
AUSTRALASIAN ENVIRONMENTAL LAW ENFORCEMENT AND
REGULATORS NETWORK (AELERT)



CHARTER

Effective 29 August 2022

CHANGE SUMMARY

Version	Date	Change Description
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CONTENTS

1. ABOUT AELERT	3
2. ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF FIRST NATIONS	3
3. PURPOSE	3
4. AUTHORITY AND SCOPE	3
5. AELERT ORGANISATIONAL CHART	4
6. NATIONAL COUNCIL	5
6.1. Composition	5
6.2. Functions	5
6.3. Role of the Chairperson	6
6.4. Role of the Deputy Chairperson	6
6.5. Financial Management	6
6.6. Code of Conduct	6
6.7. Declaration of Interests	6
6.8. Strategic Plan and Work Plan (or other Strategies)	7
6.9. Annual Reporting	7
6.10. Performance Evaluation	7
7. NATIONAL COUNCIL & CEO APPOINTMENT AND REMUNERATION	7
7.1. Appointment and Termination	7
7.1.1. National Council Chairperson	7
7.1.2. National Council Members	8
7.1.3. Chief Executive Officer	8
7.1.4. Acting Chief Executive Officer	8
7.2. National Council Remuneration	8
8. NATIONAL COUNCIL MEETINGS	9
8.1. Meeting Schedule	9
8.2. Annual Agenda Plan	9
8.3. Meeting Agendas and Papers	9
8.4. Minutes and Action Items	9
8.5. Quorum and Voting	10
8.6. Out of Session Decisions	10
9. NATIONAL COUNCIL SUPPORT	10
9.1. Induction	10
9.2. Travel and Accommodation	10
9.3. Independent Legal, Accounting and Technical Advice	11
10. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER	11
10.1. Role of Chief Executive Officer	11
11. LEADERSHIP TEAM	12
11.1. Host Agency	12
11.2. Role of the Leadership team	12
11.3. Expectations for Leadership Team, decision making, and culture	13
12. LEADERSHIP ADVISORY PANEL	13
12.1. Role of the Leadership Advisory Panel	13
13. WORKING GROUPS AND COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE	14
13.1. Working Groups	14
13.2. Communities of Practice	15
14. CHARTER REVIEW	15
15. APPENDIX 1 - AELERT CODE OF CONDUCT	16

1. ABOUT AELERT

The Australian Environmental Law Enforcement and Regulators Network (AELERT) is a network of regulatory agencies concerned with the implementation of environmental law. The network was initiated by the Commonwealth in 2003. Since then, AELERT has grown into a widely recognised professional network for sharing of knowledge and experience between regulatory practitioners within agencies in the field of environmental regulation.

AELERT's membership spans all levels of government across Australia and New Zealand and encompasses a broad range of regulators including but not limited to air, noise and water pollution, chemicals, contaminated land, dangerous goods, biosecurity, environmental impact assessment, forestry, pesticides, waste, water regulation, and wildlife.

AELERT's purpose is to foster world-class environmental regulation by facilitating collaboration between agencies. AELERT provides a unique opportunity for regulatory agencies and practitioners, with a focus on environmental regulation, to:

- Collaborate and exchange resources, information, and knowledge
- Share experiences and practical approaches to common challenges
- Build organisation regulatory capability
- Participate in a professional forum of regulators

Through our focus on world class environmental regulation, we aim to provide public value by protecting and enhancing the environment and human health.

2. ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF FIRST NATIONS

AELERT acknowledges the traditional custodians of Australia and their continuing connection to land, sea and environment, water, and community. And in recognition that AELERT is a trans-Tasman organisation, AELERT also acknowledges the First People of Aotearoa New Zealand. We pay our respects to the traditional custodians and First People, their culture, and elders past and present.

AELERT seeks to work side by side with first nations peoples in respectful partnership.

3. PURPOSE

This Charter sets out the roles, responsibilities, structure, and processes of AELERT based on principles of good corporate governance¹. It also provides the basis for the operating arrangements and practices of AELERT.

This Charter provides members of the National Council, Leadership Team, Working Groups and Communities of Practice with direction and guidance on governance arrangements and practices relevant to the respective roles and responsibilities.

