
MINUTES
WTMA BOARD MEETING NO. 79: 9 & 10 NOVEMBER 2009

PRESENT:	Dr Alastair Birtles	Director
	Dr Elaine Harding	Director
	Ms Allison Halliday	Director (in attendance 10.30am – 3.00 pm 10 Nov)
	Mr Andrew Maclean	Executive Director
	Mr Peter Ogilvie	QPWS
	Mr Wolf Sievers	QPWS
	Ms Veronica Blazely	DEWHA
	Ms Bryony Barnett	CCC
	Prof. Paul Gadek	SAC
	Assoc Prof Peter Valentine	Observer

WTMA STAFF: Mr Max Chappell
Ms Ellen Weber
Ms Tracy Laird

Agenda Item 2.1 Chairperson's Welcome and Introduction

Director Alastair Birtles opened the meeting at 1.45 pm and welcomed Prof Paul Gadek (Chair SAC).

As there is no Chair of the Authority yet appointed the Directors asked Director Alastair Birtles (Deputy Chair) to preside at the meeting in accordance with Section 28(2) of the Act.

The meeting recognised that the Board is inquorate and that the considerations at the meeting will be subject to approval by a quorum of the Board at a later date.

Agenda Item 2.2 Apologies

Apologies were received from Russell Butler Snr, Director; Alena Constantine (RET); Jeff Gillies (Tourism Queensland)

Agenda Item 2.3 Previous Minutes Meeting No. 78: 10 August 2009

The Chair referred to the minutes of the previous meeting. The following amendments were made.

Associate Professor Peter Valentine
Chair

Dated

Amendments:

76/3.1 Chair's Report – amend to read that Minister Garrett has written to the Hon. Anna Bligh MP.

RESOLUTION:

The Board endorsed the Ordinary Minutes of Board Meeting No. 78, as amended.

Agenda Item 2.4 Actions Arising

The Chair referred to the Actions Arising from the previous meeting and the following comments and amendments were made:

- change 76/3.1 to the Hon Anna Bligh MP and delete reference to the Hon J Macklin MP and Hon Kate Jones MP
- 77/3.5 in progress should be changed to completed. SAC discussed this item with officers from AQIS, Biosecurity QLD and Cairns Regional Council at their 5 November meeting
- 78/4.3 in progress. The Board noted that background scoping work and research was required prior to consideration at a future Board meeting;
- 78/6.2 Change instructed to requested.

RESOLUTION:

The Board noted the status of Actions Arising from previous Board Resolutions, as updated.

Agenda Item 3.1 Chair's Report

Dr Birtles gave a verbal report to the Board on the following matters:

- update on the Australian World Heritage Advisory Committee and advised there had been a meeting at Uluru on 3rd and 4th September
- advised that he had been appointed Acting Deputy Chair of AWHAC for four months to September and had been elected to the full position at the last Meeting subject, to approval by the EPHC
- he had met with DEWHA AWHAC Secretariat Staff for a day in Sydney on 29th October with the Chair of AWHAC and they had subsequently met with Minister Garrett on 30th and had a very open and useful interaction
- during the course of this meeting, the issue of WHA Property funding had been raised and the Minister foreshadowed forward funding of WTMA for the current FY and a further three years. This was publicly announced at the Cassowary Awards by Senator Jan McLucas

Associate Professor Peter Valentine
Chair

Dated

- the AWHAC Chair and Dr Birtles had strongly represented AHWIN's needs for a source of predictable funding
- advised that he had chaired the TILG on 1 October
- advised that he officially opened the Cassowary Summit on 8 September and the Cassowary Expert Workshop on the 9 September
- congratulated the Authority and staff on the organisation of the Cassowary Summit and noted it was a positive community engagement occasion; and
- congratulated the Authority and staff on the success of the Cassowary Awards on 7 November.

RESOLUTION:

The Board noted Dr Birtles' report.

Agenda Item 3.2 Executive Director's Report

The Authority's Executive Director, Andrew Maclean, presented his report, as tabled and provided further updates as follows:

- WTMA, Terrain NRM and CSIRO staff met to debrief on the unsuccessful large scale Caring for Country bid. Although the new CFOC plan has not been released, the Authority is considering options for future bids. The Authority will use the SAC to assist in identifying priority values and threats in the bioregion. The CCC has also indicated its interested in being involved in the development of future bids
- CSLG has requested that we monitor the Sustainable Planning Act in relation to developments adjacent to the World Heritage area
- the Authority has received a report from John Courtney regarding Tourism Accreditation and the Authority has had discussions with the industry and the QPWS. There is widespread support for some sort of WHA accreditation system
- progress is continuing in relation to the abolition of the Wet Tropics Ministerial Council
- advised the Board of the completion of the World Heritage inter-governmental agreement
- the ED thanked the Authority's staff and Directors for their assistance on Saturday night at the Cassowary Awards. The Authority is reviewing the event in its current format to determine options for future years which maintains the strong community attendance and also reflects government standards on costs to tax payers. This may result in a more modest event

