



NCAT REFERENCE GROUP

Terms of Reference

Introduction

In October 2012, the NSW Government announced the establishment of the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal, which will also be known as 'NCAT'. More than 20 existing tribunals or other entities exercising tribunal-like functions will be integrated into NCAT, which will provide a single gateway for tribunal services to the people of NSW. It is anticipated that NCAT will commence operations on 1 January 2014.

A high level Steering Committee has been established to maintain strategic oversight of the project and to make decisions about the institutional design of NCAT and the appropriate allocation of resources.

NCAT Reference Group

Commissioner Linda Pearson of the Land and Environment Court will Chair the NCAT Reference Group. Membership of the Reference Group will consist of key stakeholders nominated by tribunals, tribunal user groups and relevant peak bodies (see Attachment A). Membership of the Reference Group is voluntary and members are not paid for their participation.

The Reference Group will ensure that all interested parties have meaningful and regular input into NCAT's development. The Reference Group will be a forum for tribunal members, staff, user groups and peak bodies to provide feedback and suggestions to the Steering Committee about how NCAT should operate. In particular, the Reference Group will be asked to:

- Review draft legislation and proposed rules
- Provide advice on customer service standards
- Propose new and innovative ways of doing business, and
- Identify opportunities to streamline procedures or share services and facilities.

Secretariat

A small full-time project team has been established to assist the Steering Committee and Reference Group. The project team will provide secretariat and general administrative support to the Reference Group, including by taking minutes at Reference Group meetings. The project team will also provide a link between the Reference Group and Steering Committee.



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Quorum/Accountabilities

The Reference Group will be a forum for open discussion and feedback on significant issues arising throughout the NCAT project. However, the Steering Committee does not expect the Reference Group to reach unanimous decisions or agree on specific recommendations. Any comments and suggestions made by the Reference Group will be taken into consideration by the project team and Steering Committee.

It is expected that Reference Group members will wish to discuss issues arising during meetings within their organisations. To this extent, Reference Group members should assume that papers, agendas and minutes may be distributed and discussed outside of the Reference Group. In the event that information of a confidential nature is discussed, it should be identified as such so that Reference Group members understand the need for confidentiality to be maintained.

Frequency of Meetings

It is expected that the Reference Group will meet every 4 to 6 weeks during the course of 2013.

Agendas

A reminder of the upcoming meeting and a call for agenda items will be emailed to Reference Group members approximately one week prior to each meeting. Agenda items can be submitted to the Secretariat up to 3 working days before the meeting.

Minutes

The Secretariat will take minutes of all meetings and, when requested, a person's particular views that they wish to be recorded.