

# MINUTES OF SCIENCE STEERING COMMITTEE

## Science Integration and Ramsar Wetlands Science and Management



Held on 15 November 2018 at PHCC Shed  
58 Sutton Street Mandurah WA 6210

**PHCC** Working Together  
Peel-Harvey Catchment Council

Steve Fisher opened the meeting at 9:00 am.

## 1 Welcome

### In Attendance:

Bob Pond  
Steve Fisher  
Sue Fyfe  
Peter Hick  
Jane O'Malley  
Mike Schultz  
Jan Star (Chair)  
Rob Summers

## 2 Apologies:

Andrew Ward

## 3 Declarations of Interest

None

## 4 Terms of Reference

Steve presented the Terms of Reference to the committee (see below) as detailed in Policy 1.7 Project/Program Steering Sub-Committees

### Terms of Reference

The primary function of a Project/Program Steering Sub-Committee is to provide sound governance and support to oversee the successful project delivery in accordance with Project Funding Guidelines and Service Agreement. To do this Sub-Committee Members will contribute their skills, knowledge, insight and experience to project development and delivery. Sub-Committee Members will understand the projects scope, funding guidelines and delivery requirements.

The key roles and responsibilities of Project/Program Steering Sub-Committees are to:

- Project Officer presents individual project plans to Program Manager for review for accuracy and compliance with funding requirements. Program Manager then presents them to Sub-Committee for endorsement and recommendation to CEO/Board as per delegations
- Monitor progress of project delivery
- Monitor the financial performance of the project in accordance with the approved budget
- Recommend against budget variations, for approval by the delegated officer
- Review, verify and/or endorse changes against the project plan
- Review, suggest solutions for risk and any issues critical to achieving success of project delivery
- Be part of assessment panels for grant applications or similar, as required
- Assist in resolution of conflicts
- Deliberate, make recommendations, advise and serve as an advocate for the Board
- Sub-Committee meeting minutes and/or presentations will be provided as Project and/or

- Program progress reports to the Board and/or Executive.

## 5 Science Integration

### 5.1 Project overview including deliverables

Steve provided the following information

- The project was initially funded by Department of Regional Development (DRD) at \$100,000 p.a. for four years as a 2013 Election Commitment by the Liberal Government for ***Employment of a Senior Scientist to provide science leadership and better integrate science into the management of the Peel-Harvey Catchment*** also known within PHCC as the ***Science Integration Project***.
- The City of Mandurah also contributed \$10,000 p.a. to the project for a combined total of \$440,000 over four years, commencing financial year 2014/15 and ending 2017/18.
- Steve commenced working on this project July 2015 and submitted a four-year plan to DRD to deliver the project, with Key Performance Indicators and Milestones mapped against each of the duties in the agreement. According to this plan the project is due for completion in July 2019, with final acquittal in October 2019.
- The final payment of \$110,000 was made to PHCC in Dec 2017.
- In May 2018, further funding (\$345,000 over three years to June 2021) was obtained with advocacy from the Peel Development Commission through a 2017 Election Commitment for the project ***Peel-Harvey Estuary 1FTE (Proj 1017-0487-2): Employ an officer to drive the process of rehabilitation of the Peel-Harvey Estuary***, also referred to as the ***1FTE State Election Commitment*** project within PHCC. The City of Mandurah has committed to contributing \$20,000 to the project in 2018/19 and we assume this will be repeated in the other two years. Key outcomes for the 1FTE project are as follows with Outcomes shown in **bold** aligning with the outstanding deliverables from the previous *Science Integration* project (see Table 1).
  - Manage and/or oversee rehabilitation and water quality projects to improve the ecological health of the Peel-Harvey Estuary, addressing current and future risks (FAA)
  - **Establish and maintain networks with relevant researchers and research institutions in public and private sectors (FAA)**
  - **Provide expert advice to PHCC and decision-makers to influence planning and policy decisions for a sustainable Peel-Harvey Estuary (FAA)**
  - **Develop, maintain and communicate the Peel-Harvey Catchment Reporting (Report Card) on a regular frequency (FAA)**
  - Any amended or additional key duties proposed by a Party and agreed to in writing by the Recipient and the Department (FAA).
  - **Maintain research portal to enable access to research;**
  - Prepare a gap analysis for research and monitoring and strategies to reduce the implementation gap;
  - **Prepare an updated Science Strategy for the Peel-Harvey, incorporating broader catchment issues as well as Estuarine and Riverine;**
  - **Facilitate collaborative research programs to address priority research needs;**
  - Co-ordination and reporting of research undertaken in and/or relative to the Peel-Harvey
  - **Advocate for Science and Scientific research in the Peel-Harvey Catchment.**
  - Supervise and manage relevant officers to deliver waterways health programs within timeframes and budget;
  - Identify and secure funding and investment opportunities relevant to the position.