Associate Professor Peter Valentine
Chair

Dated

- the ED advised the Board that Minister Jones has responded to the Authority's letter that was written after the last board meeting advising of the Board's concerns on a number of issues. A copy of the letter was tabled
- advised that the recruitment process is underway for an identified AO4 position to work primarily on the implementation of the Kuku Yalanji ILUA. The Project Officer position will be for a duration of approximately 12 months
- the ED advised that Craig Bingham will be off work for some time on sick leave and interim arrangements will need to be made for the Board secretariat role. Alastair Birtles asked that the Executive Director pass on the Board's best wishes for his speedy recovery.

As part of the Executive Director's report, Andrew Maclean asked Peter Ogilvie to give the board a briefing on the World Heritage Inter-Governmental Agreement that has been signed recently. Peter advised that the new agreement clarifies the shared responsibilities of the Commonwealth and States but will not have an immediate impact on management of individual properties. He also advised that, separately to the intergovernmental agreement, the Commonwealth is seeking information on the function and value of World Heritage property advisory committees.

Peter Ogilvie advised the Board that the Queensland Government is developing a uniform standard for badging of World Heritage properties.

Veronica Blazely stated that the Commonwealth was reviewing the national eco-tourism accreditation framework and encouraged to Authority to develop any Wet Tropics tourism accreditation in line with this project.

RESOLUTION:

The Board noted the Executive Director's report.

Agenda Item 3.3 Community Consultative Committee

The Chair of the CCC, Bryony Barnett, briefed the Board on the committee's tabled report. The following points of interest were made:

- the CCC had a strong interest in the accreditation program and hope to have more discussion about this at future meetings. Bryony requested a copy of the report that was delivered to the Authority
- Caring for our Country – members of the CCC had expressed the view that they hadn't had enough opportunity to be involved in the Caring for our Country proposal
- a number of CCC members attended the Cassowary Summit and thoroughly enjoyed the event.

Associate Professor Peter Valentine
Chair

Dated

RESOLUTION:

The Board:

- *noted the CCC minutes for 30 October 2009;*
- *notes the CCC comments about the WTMA response to its roads paper;*
- *welcomes the CCC's views on the importance of maintaining Commonwealth Government involvement in management of the WTQWHA; and*
- *endorsed Martin Cohen and Moni Carlisle as new CCC members.*

The Board thanked Bryony Barnett for her report.

Agenda Item 3.4 Rainforest Aboriginal Advisory Committee

Nigel Hedgcock addressed the Board on the RAAC recommendations, as tabled.

Nigel Hedgcock advised the Board that the the RAAC is seeking clearer guidance regarding way the Board handles the term 'noted'.

Dr Elaine Harding commented that she didn't wish to revisit and reword past RAAC resolutions.

The Executive Director commented that he was sympathetic to their request and the Authority needs to indicate a more complete position than it has sometimes in the past and that he suggested the Board needed to convey their intentions more clearly where possible.

Nigel Hedgcock then asked Allison Halliday to address the Board and she made the following comments:

- gave apologies for Troy Wyles-Wheelan who could not make the Board Meeting
- as a Board we need to clearly communicate to the RAAC the process of appointing Aboriginal Directors.

RESOLUTION:

The Board:

- *noted that the RAAC met on 26-27 October 2009 (Attachment 3.4(1))*
- *agrees to provide more detailed responses to RAAC resolutions including a clear position of the Board where appropriate*

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Chair

Dated

- *endorsed the Authority to provide the RAAC with feedback on the July resolutions 3, 5, 6 and 7 consistent with Board 79 paper 3.4*
- *endorsed WTMA to action Resolution 2 in accordance with the RAAC requests and within available WTMA resources*
- *noted and thanked the RAAC for the information provided in Resolution 3*
- *considered Resolution 4 in the context of the strategic discussion under agenda item 4.2*
- *noted the intent of Resolution 5 and requests the Executive Director takes steps to ensure appropriate consultation with Rainforest Aboriginal People in the selection of new directors and clarify the Government processes that pertain now and post abolition of the Wet Tropics Ministerial Council, and*
- *noted and thanked the RAAC for the information provided in Resolution 6, and thanked Margaret Freeman for her significant contribution on RAAC and as the Wet Tropics Member of AHWIN and for her role on AHWAC and wished her well with her future, and requested that RAAC provide advice to the board on who should be the two DEWHA funded Wet Tropics World Heritage Area members on AHWIN.*

