MINUTES

Board	**Woomera Prohibited Area (WPA) Advisory Board Meeting**	
Date	Wednesday, 10 July 2024	
Time	**Start:** 12:00 pm AEST	**Finish:** 13:32 pm AEST
Venue	Virtual - Microsoft Teams	
Members	**Name**	**Appointment**
	The Hon Amanda Vanstone AO	Chair
	Ms Andrea Slattery	Deputy Chair
Ex-Officio Members	Mr Hugh Jeffrey	Deputy Secretary, Strategy, Policy and Industry, Department of Defence
	AIRMSHL Stephen Chappell DSC CSC OAM	Chief of Air Force, Department of Defence
	Dr Paul Heithersay PSM	Chief Executive, SA Department for Energy and Mining
	Mr Matt Opie	Chief Executive, Defence SA
	Mr Peter Chesworth	Head of Division – Minerals and Resources, Department of Industry, Science and Resources representing Ms Jane Urquhart, Deputy Secretary, Resources and Strategy, Department of Industry, Science and Resources
	AVM Stephen Meredith	Director General, Strategic Review of Reserves, Department of Defence
Support Staff	AIRCDRE Adrian Maso	Commander, Air Warfare Centre, Air Force, Department of Defence
	Mr Reg Carruthers	Executive Director, Defence and Space, Defence SA
	Ms Emma Cooney	Assistant Secretary, Strategic Engagement and Corporate Branch, Departnent of Defence
	Ms Tracee Martin	Director, Woomera Prohibited Area Coordination Office, Department of Defence
	Mr Michael Smith	Director, Regulation and Compliance Division, SA Department for Energy and Mining
	WGCDR Peter Tame	Deputy Director Woomera Range Complex, Air Force Headquarters, Department of Defence
	WGCDR Gary Rains	Commanding Officer Air Force Test Ranges Squadron, Air Force, Department of Defence
	WGCDR Kevin Rowlatt	Acting Director Advanced Test and Training Environments Directorate, Air Warfare Centre, Air Force, Department of Defence
	GPCAPT Matt Grant	Deputy Commander, Air Warfare Centre, Air Force, Department of Defence

Opening and Acknowledgement of Country

Item	Discussion	Action Item	Owner
1.0	The Chair acknowledged the traditional custodians of the land on which attendees were gathered – the Kuarna and Ngunnawal people.		

The Chair welcomed Advisory Board members and supporting staff attending in-person and remotely.

Minutes from the previous meeting (2/2023)

Item	Discussion	Action Item	Owner
2.0	The Chair tabled the minutes from the previous Advisory Board meeting held on 01 December 2023. The Chair welcomed new Advisory Board Ex-Officio members to their first WPA Advisory Board: • Mr Matt Opie: Chief Executive, Defence SA; and • AIRMSHL Stephen Chappell DSC CSC OAM: Chief of Air Force, Department of Defence. The Board endorsed the meeting minutes and agreed Defence will publish the minutes on the WPA website.	Publish the minutes on the WPA website.	Defence SP&I

Matters for WPA Advisory Board Decision

Item	Discussion	Action Item	Owner
4.1	***WPA Coexistence Framework Health Check Report 2023*** Defence presented the 2023 Health Check report and requested the Board endorse the report. Defence provided an update on the changes to the strategic environment and summarised the National Defence Strategy, including how this would increase demand for a safe and secure WPA. Defence cited the importance of these health checks moving forward. The Board endorsed the 2023 Health Check.	The Chair requested Defence provide further details on permit approval timeframes.	Defence SP&I
4.2	***First Nations engagement in the WPA update*** Defence and Air Force provided updates on First Nations engagement, including an update on the Regional Compliance Officer (RCO) Program. Defence sought endorsement to move forward with the approach outlined in the WPA First Nations Engagement proposal. The Board noted the engagement with Aboriginal Corporations and the update on the RCO Program and endorsed the First Nations proposal.	Subject to the availability of First Nations groups to engage with Defence in the timeframe: a) Defence to develop a strategy for engagement with First Nations groups in the WPA and provide for endorsement at the next meeting. b) Provide an update on the progress of Individual Implementation Plans for consideration at the next Board meeting in late 2024.	Defence SP&I
4.3	***WPA Dashboard Reporting October 2023 – March 2024*** Defence presented the WPA Dashboards for the October 2023 to March 2024 reporting period, proposing that the Board endorse them for publication. In 2022, the Board asked Defence to publish the April to September Dashboard on the WPA website. Defence		