4. AUTHORITY AND SCOPE

AELERT is hosted by the Commonwealth Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (the Department). The roles of the Leadership Team are hosted by the

¹ Relevant sections of the following documents were considered as guidance in preparation of the AELERT Charter:

- *Commonwealth Resource Management Framework*
- Australian Institute of Company Directors - *Good Governance Principles for Not-for-Profit Organisations*
- Governance Institute - *Good Governance Guide, Context for Public Sector Governance*
- ASX - *Corporate Governance Council's Corporate Governance Principles and Recommendations*

Australasian Environmental Law Enforcement and Regulators Network Charter

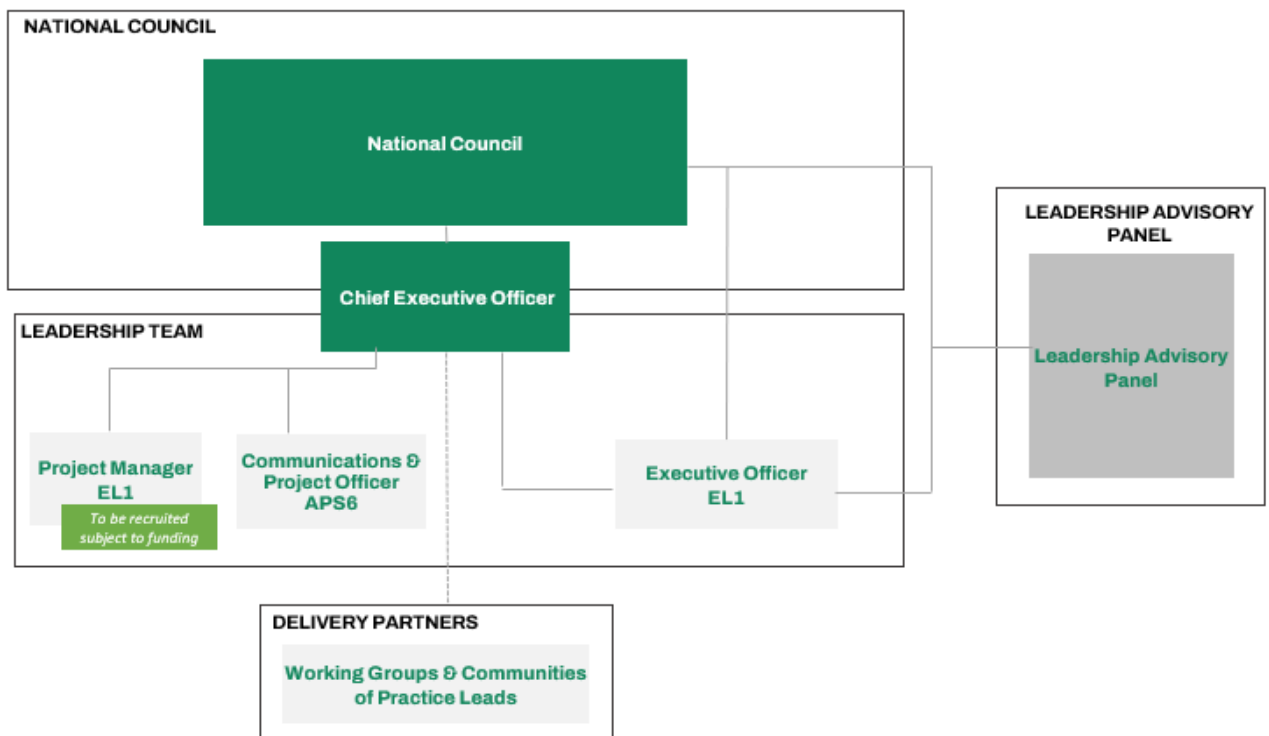
Department however their work is guided by the AELERT Charter, Strategic Plan, and the Leadership Team guidelines.

As AELERT is not a legal entity it cannot hold property or assets. All AELERT’s assets and property, including intellectual property of the AELERT website are held in trust by the Leadership Team’s host agency, the Department.

This Charter assigns the National Council the role of deciding the objectives, strategies, and policies to be followed by AELERT, and ensuring that AELERT performs its functions in a proper, efficient, and effective manner.

The AELERT National Council Chair, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Leadership Team must comply with the administrative and operational framework of the host agency (the Department). At the end of each financial year, AELERT will publish an annual report (see section 5.9).

5. AELERT ORGANISATIONAL CHART



AELERT Organisational Chart

6. NATIONAL COUNCIL

As the governing body of AELERT, the National Council is independent from the day-to-day management of AELERT. The roles and responsibilities of the Chairperson and CEO are separate and are detailed in this Charter.

6.1. Composition

National Council members are appointed on a skills basis with consideration given to ensure representation across jurisdictions, the diverse geographical area covered by AELERT member agencies, and the range of AELERT member agency interests. The membership of the National Council is to reflect a mix of personal attributes to enable the Council to fulfil its role effectively. The National Council will include a representative of the agency that hosts the AELERT Leadership Team (currently the Commonwealth Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water). The majority of members appointed will be representative of the AELERT membership who are experienced in regulatory practice.

