MINUTES

Board	**Woomera Prohibited Area (WPA) Advisory Board Meeting**	
Date	Friday, 01 December 2023	
Time	**Start:** 1:23 pm AEDT	**Finish:** 2:45 pm AEDT
Venue	State Room, R1 Russell Offices, Canberra, ACT	
Members	**Name**	**Appointment**
	The Hon Amanda Vanstone AO	Chair
	Ms Andrea Slattery	Deputy Chair
Ex-Officio Members	Dr Sheridan Kearnan	Acting Deputy Secretary, Strategy, Policy and Industry, Department of Defence
	AVM Wendy Blyth AM	Head of Air Force Capability (representing AIRMSHL Robert Chipman, AM, CSC, Chief of Air Force)
	Dr Paul Heithersay PSM	Chief Executive, South Australia - Department for Energy and Mining (DEM)
	Mr Richard Price	Chief Executive, Defence SA (Virtual attendance)
	Ms Jane Urquhart PSM	Deputy Secretary, Resources & Strategy, Department of Industry, Science and Resources (DISR)
Support Staff	Mr Sam Usher	Head of the Australian Radioactive Waste Agency
	AIRCDRE David Titheridge	Director General Air Capability Enablers – Air Force
	Ms Alison West	Assistant Secretary, Strategic Engagement and Corporate, Department of Defence (AS-SEC)
	Mr Reg Carruthers	Executive Director, Defence and Space, Defence SA
	Mr Benjamin Zammit	Acting Executive Director, Mineral Resources, SA DEM
	Mr Darren Manser	Director, Air Force Ranges, Air Warfare Centre (AF-AWC)
	Ms Tracee Martin	Director, Woomera Prohibited Area Coordination Office (WPACO), Department of Defence
	Ms Cathy Lacar	Senior Regulatory Advisor, Mineral Resources, SA DEM

Opening and Acknowledgement of Country

Item	Discussion	Action Item	Owner
0.0	Chair acknowledged the traditional custodians of the land on which attendees were gathered – the Kaurna and Ngunnawal people.	---	---
	Chair welcomed Advisory Board members and supporting staff attending in-person and remotely.	---	---

Security Briefing

Item	Discussion	Action Item	Owner
1.0	Defence presented on the general security environment.	Incident reporting details to be emailed to non-Defence Board members and support staff.	Defence SP&I

BHP Presentation

Item	Discussion	Action Item	Owner
2.0	BHP (Mr Andrew Mooney, General Manager, Prominent Hill; Mr Tom Carrick-Smith, Principal Government Relations, Copper South Australia; and Mr Jon Richards, Principal, Australia Government Relations) presented on the current and intended activities of BHP inside and directly adjacent to the Woomera Prohibited Area. The presentation focussed on the establishment of a 'Copper Province', while recognising the importance of the WPA to Defence. BHP thanked the Range Team for the good relationship between the Range and BHP and emphasised the importance of developing strong relationships with stakeholders.	The Board received the presentation by BHP. --- ---	--- --- ---

Minutes from the previous meeting (1/2023)

Item	Discussion	Action Item	Owner
3.0	The Chair tabled the minutes from the previous Advisory Board meeting held on 03 May 2023.	The Board endorsed meeting minutes and agreed Defence will publish the minutes on the WPA website.	Defence SP&I

Matters for WPA Advisory Board Decision

Item	Discussion	Action Item	Owner
4.1	***WPA Advisory Board Annual Report 2022-2023*** Defence presented the final draft WPA Annual Report for the Financial Year 2022/2023. The Chair supported the plan for the Report to be professionally prepared for publication by Defence publishing. The Board provided feedback and requested the following amendments to the draft Annual Report: • Revise the language to reduce Defence jargon. • Add a section that clarifies that the Annual Report is reporting on activities in the WPA not the activities of the Board.	--- Defence to update draft Annual Report based on Board feedback. Board to clear the final Annual Report out of session.	--- Defence SP&I Defence SP&I
4.2	***Updated (2023) WPA Resource Prospectivity and Economic Assessment*** The Department of Energy and Mining presented on findings from the Woomera Prohibited Area Resource Prospectivity and Economic Assessment October 2023 report. Discussion followed. The tabled recommendations (a) – (d) agreed to. Recommendation (e) next steps was not agreed.	--- Defence requested more time to consider the content of the report prior to its publication.	--- Defence SP&I