Agenda Item 3.5 Scientific Advisory Committee

The Chair of the Scientific Advisory Committee Prof. Paul Gadek addressed the Board. He advised that the following agenda items were discussed at the SAC meeting on 5 November;

- a plant post-quarantine facility and nursery at Wyanbeel, which may impact on the values of the adjacent WHA
- the Wet Tropics Management Plan Review
- report back from the Wet Tropics Indigenous research directions workshop
- review of Research and Information Needs report and the development of a Research Implementation Strategy that provides direction to the Authority about priorities; and
- Cassowary Summit and communiqué.

RESOLUTION:

That the Board:

Associate Professor Peter Valentine
Chair

Dated

- *noted the verbal summary of the minutes of the SAC minutes from 5 November 2009*
- *thanked the SAC for their report on the plant nursery at Wyanbeel; and*
- *noted the report from SAC reinforces the Board's previously expressed concern over the threats to World Heritage values posed by exotic species and requested that the Authority and SAC liaise on the issue with relevant agencies and provide a progress report update at their next meeting.*

The Board reiterated its grave concerns about the risks created by the plant nursery and acknowledged the efforts of AQIS, Biosecurity QLD and the Cairns Regional Council in managing the spread of weeds into the adjacent WHA and catchment. The Board agreed that community education is an important component of the weed eradication program.

The Board thanked Prof. Paul Gadek for his report.

Agenda Item 4.1 2009-10 Project Status Report and Work Plan Progress Report

Andrew Maclean addressed the meeting and briefed the Board on the Project Status Report and Work Plan Progress Report. He advised that the Authority was underspent mainly due to the slow implementation of the Kuku Yalanji project but was largely on track in other respects.

Director Alastair Birtles commented that the Authority needed a clearer way of tracking funding, and encouraged the development of a financial reporting system to facilitate this. It would be useful for the Board to have a report that identifies project targets such as a future investment report or strategy.

RESOLUTION:

That the Board:

- *congratulated the Authority staff on the detailed analysis of the Project Status Report presented*
- *noted the 2009-10 Project Status Report, as at 30 September 2009 (Attachment 4.1(1) and (2)); and*
- *noted the 2009-10 Work Plan Progress Report, as at 30 September 2009 (Attachment 4.1(3)).*

Associate Professor Peter Valentine
Chair

Dated

Agenda Item 4.2 Board Strategic Planning Discussion

Andrew Maclean addressed the Board and provided an update on the Board Strategic Planning. The Board discussed the document provided and the the following comments were made:

- Director Alastair Birtles welcomed the Project Leaders to the board meeting
- Director Alastair Birtles suggested the Authority develop a planning workshop or retreat to be held sometime between now and the next Board Meeting, most preferably in February 2010
- it would be of some value to invite some influential stakeholders or partners to the workshop
- one of the key initiatives that came out of the recent SAC meeting was to develop an international research and learning hub.

RESOLUTION:

That the Board:

- ***requests the executive director to arrange a planning workshop in early 2010 that should include senior staff, Board Directors, Chairs of the Advisory Committees and strategic partners.***

Agenda Item 4.3 QPWS/WTMA Partnership Agreement

Andrew Maclean addressed the Board on the QPWS/WTMA Partnership Agreement. The following comments were made:

- the thinking behind the QPWS/WTMA Partnership Agreement is that the Authority doesn't need to instruct QPWS on matters of operational detail
- Wolf Sievers has been invited to attend the Authority's Project Leaders meetings
- Wolf Sievers has provided the Executive Director a copy of the QPWS 09/10 Business Plan
- Director Alastair Birtles suggested having a trial joint meeting between the Tourism Industry Forum and TILG as a means of strengthening the partnership between WTMA and QPWS in relation to the tourism industry.

Director Alastair Birtles further suggested that given DEWHA interest in reducing Advisory Committees, he hoped that it has been conveyed that the Cassowary Advisory Group has now been subsumed into the Cassowary Recovery Team.

Associate Professor Peter Valentine
Chair

Dated

RESOLUTION::

- *That the Board warmly welcomes that WTMA and QPWS have completed a partnership agreement for 2009/10 and considers this to be a significant document outlining the nature and direction of our most important partnership.*

Agenda Item 5.1 Road Access within the Wet Tropics WHA – CCC Discussion Paper

Max Chappell addressed the Board and advised of developments in road management since completion of the CCC report.

