

Department of Conservation and Land Management

**ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE FOR RANGELANDS
COORDINATION AND MANAGEMENT AND
TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE RANGELANDS
POLICY GROUP**

**PREPARED FOR
THE RANGELANDS POLICY GROUP MEETING
(November 2003)**

**Nigel Sercombe
Acting Rangelands Conservation Management Officer
Summary**

Background

In December 2002, Ian Kealley, then acting in the role of the Rangelands NRM Technical Working Group Coordinator, was requested by the A/Director of Nature Conservation to 'review and report on NRM implications and internal structures to provide advice to the Director of Nature Conservation and Executive Director regarding;

1. A strategic approach to the Department's involvement in rangelands NRM management and planning processes.
2. The coordination of the Department's involvement in rangelands NRM issues, including the possible employment of a Departmental coordinator to steer the Departments involvement, including duties, functions, staff requirements etc. for such a position.'

The process of discussion and consultation in the development of the report brought together a group of managers and other staff with interest/expertise in rangelands management and led to the inclusion, as an appendix to the report, Terms of Reference for the formal establishment of a Rangelands Policy Group (RPG). The RPG, though not formally endorsed by the Corporate Executive, has the support of the Executive Director and Directors of Nature Conservation and Regional Services (see memo at attachment 1) and has been functioning to support rangelands strategic direction and policy development.

The December 2002 report offered 5 recommendations and a proposed rangelands management and coordination structure as follows:

That the Directors of Nature Conservation and Regional Services and the Corporate Executive:

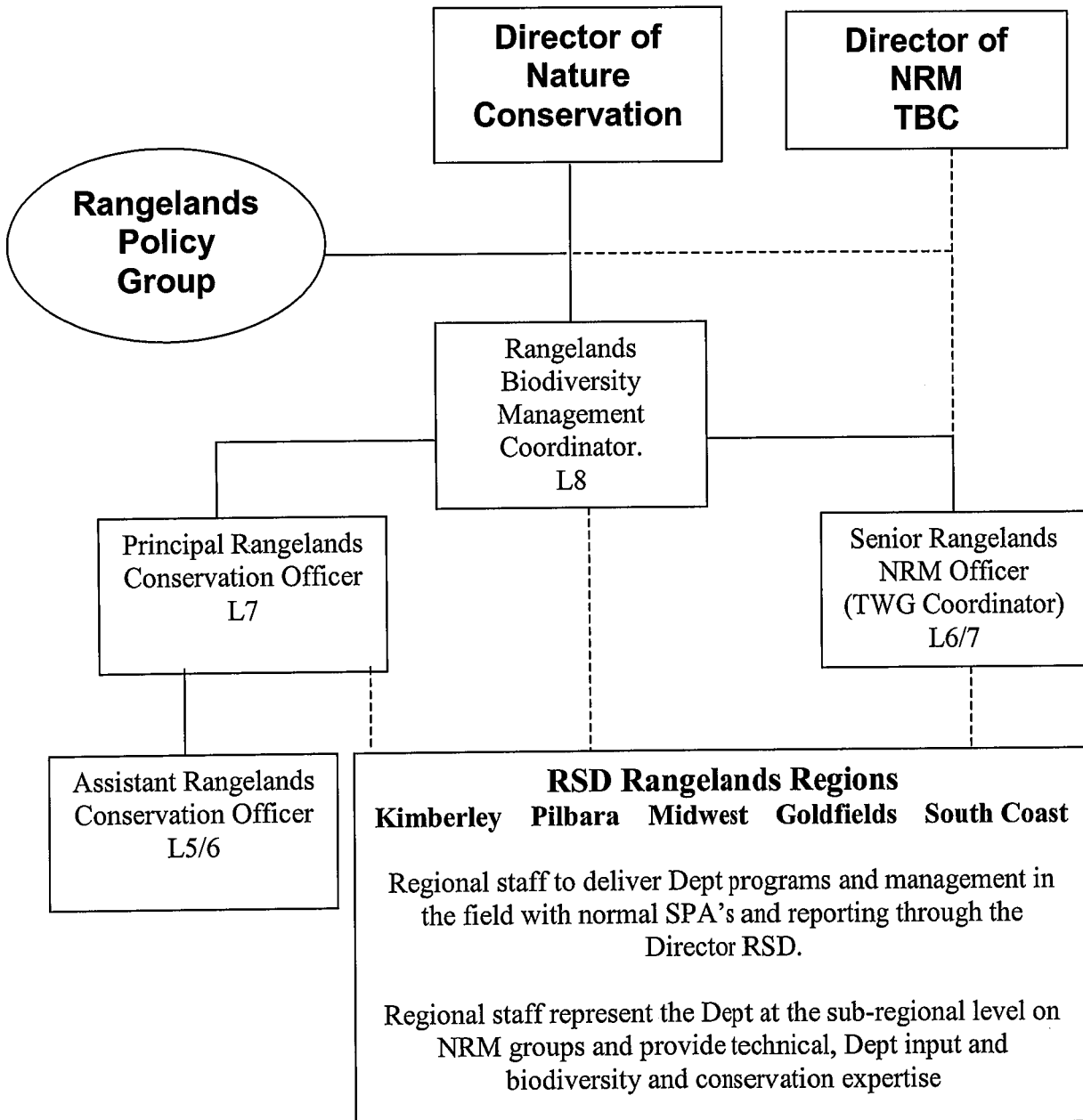
1. Endorse the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the RPG and operation of the RPG within the agreed framework
2. Endorse the recommended structure and positions for the Departmental rangelands coordination and management (structure diagram at figure 1)
3. Approve the creation of the 4 rangelands coordination positions for immediate filling by approved and agreed methods (permanent through advertising, contract, secondment) compatible with Departmental restructuring and staffing needs.
4. Allocate a dedicated budget to support the coordinating positions compatible with Departmental restructuring needs and budget considerations.
5. Support the creation and filling of the agreed positions, being;
 - Approvals, finalise JDF and PEQ's and advertise - Mid/end Dec 2002
 - Selection process Jan/Feb 2003
 - Positions commence Feb/Mar 2003