Sue asked whether the City Of Mandurah had any performance indicators upon which their funding support was contingent. There are none, however Steve will continue to interact with and provide advice to the City of Mandurah on an ad hoc basis.

Steve presented the progress against the Project Plan summarized in Table 1, showing that some of the deliverables for the project were overdue, especially:

- Progress toward preparation of an updated Science Strategy for the Peel-Harvey
- Establishing and maintaining a web portal for future access to research
- Preparation and communication of an annual report of estuary and catchment condition (see Item 5.3 below)

The outcomes from the discussion are summarised as follows:

- The updated Science Strategy is important but not urgently required. It is extremely unlikely to be completed by June 2019 so preparation of this should be carried over into the next phase of the Science Integration project
- Considerable effort has been put into capturing the grey literature regarding science and management in the Peel-Harvey region into the Filemaker database, however this might not be the most useful resource for university researchers
- See Item 5.3 below

Steve proposed the following actions with which the committee agreed:

**Action 1:** As there are no outstanding deliverables that are not addressed by the outcomes of the 1FTE Project, the project plan from the previous Science Integration Project be retained but be adapted by Steve to include any new deliverables.

**Action 2:** The 1FTE State Election Commitment Project is non-descriptive and unflattering title for the project. Internally at PHCC we will continue to refer to the project as the Science Integration Project.

**Action 3:** Steve will arrange a meeting with DPIRD (Greg McAuliffe and Martin Clifford) in mid-January 2019 to explain and discuss the approach to completing Science Integration project delivery.

The Steering Committee members proposed the following Actions

**Action 4:** Steve to form a sub-group comprising Rob, Pete and Jane to discuss development of the web portal / File Maker database

## 5.2 Project Budget

Steve provided the following information for consideration and discussion:

- The project funds were / are expended on salary only i.e. there is no operating component except for the audit costs.
- The audited financial statement for 2017/18 for the DRD-funded *Science Integration Project* was submitted to DPIRD in October 2018
- DPIRD require quarterly financial reports of which we have submitted two:
  - to 30 June 2018, reflecting no expenditure from the project, and
  - to 30 Sep 2018, where \$32,985 had been expended from the first year budget of \$133,000 (\$113,000 from DPIRD, \$20,000 from City of Mandurah).

### 5.3 Ramsar 482 Report Card

Steve provided a hard copy of the report card showing the condition of the Ramsar Site based on a traffic light scoring system (red, amber, green) based on deviation from Limits of Acceptable Change specified in Ecological Character Description. The discussion is summarised follows:

- The committee agreed that the comparison with the LACs to assess condition is a good approach
- Text defining what the LACs are and how they were derived needs to be included
- LACS for Waterbirds were particularly unclear. Steve suggested including a bar graph for each species showing the variability against the LACs over the five year reporting period
- References / attributions (for example using footnotes) to identify the source of the data should be included
- Text must be included explaining the results and how the condition of the estuary is tracking.
- A Draft Report Card for consultation will be prepared by June 2019, but there will need to be a period of consultation with stakeholders through for example focus group discussions before release and communication.
- Jan suggested an Honours project investigating the variability in bird numbers. Steve suggested that the variability might not be statistically significant given they were based on a count performed on a single day

**Action 5:** Steve to include this feedback into the design of the report card and present to the Steering Committee before 30 June 2019.