RESOLUTION:

The Board:

- *noted that following representations by the Authority, the Cairns Regional Council has accepted management and maintenance responsibility for the CREB track and will manage future seasonal closures*
- *noted that the Authority has reached agreement with Townsville City Council and QPWS about the future management of Benhams Track in a way that will address most of the concerns of the Paluma community (subject to approval of the amended Wet Tropics Management Plan)*
- *noted that the Authority has scheduled a meeting with QPWS, Cassowary Coast Regional Council and Tablelands Regional Council regarding the Kirrama Range Road and Culpa Road with the objective of clarifying and aligning responsibilities and discussing options for future management of these roads notes with pleasure the CCC representatives will be invited to attend the field trip and requests a report on the outcome of this meeting; and*
- *commends the CCC for its lead in bringing this important issue to the attention of the Authority and hopes that the CCC will share the Board's enthusiasm for the positive outcomes outlined above and looks forward to further developments.*

Associate Professor Peter Valentine
Chair

Dated

Agenda Item 5.2 Cassowary Summit Report

Ellen Weber and Elaine Harding addressed the Board and updated the Board on the Cassowary Summit Report and made the following points:

- the cassowary summit was held on 8 September and was a very successful day
- there was a lot of media which generated news stories throughout Queensland as well as PNG
- an Expert Workshop was held with about 25 people attending on 9 September including some SAC representatives and Directors Elaine Harding and Alastair Birtles
- due to time constraints the workshop focussed on key questions including “what do we need to monitor in order to know if cassowaries are recovering?”
- the communiqué developed from that day was discussed at the 5 November SAC meeting. The SAC endorsed the document noting that monitoring cassowary populations was only part of the issue and that they did not consider it necessary to hold another cassowary summit in 6 months time; and
- the next meeting of the Cassowary Recovery Team is set for 11 December.

Wolf Sievers advised the Board that he had received an invitation from the Australian Rainforest Foundation seeking QPWS representation on their International Cassowary Recovery Taskforce. Andrew Maclean observed that the Authority had not received an invitation but the ARF has been invited to participate in the Cassowary Recovery Team.

RESOLUTION:

The Board:

- *noted the Authority hosted a Cassowary Summit on 8 September 2009*
- *congratulated the Authority and everyone involved in organising the Cassowary Summit and workshop*
- *noted the Authority facilitated an expert workshop on 9 September 2009; and*
- *noted the communiqué and referred it to the Cassowary recovery team for discussion at their next meeting.*

Agenda Item 5.3 Policy Review Land Acquisition

Bruce Jennison addressed the Board and updated the Board on the Policy Review Land Acquisition.

Associate Professor Peter Valentine
Chair

Dated

RESOLUTION:

The Board endorses the revised Internal Operational Guideline No. 1 Voluntary Land Acquisition and Cooperate Management Agreement, Criteria for Determining Priorities.

Agenda Item 6.1 Tourism Industry Liaison Group

Director Alastair Birtles addressed the Board and advised that the minutes of the last meeting would be circulated shortly. He apologised for having been unable to endorse the draft TILG minutes in time for inclusion with the Board agenda because of his absence on Special Study Leave in Canada throughout October and requested that in future WTMA provide him with timely reminders of the need to do so.

RESOLUTION:

The Board noted the views expressed by the TILG about WTMA's role in ecotourism accreditation and Indigenous tourism.

Agenda Item 6.2 Conservation Sector Liaison Group

Andrew Maclean presented the report for the CSLG, as tabled.

RESOLUTION:

The Board:

- *noted the CSLG minutes of 26 July 2009*
- *noted the CSLG views on the importance of maintaining Commonwealth Government involvement in management of the WTQWHA; and*
- *noted the CSLG request that the Board be kept informed about any impacts on the WTQWHA from the new Sustainable Planning Act and the draft Coastal Plan.*

Agenda Item 7.1 Future Meeting Dates

The Board discussed the 2010 calendar for Board Meetings, as follows:

Associate Professor Peter Valentine
Chair

Dated

Scheduled Dates	Location	Category
1-2 March 2010	Cairns	General
10-11 May 2010	Cairns	General
9-10 Aug 2010	Townsville	General
8-9 Nov 2010	Cairns	General

CONSIDERATION:

That the Board:

- ***approved the proposed dates for the meetings to be held in 2010 with the exception of the March meeting with the dates now being 15-16 March; and***
- ***that the Authority develop a 1 1/2 day workshop to be held in mid-February off site.***

The meeting closed at 3.15 pm.

Associate Professor Peter Valentine
Chair

Dated