These recommendations have been given effect to varying degrees. The A/Director of Nature Conservation has resourced and filled, via expressions of interest (EOI) processes, three rangelands positions. The organisational

structure (Figure 2) supporting these positions represents a modification of that recommended in the December 2002 report.

Figure 1

RECOMMENDED STRUCTURE DIAGRAM
(Taken from December 2002 report)



At the August 2003 meeting of the RPG it was identified that in the context of the December 2002 report and the establishment of the rangelands positions there is a need to;

1. Clarify the organisational/structural context in which the rangelands positions now operate.
2. Review and seek formal endorsement of the Director of Nature Conservation, Executive Director and Corporate Executive for the TOR and establishment of the RPG.

This paper outlines the current rangelands coordination and management arrangements, raises for discussion issues to do with the functional effectiveness of the current arrangements and provides basis for discussion for a review of the TOR forwarded as an attachment to the December 2002 report.

1. Current Rangelands Management and Coordination Arrangements (As at October 2003)

In correspondence dated 1 May 2003 the A/Director of Nature Conservation indicated his support for the rangelands positions proposed in the Dec 2002 report, however he was unable to identify sufficient funds for all the positions proposed. Resources were made available for the appointment of two new positions, additional to the existing position dealing with pastoral lease negotiations, the role performed by Tony Brandis.

Consequently three positions, amalgams of the positions proposed in the December 2002 report, were advertised via Expression of Interest:

- **Coordinator, Pastoral Lease Negotiations (L8)**
Responsible for coordinating and leading the process of negotiations with lessees regarding lands identified for exclusion for conservation in 2015, and policy development for rangelands conservation.
- **Rangelands Conservation Management Officer (L6, 7 or 8)**
Responsible for facilitating coordination of management across regions of areas acquired from pastoral leases, and for providing Departmental input into the Rangelands NRM Regional Strategy as Rangelands NRM Region Technical Working Group Coordinator.
- **Assistant Rangelands Conservation Officer (L4 or 5)**
Provide assistance to the above position and to regional staff in terms of management of acquired areas, executive officer to the RPG and technical assistance to the Rangelands NRM Coordinating Group.

As an outcome of the EOI processes Tony Brandis was appointed A/Coordinator, Pastoral Lease Negotiations for a term of six months, Nigel Sercombe was appointed A/Rangelands Conservation Management Officer (A/RCMO) for a term of six months and John Carter was appointed A/Assistant RCMO for an initial term of 3 months with a view to effecting a permanent appointment to the position by transfer or advertisement after the

initial 3 months. It is understood that JDF's for these positions have not been amended/developed in the context of the modified structure.

The organisational structure and reporting relationships for the positions is represented in figure 2 below.

That the Department needed to review and increase its capacity to service and coordinate rangelands activities is unequivocal. The December 2002 report, the Nature Conservation Output: Internal Review of Regional Services (March 2003), [Recommendation 24], and the recent appointments clearly demonstrates that the need was well recognised.