	proposed the Board agree to continue this practice of publishing Dashboards to provide WPA users with timely information, as per Recommendation 11 of the 2018 Review. Defence recommended that the previous three Dashboards be published. Defence proposed that the Dashboard reporting partially meets the Board annual reporting obligations allowing the Annual Report to be streamlined. The Dashboard is a more user-friendly and timelier way to share information with stakeholders.		
	The Board noted the WPA Dashboard and the contributions made to the report by Defence SP&I, Air Force and the SA Government. The Board Agreed to the publication of Dashboards. The Board agreed with the proposal to streamline the Annual Report process to account for increased reporting through the public Dashboards.	Defence to publish three previous Dashboards, and future Dashboards, on the WPA website. Defence to streamline the 2024 Annual Report and present a draft for endorsement of the Board at the next meeting in late 2024.	Defence SP&I
4.4	***Updated (2023) WPA Resource Prospectivity and Economic Assessment Report publication*** Deputy Secretary, Strategy, Policy, and Industry presented the *Updated (2023) WPA Resource Prospectivity and Economic Assessment* report publication paper, reminding the Board that this item was deferred at the previous Advisory Board meeting in December 2023, to give members time to consider the report content. Following the December 2023 Board meeting, DEM and Defence staff worked out of session to ensure the report drew appropriate attention to legislative provisions that limit access to the WPA.		
	The Board agreed to amend the Updated (2023) WPA Resource Prospectivity and Economic Assessment report to include the updated preface. The Board agreed to publish the amended (2023) WPA Resource Prospectivity and Economic Assessment.	DEM to amend to include the Preface in the *Updated (2023) WPA Resource Prospectivity and Economic Assessment* report. DEM to publish the amended *Updated (2023) WPA Resource Prospectivity and Economic Assessment* report.	DEM

Noting

Item	Discussion	Action Item	Owner
	Update on resource prospectivity		
5.1	SA Department for Energy and Mining presented a noting paper on the progress of Phase 2 of Recommendation 5 of the 2018 WPA Review, which includes the potential access to the Red Zone of the WPA for further analysis.		SA DEM

	The Board noted the update on resource prospectivity.		
5.2	***Woomera Prohibited Area (WPA) Defence Act Update and Remaking of the Woomera Prohibited Area Rule 2014*** Defence informed the Board of recent developments in which the Attorney-General had deferred sunsetting the Rule from 01 October 2024 to 01 October 2026. It is not possible to seek another deferral of sunsetting. Recommendation 12 of the 2018 Review of Coexistence requires Defence and SA Government to determine whether a review of coexistence arrangements is required by 2025. Remaking of the Rule presents an opportunity to ensure that coexistence arrangements for the WPA continue to meet evolving needs in the current and rapidly changing security environment outlined in the 2024 National Defence Strategy. Meaningful consultation will be at the heart of this review. The Board noted the sunsetting of the WPA Rule and the verbal update.	Defence to forward the Terms of Reference to the Board for the upcoming *Woomera Prohibited Area Coexistence Framework Review*.	Defence SP&I
5.3	***Coexistence in the WPA 2018 Review implementation plan*** Defence updated the Board on progress to implement recommendations from the 2018 Review. Recommendation 12 will be fulfilled by the WPA Coexistence Framework Review. The upcoming Review will look at the outstanding recommendations from 2018, and identify next best steps. The Board noted the implementation status of Recommendations 2, 5, 11 and 12 of the 2018 Review.	Defence to confirm whether a digital platform for administering coexistence arrangements is viable.	Defence SP&I
5.4	***WPA Exclusion Periods and Range activities update*** Air Force provided an update on the WPA exclusion periods and range activities covering 01 October 2023 to 30 March 2024. Air Force noted that Woomera Test Range activities are continuing to increase, and that current high demand has been driven by the uncertainty in the strategic environment. The Boarded noted the update.		CAF
5.5	***Resources Industry activities in the WPA*** The Chief Executive, SA Department for Energy and Mining provided a verbal update on resource industry activities in the WPA. The Board noted the update.		DEM
5.6	***Defence Industry activities in the WPA*** The Chief Executive, Defence SA provided a verbal update on Defence SA activities in South Australia.		Defence SA

	The Board noted the updates.

Other business

Item	Discussion	Action Item	Owner
6.0	Advisory Board brought to an end and advised that the meeting had been recorded.		

Next meeting – [November, 2024] in [Adelaide]

Item	Discussion	Action Item	Owner
7.0	Chair invited Board input on potential dates for the second and final Board meeting of the year for 2024.	Defence to consult members out-of-session to determine suitable dates for the next meeting.	Defence SP&I

Meeting concluded at 13:32 pm AEST