



# AusSeabed Steering Committee Terms of Reference

Version	Last Meet	Author	Action
2.0	20180731	Ralph Talbot-Smith et al.	DRAFT
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## Background

The AusSeabed Steering Committee (the Committee) has been established to provide an effective representative governing body of the AusSeabed program (<http://www.ausseabed.gov.au>). Amendments to the Steering Committee Terms of Reference (TOR) can be brought forward for voting at the Annual General Meeting that will accompany the AusSeabed partnership workshop held alongside the AMSA conference each year.

## Purpose

The role of the Committee is to provide strategic direction and leadership to guide AusSeabed to best achieve the vision for national bathymetric data to 'collect once, use many times'. The Committee will work to promote AusSeabed across all seabed mapping sectors and data users as well as encourage sharing of technical knowledge, data and resources.

## Goals

The Steering Committee will support, promote and look for new opportunities to advance the key goals of AusSeabed (<http://www.ausseabed.gov.au/about>).

## Membership

The Committee membership will be assigned to the workplace, not the person. Membership will consist of an equal and fair representation of the various sectors (e.g. government; university; industry) that participate in the AusSeabed initiative.

The Committee will also include three Standing Members, one each from the Australian Hydrographic Office, the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation/Marine National Facility and Geoscience Australia to reflect the major levels of resourcing and national perspectives these organisations bring to AusSeabed.

To enable the Committee to function efficiently while maintaining effective representation it is recommended that it should comprise approximately 12 members.

When required, nominations for new members will be sought through a call for nominations via the AusSeabed representatives' mailing list and on the AusSeabed website 2-months prior to the Annual General Meeting (AGM, normally held to coincide with the Australian Marine Science Association conference in early July). The Chair, Vice-chair and Secretary may be nominated from the existing Committee members.

Election of the Committee members will be done by the AusSeabed working group via closed online voting 1-month prior to the AGM with 1 vote per entity for each sector. New members will be



appointed by the standing Chair 2-weeks prior to the AGM. Appointment will be done following the majority of the votes, and equal and fair representation rule and established by the Committee.

To ensure continuity in the Committee, the Vice-chair will be appointed by the new Chair at the end of the Chair's term (a period of one year). Appointment of the Committee Vice-chair and Secretary will be done by the new Committee membership via closed online voting 2-weeks prior to the AGM. Appointment will be announced at the AGM by the Chair.

Membership in the Committee will be for a maximum period of 2 years. At the end of this term, members can renominate for continued service.

Members of the Committee may withdraw from service at any time and must notify the Committee Chair as soon as possible.

In the event that a member of the Committee cannot attend a meeting, a proxy representative may be nominated. If the committee member cannot provide a substitute member to represent the organisation then the Chair may appoint a substitute member. Members may also invite observers to meetings or guests to present relevant information to the committee with the approval of the Chair.

## **Roles and Responsibilities of Steering Committee Members**

- Hold as their primary responsibility the success of AusSeabed.
- Bring the perspectives and priorities of their organisation and, more broadly, the particular sector of the seabed community they represent (e.g. marine survey; fisheries management; marine environmental management)
- Attend and prepare for meetings, including proposing agenda items for meetings and nominate a proxy when unable to attend
- Facilitate the collation and review of feedback or progress on initiatives from their respective sectors, as required by the Committee, in a timely fashion
- Facilitate the acquisition of advice from experts within their workplace and sectors in support of AusSeabed objectives and specific projects

## **Role of the Steering Committee Chair**

- Provide a strategic perspective that extends beyond their own organisation (e.g. emerging issues and potential new opportunities that advance the vision of AusSeabed) and can link to international programs
- Provide leadership and ensure the effective operation of the Committee
- Plan meetings and workshops, and develop the agenda in conjunction with the Secretary and/or the other Committee members; ensure that agendas and supporting materials are delivered to members prior to the meeting
- Chair the Committee meetings and AGM according to the following meeting guidelines:
  - make the purpose of each meeting clear and explain the agenda
  - call for a member to oversee the checklist of appropriate behaviours
  - clarify and summarise progress as agenda items are dealt with
  - ensure action items are completed in a timely manner
  - keep the meeting moving by ensuring agenda items stick to time limits
  - encourage broad participation in discussions by calling on different members



- conclude each meeting with a summary of decisions, action items and their agreed time periods
- Ensure that decisions made at meetings are implemented
- Follows up with consistently absent members to determine if they wish to discontinue membership
- Finds replacements for members who discontinue participation
- Ensure nomination and appointment process takes place at end of each term

### Role of the Steering Committee Vice-chair

- Stand in for the Chair if s/he is away
- Support the Chair in ensuring smooth functioning of the Committee
- Deal with specific tasks or issues as defined by the Committee

### Role of the Steering Committee Secretary

- Help the Chair to plan meetings
- Organise logistics of the meetings
- Maintain records and administration of the meetings
- Uphold the legal requirements of governing documents
- Undertake effective Committee communication and correspondence
- Distribute the outcomes, recommendations and findings of the committee to the AusSeabed community both within Australia and globally after finalising documents with the Committee
- Documents arising from meetings should be forwarded no later than 1 week after the meeting

### Meetings and Reporting

The Committee will meet biannually. One meeting of every year will coincide with the Australian Marine Science Association conference (usually early July). This meeting will be paired with a AusSeabed partnership workshop followed by the AGM. The 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting will usually be held in late November.

Agendas will be circulated by the Chair at least 2 weeks before any Committee meeting or AGM Partnership assembly.

Progress on action items from previous meetings will be communicated to the Chair 1 week before any subsequent meeting.

Secretariat support (*including communication of meeting outcomes and minutes*) will be provided by the Chair's host organisation and will be distributed within one week of meeting to the wider AusSeabed working group.

### Quorum & Decision Making

Motions and agenda items that require a judgement or decision will need to be seconded by another Committee member before being put to a vote. A quorum will be more than half of the attending Committee members. Resolutions will require the support of the quorum.

The Committee **will not** make any financial decisions or commit the AusSeabed partnership or Committee to any financial arrangement without the clear and documented approval of the AusSeabed partnership.