## 6 Ramsar Wetlands Science and Management (NLP2/RLP)

### 6.1 Project overview including deliverables

Steve provided the following overview:

- This project will deliver components (i) and (iii) of our detailed Project Design ***“Wetlands and people – a community restoring the ecological character of the Peel-Yalgorup Ramsar 482 Wetlands”*** submitted in February 2018 in response to the Australian Government call for tenders for the National Landcare Program (2) / Regional Land Partnership program. The four component subprojects are:
  - Integrated collaborative management facilitated for ongoing integrated delivery and sustained action (Ramsar TAG**
  - Community Engagement (Wetlands and People)
  - Assess Ecological Character and address key knowledge gaps**
  - On-ground priority actions
- The project logic upon which the Project Design and MERI Plan outcomes are based is shown below in Figure 1. A revised Monitoring Evaluation Reporting & Improvement (MERI) plan for the Project Design was approved by the Australian Government and we received a work order on 13 November.
- Steve is currently running a recruitment process for a Coordinator, Wetlands Science and Management to manage components (i) and (iii).
- Components (ii) and (iv) will be delivered by the Ramsar Community Engagement Coordinator (Sharon Meredith) and the Wetlands Restoration Officer (Rick James) respectively. These projects components will be guided by separate Steering Committees.

- Bob suggested that we send a save the date for the meeting of the Ramsar Technical Advisory Group to be held in March 2019.

## 6.2 Project Budget

The total cost of all subcomponents is approx. \$5M (\$4,996,221) spread over five financial years ending 30 June 2023. A budget has not yet been formalised for each of the component subprojects. This will be unpicked from the total budget over the next few months.

## 7 Other Business

None

## 8 Actions from this Meeting

Summary of actions from previous meetings:

No.	DETAILS	RESP.
1	The project plan from the previous Science Integration Project be retained but be adapted by Steve to include any new deliverables.	Steve
2	Internally at PHCC we will refer to the 1FTE State Election Commitment Project as the Science Integration Project.	Steve
3	Arrange a meeting with DPIRD (Greg McAuliffe and Martin Clifford) in mid-January 2019 to explain and discuss the approach to completing the Science Integration project delivery	Steve
4	Form a sub-group comprising Rob, Pete and Jane to discuss development of the web portal / File Maker database	Steve
5	Include feedback from the Steering Committee into the design of the Ramsar report card and present to the Steering Committee before 30 June 2019.	Steve
6	Send a Save the date for the Ramsar TAG Meeting to be held in March 2019	Steve

### Next Meeting:

The next Steering Committee meeting is scheduled for 22 March 2019. Meeting(s) may be scheduled in the interim depending on need.

*The meeting closed at 10:40 am*

Chairman: .....

Date: .....

**Table 1: Employment of a Senior Scientist to provide science leadership and better integrate science into the management of the Peel-Harvey Catchment: Schedule of Deliverables (Milestones and KPIs) addressing *Key Duties* of the position according to the contract.**

Fin Year	No.	Milestone / KPI	Key Duties of Senior Scientist addressed by Milestone / KPI	Date for completion (on or before)	Output	Status at 13 Nov 2018
2014/15	1	Senior Scientist recruited, employment contract signed and officer commenced	Key Milestone	13 Oct 2014	Proof of appointment of Science Advisor to PHCC	Completed
	2	Invoice DRD for Payment: Year 1 (\$100,000)	Key Milestone	31 Oct 2014	Invoice	Completed
	3	Resignation / cessation of employment of Senior Scientist		6 Mar 2015	Notification of cessation	Completed
2015/16	4	Senior Scientist (Science Advisor) recruited, employment contract signed and officer commenced	Key Milestone	20 Jul 2015	Proof of appointment of Science Advisor to PHCC	Completed
	5	Project Steering Group established and first meeting held	Key Milestone	11 Aug 2015	Provide minutes of meeting	Completed
	6	Submit project plan to DRD within 3 months of commencement of Science Advisor	Key Milestone	20 Oct 2015	Submit plan	Completed
	7	Invoice DRD for Payment: Year 2 (\$100,000)	Key Milestone	31 Oct 2015	Invoice	Completed
	8	Conduct Steering Group Meetings including summary of advice to PHCC, register of meetings and summary of collaborations with key researchers (KPI).	Key Performance Indicator (1, 9 & 10)	Quarterly 2015/16	Provide minutes of Steering Group meetings for 2015/16 as they are completed	Completed
	9	Produce a draft gap analysis for research and monitoring.	4 (5, 7 & 1)	31 Mar 2016	Produce draft gap analysis document	Completed
	10	Organise and conduct workshop (#1) to (i) explore and ground truth knowledge gaps for research and monitoring and (ii) develop indicators of catchment condition	4 (5, 7 & 1)	30 June 2016	Provide record of workshop attendance and outcomes	Completed

