Terms of Reference

AusSeabed Steering Committee

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1 Background

The AusSeabed Steering Committee (the Committee) has been established to provide an effective representative governing body of the AusSeabed program (http://www.ausseabed.gov.au). Amendments to the Steering Committee Terms of Reference (TOR) can be brought forward for voting at the Annual General Meeting that will accompany the AusSeabed partnership workshop held alongside the AMSA conference each year.

2 Purpose

The role of the Committee is to provide strategic direction and leadership to guide AusSeabed to best achieve the vision for national bathymetric data to 'collect once, use many times'. The Committee will work to promote AusSeabed across all seabed mapping sectors and data users as well as encourage sharing of technical knowledge, data, and resources.

3 Goals

The Steering Committee will support, promote and look for new opportunities to advance the key goals of AusSeabed (http://www.ausseabed.gov.au/about).

4 Membership

The Committee membership will be assigned to the workplace, not the person. Membership will consist of an equal and fair representation of the various sectors (e.g. government; university; industry) that participate in the AusSeabed initiative.

The Committee will also include three Standing Members, one each from the Australian Hydrographic Office, the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation/Marine National Facility and Geoscience Australia to reflect the major levels of resourcing and national perspectives these organisations bring to AusSeabed.

To enable the Committee to function efficiently while maintaining effective representation it is recommended that it should comprise approximately 12 members.

When required, nominations for new members will be sought through a call for nominations via the AusSeabed representatives' mailing list and on the AusSeabed website two months prior to the Annual General Meeting (AGM; normally held to coincide with the Australian Marine Science Association conference in early July).

Election of the Committee members will be done by the AusSeabed working group via closed online voting one month prior to the AGM with one vote per entity for each sector. New members will be appointed by the standing Chair two weeks prior to the AGM. Appointment will be made according to majority based on votes, and the equal and fair representation rule established by the Committee (see section 8). To ensure continuity, the Chair position can only be held by an enduring standing member

of the Committee. To be eligible, the standing member must have served on the SC for a minimum period of one year. If no one is eligible and the Chair wishes to stand down, then an extraordinary meeting will be held to discuss temporary succession. This meeting will discuss the potential for the Vice-Chair to act until such time as a standing committee member is eligible (unless the Vice-Chair has less time in service than the proposed standing committee member).

Vice-Chair and Secretary positions can be held by any member on the committee, however, a member may not occupy more than one role simultaneously.

The Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary will hold office for one year from the date of their election. Any of these roles may be elected for a consecutive term on the anniversary of their election if: 1) they are nominated and willing to do so (or self-nominated); 2) they have a majority support in the Steering Committee; and 3) support from their organisation. In the event of multiple nominations for a role, votes will be held to assign the position. If no nominations are brought forward for a role and the previous occupant is no longer willing or able to undertake the duties then a name shall be drawn at random from the pool of remaining steering committee members. Appointment of the Committee Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary will be done by the new Committee via closed online voting two weeks prior to the AGM. The appointments will be announced at the AGM by the former Chair.

General membership in the Committee will be for a maximum period of two years. At the end of this term, members can renominate for continued service during the call for representatives to the wider working group. The exception will be the tenures of the inaugural general committee members. These will be either a one-and-a-half year or a two-and-a-half year term to establish a staggered renewal process to ensure continuity between committees.

Members of the Committee may withdraw from service at any time and must notify the Committee Chair as soon as possible, in writing. A decision will then be made by the Chair and Vice-Chair on whether an election will be held, or deferred, until the next call for committee renewal.

In the event that a member of the Committee cannot attend a meeting, a proxy representative should be nominated, with at least a one week notice. If the committee member does not provide a substitute member to represent the organisation then the Chair and Vice-Chair can appoint a proxy. Members may also invite observers to meetings or guests to present relevant information to the committee with the approval of the Chair.

