and more formalised roles in management through native title, Aboriginal ranger organisations and Indigenous Protected Area arrangements. Leslie proposed that the board could recommend to Ministers increased appointments of Rainforest Aboriginal persons in non-identified board positions (directors and

Chair) in future, outlining that nominees have appropriate knowledge, skills and experience in world heritage management and governance.

Directors discussed the process and skills required, and the unique needs of a Rainforest Aboriginal chair, for example, in relation to support, commitments, community perceptions and community obligations. Directors also deliberated the appointment of new Aboriginal directors given that the current female director's term finishes in mid-2020, and current male Aboriginal director's term will be completed 18 months later; and the potential for increasing the number of Rainforest Aboriginal People on the board. Previous processes to seek Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples' endorsement of potential Aboriginal directors were also discussed, as well as the legislative process to appoint directors to the Authority's board.

Resolution

The Board **noted** that a process for appointment of Aboriginal directors and the chair needs to be further considered and seek the feedback of the Traditional Owners Leadership Group (TOLG).

Actions

- Chair to write to the Indigenous Advisory Members (IAM) and TOLG seeking their feedback on the concept of an Aboriginal chair and processes for endorsement
- Seek to have the discussion as an agenda item at next TOLG meeting 6 September 2019
- Follow up with a letter to Commonwealth and State ministers outlining feedback and providing advice for consideration

7.5. Approval of Board communique 109

The communique was drafted and finalized.

Resolution

The Board approved the communique for meeting 109.

The meeting closed at 5.05pm

Ms Leslie Shirreff PSM

Lesus Su/

Chair

Date 11/12/2019