

# **WILLIAMTOWN CONSULTATIVE FORUM.**

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### **Purpose**

RAAF Base Williamtown is a major asset contributing to the strategic defence of Australia. For this reason, successful integration into the community and sound environmental management of the Base and the associated Salt Ash Weapons Range (SAWR) is of great importance to Defence and the Commonwealth Government.

The Williamtown Consultative Forum (WCF) is an important information sharing and co-ordinating forum for the three levels of government and elected community representatives to raise strategic issues associated with RAAF Base Williamtown and the SAWR.

The WCF is the forum to discuss the broader strategic issues associated with RAAF Base Williamtown and its role within the Hunter region. The objectives of the WCF are:

- Through its Chair, provide advice to the Minister for Defence on issues relevant and important to the Hunter community.
- Act as a collaborative forum for Defence to engage with state and local governments and elected community representatives.

The WCF will be a key source of information for Defence and State and Local Government authorities when considering development, planning, environmental and management activities associated with RAAF Base Williamtown and the SAWR.

### **Agenda**

Defence will brief WCF members on projected training and operational activities and provide updates on the introduction of new air capabilities as they relate to the Base. Defence will also provide information on forthcoming issues and initiatives of a social and economic nature that may also be of interest to the broader community.

Non Defence members of the WCF will be invited to provide advice to Defence on strategic planning initiatives and proposed developments within the Hunter Region that could impact on Defence operations at either RAAF Base Williamtown or the SAWR.

The WCF will identify appropriate business and community leaders from the Hunter region to address WCF meetings and provide input to the WCF on specific matters. Members of the WCF will also be invited to table matters relevant to Defence and provide briefs on forthcoming events and activities that Defence should be aware of.

Whilst the WCF does not have formal decision making powers, it will receive and can request reports on key issues of concern.

### **Williamtown Advisory Group**

The Williamtown Advisory Group (WAG) will support the Williamtown Consultative Forum (WCF). While the WCF focuses on the broader strategic issues associated with

RAAF Base Williamtown and its role within the Hunter region, the WAG concentrates on operational details associated with environment, planning and development issues relating to RAAF Base Williamtown and the SAWR.

The WAG will be an officer level working group chaired by Defence and comprising representatives from the NSW Department of Planning, Port Stephens Council, Newcastle Council, NSW Premiers Department, NSW Department of Environment and Climate Change, Hunter Water and other agencies as the need arises.

### **Membership**

The Head of Infrastructure for Defence will chair the WCF and will report to the Minister for Defence on the outcomes after each WCF meeting. Membership of the Forum will comprise of:

- the Federal member for Paterson;
- the Federal member for Newcastle;
- the State member for Port Stephens;
- the State member for Newcastle;
- the Mayors and General Managers from both Port Stephens and Newcastle Councils;
- NSW Premiers Department; and
- General Manager from Newcastle Airport Ltd.

In addition to the Head of Infrastructure, Defence will also be represented by:

- the CO, 381 Expeditionary Combat Support Squadron,
- the Commander, Air Combat Group; and
- the Regional Manager, Defence Support, Central and Northern NSW.

Attendance by other officers or staff of organisations will be by invitation or prior agreement and only for specific agenda items or as a substitute for an official member.

### **Support**

Secretarial support will be provided by Infrastructure Division, Defence Support Group.

### **Meeting Frequency**

WCF meetings will be held twice each year, with extraordinary meetings being held as the need arises.

### **Location**

Hosting WCF meetings will be shared amongst member organisations.

### **Amendment to WCF Membership or Terms of Reference**

The WCF will review on an annual basis the operation of the WCF to ensure its effectiveness is maintained. If required, the Chair will make recommendations to the WCF and the Minister for Defence on altering the membership or the WCF's Terms of Reference.