Table 1 (cont.):

Fin Year	No.	Milestone / KPI	Key Duties of Senior Scientist addressed by Milestone / KPI	Date for completion (on or before)	Output	Status at 13 Nov 2018
2015/16 (cont.)	11	Prepare draft reporting framework for Peel-Harvey Catchment based on review of current indicators	7 (8, 1 & 4)	30 June 2016	Produce draft framework document	Completed
	12	Establish a web portal for future access to research	3 (1, 10 & 4)	30 June 2016	Provide link to portal	Partially achieved
	13	Complete literature review and review of current activities in Peel-Harvey catchment	2 (5, 4 & 3)	30 June 2016	Produce draft literature review document	Completed
	14	Communicate science on behalf of PHCC: Represent PHCC at conferences and seminars to facilitate linkages across community, industry and researchers (KPI)	10 (1, 8 & 9)	30 June 2016	Deliver two presentations and provide record e.g. meeting minutes, conference program	Completed
2016/17	15	Conduct quarterly Steering Group Meetings including summary of advice to PHCC, register of meetings, summary of collaborations with key researchers (KPI).	Key Performance Indicator (1, 9 & 10)	Quarterly 2016/17	Provide minutes of quarterly Steering Group meetings for 2016/17 as they are completed	Partially achieved
	16	Produce reporting framework discussion paper and draft template for reporting catchment condition	7 (8, 1 & 4)	30 Sep 2016	Produce discussion paper	Completed
	17	Develop research project briefs for potential uptake by university students	4 (1, 6 & 10)	31 Oct 2016	Provide at least one research project brief	Completed
	18	Submit annual report for 2015/16 financial year	Key Milestone	31 Oct 2016	Annual report	Completed
	19	Invoice DRD for Payment: Year 3 (\$100,000)	Key Milestone	31 Oct 2016	Invoice	Completed
	20	Report annual progress of ARC-Linkage Project (KPI)	1 (6, 7 & 10)	31 Oct 2016	Provide DRD with excerpt from annual report to ARC	Completed
	21	Prepare and communicate annual report of estuary and catchment condition	8 (7, 4 & 1)	31 Dec 2016	Reports completed and submitted	Partially achieved

Table 1 (cont.):

Fin Year	No.	Milestone / KPI	Key Duties of Senior Scientist addressed by Milestone / KPI	Date for completion (on or before)	Output	Status at 13 Nov 2018
2016/17 (cont.)	22	Produce review of Peel-Harvey Estuary Science Strategy document	2 (5, 4 & 6)	31 Mar 2017	Provide draft review document	Completed
	23	Maintain and communicate website portal updates (KPI)	3 (1, 10 & 9)	30 Jun 2017	Provide links to portal	Partially achieved
	24	Communicate science on behalf of PHCC: represent PHCC at conferences and seminars to facilitate linkages across community, industry and researchers (KPI)	10 (1, 6 & 3)	30 Jun 2017	Deliver two presentations in 2016/17 and provide e.g. meeting minutes, conference program	Completed
	25	Deliver one science seminar to facilitate linkages across community, industry and researchers (KPI)	10 (1, 6 & 3)	30 Jun 2017	Deliver one seminar in 2017/18, provide record of attendance	Completed
2017/18	26	Conduct quarterly Steering Group Meetings including summary of advice to PHCC, register of meetings, summary of collaborations with key researchers (KPI).	Key Performance Indicator (1, 9 & 10)	Quarterly 2017/18	Provide minutes of quarterly Steering Group meetings for 2017/18 as they are completed	Partially achieved
	27	Hold Science Workshop (#2) to refine Peel Harvey Catchment reporting framework and report format	6 (4, 7 & 8)	30 Sep 2017	Provide workshop attendance record and summary of outcomes	Completed
	28	Develop research project briefs for potential uptake by university students	4 (1 & 10)	31 Oct 2017	Provide at least one research project brief	Completed
	29	Submit annual report for 2016/17 financial year	Key Milestone	31 Oct 2017	Annual Report	Completed
	30	Report annual progress of ARC-Linkage Project (KPI)	1 (6, 7 & 10)	31 Oct 2017	Provide DRD with excerpt from annual report to ARC	Partially achieved



Table 1 (cont.):