5 Roles and Responsibilities of SC Members

- Hold as their primary responsibility the success of AusSeabed.
- Bring the perspectives and priorities of their organisation and, more broadly, the particular sector of the seabed community they represent (e.g. marine survey; fisheries management; marine environmental management)
- Attend and prepare for meetings, including proposing agenda items for meetings and nominate a proxy when unable to attend
- Facilitate the collation and review of feedback or progress on initiatives from their respective sectors, as required by the Committee, in a timely fashion
- Facilitate the acquisition of advice from experts within their workplace and sectors in support of AusSeabed objectives and specific projects

5.1 Role of the Steering Committee Chair

- Provide a strategic perspective that extends beyond their own organisation (e.g. emerging issues and potential new opportunities that advance the vision of AusSeabed) and can link to international programs
- Provide leadership and ensure the effective operation of the Committee
- Plan meetings and workshops, and develop the agenda in conjunction with the Secretary and/or the other Committee members; ensure that agendas and supporting materials are delivered to members prior to the meeting
- Chair the Committee meetings and AGM according to the following meeting guidelines:
  - o make the purpose of each meeting clear and explain the agenda
  - o call for a member to oversee the checklist of appropriate behaviours
  - o clarify and summarise progress as agenda items are dealt with
  - o ensure action items are completed in a timely manner
  - o keep the meeting moving by ensuring agenda items stick to time limits
  - o encourage broad participation in discussions by calling on different members
  - o conclude each meeting with a summary of decisions, action items and their agreed time periods
- Ensure that decisions made at meetings are implemented
- Follows up with consistently absent members to determine if they wish to discontinue membership
- Finds replacements for members who discontinue participation
- Ensure nomination and appointment process takes place at end of each term

5.2 Role of the Steering Committee Vice-Chair

- Stand in for the Chair if s/he is away
- Support the Chair in ensuring the Committee runs smoothly
- Help the Chair to plan meetings
- Organise logistics of the meetings
- Deal with specific tasks or issues as defined by the Committee

5.3 Role of the Steering Committee Secretary

- Maintain records and administration of the meetings, including delivering confidential votes
- Uphold the legal requirements of governing documents
- Undertake effective Committee communication and correspondence
- Distribute the outcomes, recommendations and findings of the committee to the AusSeabed community both within Australia and globally after finalising documents with the Committee
- Documents arising from meetings should be forwarded no later than one week after the meeting

6 Meetings and Reporting

The Committee will meet three times each year. Two meetings will be held face-to-face, in July (coinciding with the Australian Marine Science Association conference) and in late-November, the third meeting will be held via teleconference in March. The July meeting will be in final preparation for the AusSeabed AGM and collaborators workshop that are held as part of AMSA conference.

Agendas will be circulated by the Chair at least two weeks before any Committee meeting or AGM Partnership assembly.

Progress on action items from previous meetings will be communicated to the Chair one week before any subsequent meeting.

Secretariat support (including communication of meeting outcomes and minutes) will be provided by the Chair's host organisation and will be distributed within one week of meeting to the wider AusSeabed working group.

7 Quorum and Decision Making

Motions and agenda items that require a judgement or decision will need to be seconded by another Committee member before being put to a vote. A quorum will be more than half of the attending Committee members. Resolutions will require the support of the quorum. In the event of a tie, the Chair's vote will count as two. This special case is the reason that the Secretary has the responsibility to conduct the vote counting in confidence, so that decisions remain anonymous. If the vote being held is for the chair position, then the tie break will consist of the majority vote within the standing members.

The Committee **will not** make any financial decisions or commit the AusSeabed partnership or Committee to any financial arrangement without the clear and documented approval of the AusSeabed partnership.

8 Steering Committee Composition

Sector	No. of workgroup members	Proportion of steering Committee	No. on Steering Committee	Rounded
Government (Five Standing members)	17	0.6	7.4	7
Private	7	0.2	3.1	3
Academic	4	0.1	1.7	2
international	2	0.1	0.9	1
Total	30			13

9 Document Control

Version	Revision Date	Author	Action
Draft	20180731	Ralph Talbot-Smith et al.	Developed TOR
1	20180731	Aero Leplastrier (AL)	Final - published
1.1	20190703	AL	Proposed changes
1.2	20190710	2019 AusSeabed Steering Committee	Steering committee input on proposed changes
1.3	20191001	AL, KP	Final revision of changes
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