		DEM, DISR and Defence to meet to discuss and plan for implementation of Phase 2 of recommendation #5.	DEM
4.3	***Maralinga Tjarutja Indigenous Protected Area Update*** The Board was asked to support the updated governance arrangements of the Maralinga Tjarutja Indigenous Protected Area, which the Board agreed to support at the Advisory Board meeting held in May 2023. The new proposal will reduce the Board's representative on the Indigenous Protected Area's Steering Committee from voting to advisory.	---	---
	The Board agreed to support the alternative proposal.	The Chair will send a letter of support to Maralinga Tjarutja advising them of the Board's agreement.	Defence SP&I

Matters for WPA Board Noting

Item	Discussion	Action Item	Owner
5.1	***2018 WPA Review Implementation Plan*** The Chair confirmed there were no comments on this agenda paper.	---	---
5.2	***Aboriginal Engagement in the WPA Update*** The Chair has now met with all of the Aboriginal Corporations at least once.	---	---
	The Chair reported that two of the Aboriginal Corporations have requested to be included as members of the Board.	---	---
	The Chair recognises that this is not an achievable request.	Defence will develop an alternative proposal for Aboriginal engagement. DISR/SA will share existing engagement models which have been successful.	Defence SP&I DISR and DEM
	---	The meetings will continue until an alternative is developed and approved.	Defence SP&I
5.3	***WPA Exclusion Periods and Range Update*** Air Force provided an update on the WPA exclusion periods and range activities covering April 2023 to September 2023.	The Board noted the update.	---
	Air Force confirmed that the previously flagged demands for greater testing and collaboration in the WPA continue to increase, and that the increased rate of effort at the Range is beginning to be felt.	---	---
	The Board noted range activities, including test and evaluation, range remediation, training exercises and patrols.	---	---

	Dashboard Reporting		
5.4	Defence proposed the Board endorse the Dashboard with some minor amendments requested.	Defence will action amendments. Updated Dashboard to be considered out-of-session.	Defence SP&I Defence SP&I
	Dashboard will be approved out-of-session.	Defence will publish the Dashboard on the WPA Website.	Defence SP&I
	WPA Advisory Board Forward Work Program		
5.5	Defence proposed an update on the implementation of phase 2 of Review recommendation #5 (prospectivity) be added to the May 2024 meeting agenda. The Board agreed.	DEM to provide an update following engagement with DISR and Defence.	DEM
	The Deputy Chair proposed a Rule Review item be added. The Board agreed.	Defence will add a Rule Review update to the Forward Work Program.	Defence SP&I
5.6	***Media Coverage of the WPA: Update on Australian Radioactive Waste Consideration***		
	The Australian Radioactive Waste Agency (ARWA) reported that the Agency is not currently looking at any locations for waste storage facilities.	The Board noted the update.	---
	ARWA described the need to work with local communities and Traditional Owners using best practices to ensure community consent and the best outcome on any future decisions.	---	---
	Defence Industry		
5.7	Defence SA informed the Board that Mr Richard Price will be retiring on 31 December 2023. Mr Carruthers will be acting Chief Executive until the new appointment.	The Board noted the update.	---
	Defence SA reported that Koonibba Test Range has been licenced and expects their next launch to be in 2024.	---	---
5.8	***WPA Framework Review - Update***		
	Defence reported that the Framework Review is waiting on a decision from the Deputy Prime Minister.	The Board noted the update.	---

Item 6 – Other business

Item	Discussion	Action Item	Owner
6.0	AVM Blyth thanked AIRCDRE David Titheridge for his service. AIRCDRE David Titheridge is moving to the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet. The Chair thanked AIRCDRE David Titheridge. The Chair thanked Mr Darren Manser for his service. Mr Manser will be retiring in the new year, before the next Board meeting.		

Item 7 – Next meeting – May, 2024 in Adelaide

Item	Discussion	Action Item	Owner
7.0	The Chair invited the Board to determine a date for the next Board meeting.	Defence to consult members out-of-session via email to determine suitable dates for May 2024 board meeting.	Defence SP&I
	Meeting concluded at 2:45 pm AEDT		