However it is the firm view of the A/Director of Nature Conservation, in the context of the evolving rangelands management environment, particularly with respect to NRM/NHT processes, that the temporary/interim arrangements of the current structure are appropriate. It is his intention that these arrangements will remain in place for a two-year period unless circumstances warrant some alternative arrangement. Over the two-year period the requirements for rangelands coordination and management will be assessed with a view to addressing the resource and structure requirements for the long-term.

In this context, it is essential to ensure that the functional working arrangements between the staff in the rangelands strategic/policy area are clear and directed at delivering effective management and coordination for that two-year period. In addition issues of integration across the range of CALM 'players' involved in the rangelands need to be addressed.

It is 'early days' in terms of the time that these current arrangements have been in place and it is reasonable to expect that some of this will 'settle out' over the next six months or so. These issues are not discussed in detail here. Nonetheless, it is suggested that the Departments strategic capacity in the as a leader in rangelands management will not be realised unless the issues of coordination, and integration are resolved.

A resolution from the November 2003 meeting of the RPG will be sought towards an agreed approach for consideration of these issues:

- Structure and reporting relationships
- Role confusion
- Integration issues
- Long-term strategic direction
- People issues (arising out the above, temporary appointment, uncertainty etc)

Figure 2

Current Organisational Structure for Rangelands Coordination and Management (At October 2003)