Fin Year	No.	Milestone / KPI	Key Duties of Senior Scientist addressed by Milestone / KPI	Date for completion (on or before)	Output	Status at 13 Nov 2018
2017/18 (cont.)	31	Invoice DRD for Payment: Year 4 (\$100,000)	<b>Key Milestone</b>	31 Oct 2017	Invoice	<b>Completed</b>
	32	Prepare and communicate annual reports of estuary and catchment condition	<b>8</b> (7, 4 & 1)	31 Dec 2017	Provide reports and communication plan	<b>Partially achieved</b>
	33	Produce a draft discussion paper to inform Science Strategy	<b>4</b> (5, 6 & 1)	31 Mar 2018	Provide draft discussion paper	<b>Not commenced</b>
	34	Communicate science on behalf of PHCC: Represent PHCC at conferences and seminars to facilitate linkages across community, industry and researchers (KPI)	<b>10</b> (1, 8 & 9)	30 Jun 2018	Deliver two presentations in 2017/18 and provide e.g. meeting minutes, conference program	<b>Completed</b>
	35	Deliver a science seminar to facilitate linkages across community, industry and researchers (KPI)	<b>10</b> (1, 8 & 9)	30 Jun 2018	Deliver a seminar in 2017/18, provide record of attendance	<b>Completed</b>
	36	Maintain and communicate website portal updates (KPI)	<b>3</b> (1, 10 & 9)	30 Jun 2018	Provide links to portal	<b>No progress</b>
2018/19	37	Conduct quarterly Steering Group Meetings including summary of advice to PHCC, register of meetings, summary of collaborations with key researchers (KPI).	<b>Key Performance Indicator</b> (1, 9 & 10)	Quarterly 2018/19	Provide minutes of quarterly Steering Group meetings for 2018/19 as they are completed	<b>Partially achieved</b>
	38	Submit annual report for 2017/18 fin. year	<b>Key Milestone</b>	31 Oct 2018	Annual report	<b>Partially achieved</b>
	39	Report annual progress of ARC-Linkage Project (KPI)	<b>1</b> (6, 7 & 10)	31 Oct 2018	Provide DRD with excerpt of annual report to ARC	<b>Partially achieved</b>
	40	Develop research project briefs for potential uptake by university students	<b>4</b> (1, 6 & 10)	31 Oct 2018	Provide at least one research project brief	<b>Completed</b>

Table 1 (cont.):

Fin Year	No.	Milestone / KPI	Key Duties of Senior Scientist addressed by Milestone / KPI	Date for completion (on or before)	Output	Status at 13 Nov 2018
2018/19 (cont.)	41	Prepare final (draft) updated Science Strategy for the Peel-Harvey, incorporating broader catchment issues as well as estuarine and riverine	5 (4, 1 & 6)	31 Dec 2018	Science Strategy document	Not commenced
	42	Prepare and communicate annual reports of estuary and catchment condition	8 (7, 4 & 1)	31 Dec 2018	Provide reports and communication plan	Partially achieved
	43	Hold science workshop (#3) to prioritise research, interventions and BMPs for catchment management	6 (7, 1 & 10)	31 Mar 2019	Workshop attendance record and summary of outcomes	
	44	Communicate science on behalf of PHCC: Represent PHCC at conferences and seminars to facilitate linkages across community, industry and researchers (KPI)	10 (1, 8 & 9)	30 Jun 2019	Deliver two presentations in 2017/18 and provide e.g. meeting minutes, conference program	
	45	Deliver a science seminar to facilitate linkages across community, industry and researchers (KPI)	10 (1, 8 & 9)	30 Jun 2019	Deliver a seminar in 2018/19, provide record of attendance	
	46	Report outcomes of ARC-Linkage Project (KPI)	1 (6, 7 & 10)	30 Jun 2019	Provide DRD with excerpt of final report to ARC	
	47	Maintain and communicate website portal updates (KPI)	3 (1,10 &9)	30 Jun 2019	Provide links to portal	
2019/20	48	Submit annual report for 2018/19	Key Milestone	20 Jul 2019	Annual report	
	49	Submit acquittal report for project	Key Milestone	20 Oct 2019	Acquittal report	

Figure 1: Program Logic for NLP2/RLP Project Design and MERI Plan. Circled outcomes specifically apply to the Wetlands Science and Management Subproject