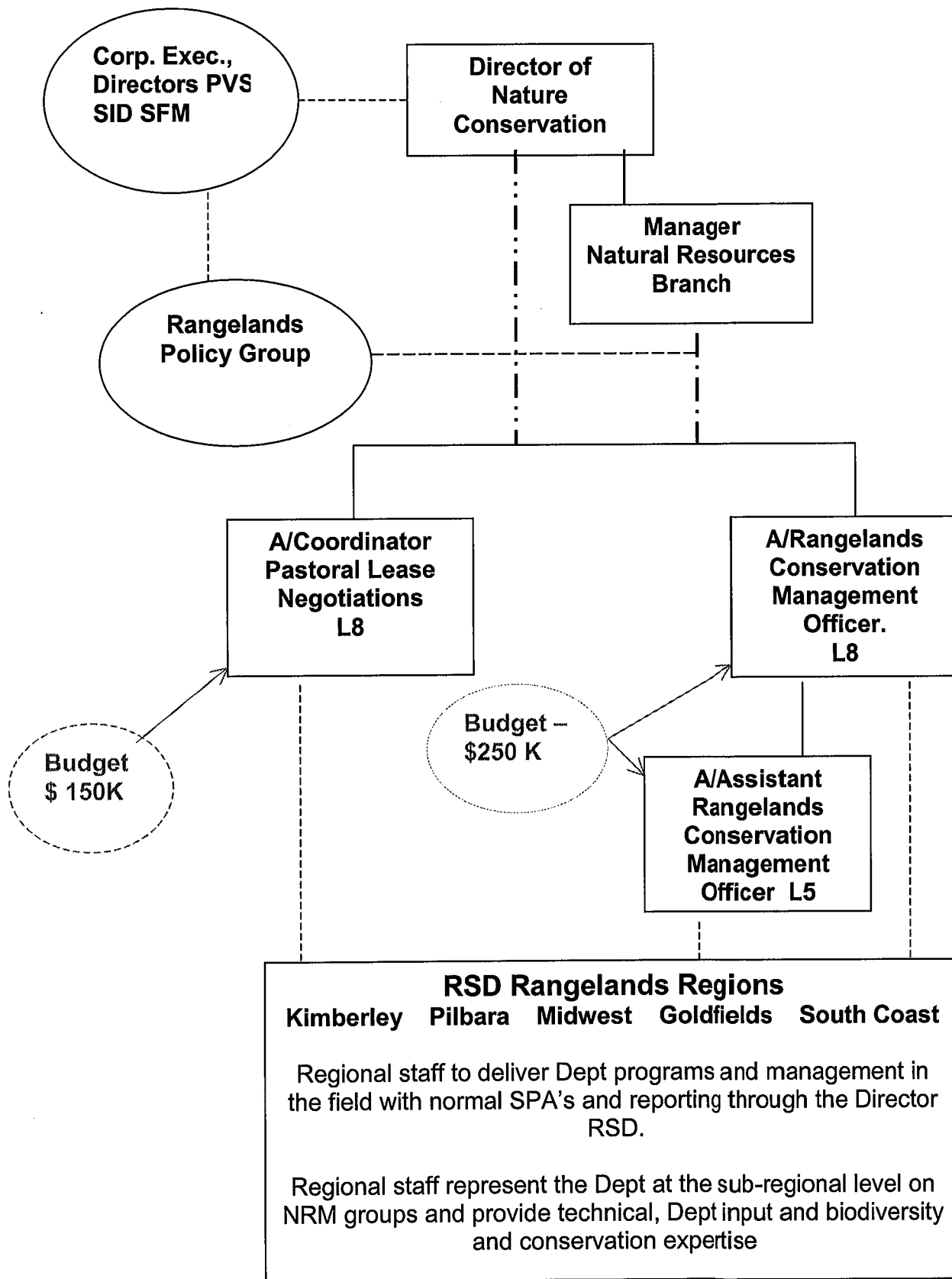


Figure 2 Key

Normal line management relationship

Functional accountability/reporting relationship

Administrative management relationship
(leave approvals, travel claims etc)

Communication/advice relationship

2. A Review of the Rangelands Policy Group - Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference for the RPG at Attachment 3 were presented as an attachment to the December 2002 report. The following outlines a number of key issues for discussion by the RPG in the context of the current rangelands management and coordination arrangements and in consideration of the resolution to provide a reviewed TOR for endorsement by the Director of Nature Conservation and the Corporate Executive.

i) The rationale for the establishment of the RPG

The rationale for the establishment of the RPG outlined in the December 2002 draft centres on:

- a) The significant increase in estate managed by CALM in the rangelands, particularly in the Murchison/Gascoyne as a consequence of acquisitions over the past 5 years or so.
- b) The significant public interest in the Departments activities on and management of former pastoral leases purchased for conservation purposes and other conservation reserves in the rangelands.
- c) The need for an integrated approach to policy development and operational activities and management across the rangelands regions to meet the changing and increasing demands in the rangelands.
- d) State/Commonwealth NRM/NHT processes and the need for CALM input and leadership in the development of an NRM strategy for the rangelands.

These issues are as relevant now as they were in December 2002. The rationale for a reviewed TOR to be presented for corporate endorsement should reflect the same issues and requires little change.

ii) The purpose of the RPG

The December 2002 TOR indicated the primary purpose of the RPG as being the provision of *'strategic policy advice to the Director of Nature Conservation*

on priority rangeland issues'. It is suggested that the provision of policy advice only to the nature conservation directorate may well be too narrow a focus.

agree

The policy and management issues evolving in the rangelands are not confined only to those of interest to the nature conservation directorate. This is reflected in the report by Wayne Schmidt, 'PVS Opportunities in the Rangelands: A Brief Report on the May 2003 Visit to the Northern Goldfields' (20 June 2003). The purpose of the RPG warrants review in the context of the scope of issues that require now or will require in the future, integrated all-of-rangelands approaches to management, planning, policy consideration, standardised operational practices etc. and where these issues best fit in the Department's divisional structure.

Should the RPG resolve, as an outcome of a review of the purpose of the RPG, to include a policy advisory role to multiple directors it will be important to ensure the reporting/line relationships for the policy group are clear. Given that under present arrangements rangeland strategic and policy roles are functionally operating within the nature conservation directorate it makes sense that the immediate reporting relationship for the policy group remain under the Director of Nature Conservation with a communication relationship with the Corporate Executive and other key Directors.

support

The RPG might also consider an expansion of its purpose to include a 'reference group' function the RCMO and CPLN roles.

✓

A redrafted RPG purpose statement is outlined below for consideration of the RPG.

RPG Purpose Statement

The Rangelands Policy Group will function under the Director of Nature Conservation to:

- Provide strategic policy advice to the Executive Director, Director of Nature Conservation, Director of Parks and Visitor Services and Director of Regional Services on priority rangeland issues.
- Serve as a 'reference group' to the RCMO and Coordinator Pastoral Lease Negotiations (CPLN) positions.
- Draw on the expertise of a range of agency personnel in assessing and evaluating a range of management issues requiring policy development.

iii) Terms of Reference for the RPG

It is obvious that the TOR for the RPG will need to be consistent with the purpose statement. The review of the TOR will be undertaken 'in-session' at the November 2003 meeting of the RPG following resolution in respect to the purpose statement

✓

iv) Membership

The current membership of the RPG was confirmed at meeting 3 of the RPG as follows:

Nigel Sercombe - RCMO (RPG Chair). TWG Coordinator
John Carter - Assist. RCMO (Executive Support to RPG)
Tony Brandis - CPLN, CALM Rep - RNRMCG and Rangelands TWG ✓
Angus Hopkins - Science and Policy
Keith Claymore - Policy, NRM and Corporate
Kelly Gillen - Mid-West Region
Chris Done - Kimberley Region
Ian Kealley - Goldfields Region
Chris Muller - Pilbara Region
Klaus Tiedemann - South Coast Region (Rangelands component)
Ken Wallace - Manager Natural Resources Branch

A number of key issues warrant consideration by the RPG in the context of a review of the TOR:

- Group size - It has been suggested that the group may be too large to be effective.
- Geographic focus – The rangelands estate acquired over the recent years is predominantly an outcome of the implementation of the Gascoyne Murchison Strategy. This is consequently where the predominant demand is in regard to policy development, support etc. Should the membership of the group reflect primarily a focus on the regions that overlap with the GMS boundary?
- Capacity to commit/participate – An effective RPG will require meaningful commitment and participation by its membership. It is fundamental to the capacity of the group to deliver on its TOR that members give priority to RPG business, providing timely and meaningful comment on papers/policy, attendance at meetings and contribution to discussion. Formal nomination to membership by the relevant director may warrant consideration to affirm support, recognition and commitment to the work of the RPG.

*substantial membership issues in other regions too - g
resourcing barrier*

v) Meeting Frequency

It is suggested that a minimum of 3 face-to-face meetings per year are required with telephone 'hook-up' meetings in between as required.

vi) Cost Issues

It is estimated that the overall cost of face-to-face meetings in Perth is \$12,000, notwithstanding that the cost is spread over other business that members might do over a trip to Perth.

RANGELANDS POLICY GROUP

TERMS OF REFERENCE

RATIONALE

The rapid development of the Rangelands conservation reserve acquisition project, as part of the Government supported Gascoyne – Murchison Rangeland Strategy in particular, has resulted in the need for a strategic level coordinated and integrated approach to policy development and operational activities across Departmental Rangeland regions. There has also been a concomitant rise in interest in the Departments activities and management on these lands requiring a strategic approach to the communications and dissemination of information about our conservation and land management policies.

Further, with the emerging emphasis by the Commonwealth/State for Natural Resource Management investment delivered through regional structures to support the National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality and the Natural Heritage Trust, there is an urgent requirement for facilitation of Departmental input into the development and implementation of regional and sub-regional natural resource management strategies and plans.

The need to develop a high level Rangelands strategic policy development group is the result of a clear need to implement a common strategy and provide information about management direction and activities, including definitive policy statements related to a range of issues in Rangelands conservation.

There is a need to provide clear policy direction, coordination and planning in relation to changes in the demands of managing a greatly enlarged conservation estate. As new information is acquired or management pressures change so there is a need to ensure that management practices in all areas reflect these changes. The translation of management directions into on-ground actions in the various regions requires sound statements of what is required and the adherence to a common set of principles. The provision of a clear set of operational specifications and standards is also necessary.

Purpose

The Rangelands Policy Group will provide strategic policy advice to the Director of Nature Conservation on priority rangeland issues.

The group will draw on the expertise of a range of agency personnel in assessing and evaluating a range of management issues requiring policy development.

*f. mark
as per
discussion
paper*

TERMS OF REFERENCE

For the Rangelands;

1. Identify strategic rangeland biodiversity management issues requiring policy development or resources;
2. Prepare draft policy statements on key issues to achieve cross-regional effectiveness and efficiency, and maximise biodiversity conservation outcomes
3. Clarify the role of the agency in planning for joint conservation management arrangements or agreements;
4. Provide adaptive management principles, specifications and standards aimed at achieving best management practices;
5. Ensure that appropriate monitoring of outcomes takes place which addresses the need for accountability;
6. Establish the basis of and regularly review the implementation of a consistent approach to management across the full range of policy areas, and
7. As necessary provide reports and recommendations in relation to the above terms of reference.

MEMBERSHIP

Ian Kealley. Temp NRM TWG coordinator and in the longer term Goldfields Region
Tony Brandis. Nature Conservation and Reserve Acquisition Project
Angela Hopkins. Science and Policy
Keith Claymore. Policy, NRM and Corporate
Kelly Gillian. Mid-West Region
Chris Done. Kimberley Region
Brad Barton. Goldfields Region (interim role)
Chris Muller. Pilbara Region
Klaus Tiedemann. South Coast Region (Rangelands component)

Other expertise as required on a needs basis (eg marine and coastal)