The range of skills and experience sought to be represented on the National Council members are outlined in the *National Council Skills Matrix*. The skills matrix is reviewed biannually or as needed.

The National Council membership consists of:

- A Chairperson
- A Deputy Chairperson
- The CEO
- Up to 8 other members.

6.2. Functions

The National Council is AELERT's governing body and monitors strategic risks, sets strategic directions, provides financial oversight, and ensures AELERT performs its functions and delivers value to its members in an efficient and effective manner. It is representative of AELERT's member agencies and the range of matters that they regulate.

The National Council monitors accountable performance in accordance with AELERT's goals and objectives. The primary functions of the National Council are:

- providing strategic direction to AELERT and deciding upon the AELERT's strategies and objectives in conjunction with the CEO
- monitoring the strategic direction of AELERT and the attainment of its strategies and objectives in conjunction with the Leadership Team
- overseeing AELERT's financial affairs including approving the annual budget, assessing AELERT's income streams and regularly evaluating AELERT's financial sustainability
- monitoring the operations and performance of AELERT
- driving organisational performance to deliver member value or benefit
- ensuring the risks faced by AELERT are identified and that appropriate control and monitoring systems are in place to manage the impact of these risks
- ensuring AELERT's financial management and reporting mechanisms are lawful, align with AELERT's strategic direction, sustainable, and provide benefits to benefits to AELERT's members

The National Council delegates to the Chairperson day-to-day responsibility for notification of significant decisions and issues (noting that the National Council remains accountable).

6.3. Role of the Chairperson

The Chairperson's principal responsibilities are to provide leadership to the National Council and to ensure the National Council fulfils its role specified in this Charter. The Chairperson has specific responsibilities to:

- a) Convene and preside over National Council meetings and to facilitate discussion within each meeting.
- b) Represent the views of the National Council to AELERT members and stakeholders.
- c) Maintain a regular dialogue with the CEO and Leadership Team, serving as a primary link between the National Council and AELERT members and providing continuity between National Council meetings.
- d) Work with the CEO in relation to the National Council's requirements for information to contribute effectively to the National Council decision-making process and to monitor the effective implementation of National Council decisions.
- e) Approve expenses and allowances for National Council members.

6.4. Role of the Deputy Chairperson

The Deputy Chairperson's principal responsibilities are to assist the Chairperson in providing appropriate leadership to the National Council and ensuring the National Council fulfils its role specified in this Charter.

The Deputy Chairperson has specific responsibilities to:

- a) Convene and preside over National Council meetings, in the absence of the Chairperson.
- b) Act as Chairperson, during a vacancy in the office of Chairperson, or if the Chairperson is absent from duty.
- c) Assist the Chairperson with their specific responsibilities as listed above.

6.5. Financial Management

The Department shall receive and distribute funds on AELERT's behalf. Funding will meet the interests of AELERT and its members in the pursuit of its core business outlined in the AELERT Strategic Plan and deliver value for money.

The AELERT Operating Budget is approved annually by the AELERT National Council. The National Council may approve expenditure for specific activities provided they are for a proper purpose commensurate with AELERT's aims outlined in its Strategic Plan and Charter. Expenditure must be consistent with relevant financial management legislation, delegations, and guidelines.

The AELERT Leadership Team may expend funds for specific activities within existing budget allocations in the approved Operating Budget for that financial year. The Leadership Team must report against approved expenditure to each National Council meeting.

6.6. Code of Conduct

Each National Council Member is expected to always observe the highest standards of ethical behaviour. The Code of Conduct applicable to National Council Members is available at Appendix 1 – APS Code of Conduct.

6.7. Declaration of Interests

Each National Council Member must declare all material personal interests that could in any way relate to the affairs of AELERT, consistent with the obligations set out in the APS Code of Conduct. The Leadership Team maintains a register of the declarations of interests provided by National Council Members. National Council Members who have any concerns about whether a possible

conflict of interest should be notified should raise the matter with the Chairperson or the CEO of the Leadership Team.

6.8. Strategic Plan and Work Plan (or other Strategies)

Approval of the Strategic Plan and other strategies is a matter reserved for decision by the National Council. The National Council and the Leadership Team are responsible for the development of the Strategic Plan and other strategies for AELERT, through a process determined by the National Council (acting with the advice of the CEO).

The National Council monitors the Leadership Team's implementation of the Strategic Plan and other strategies, and performance against those strategies.

The AELERT National Council will identify quadrennial work priorities which will inform AELERT's work plan. The work plan will be used to guide the day-to-day work of AELERT. The work plan will be published on the AELERT website.

There will be a standing agenda item on personal interests at the commencement of each National Council meeting during which the Standing Disclosure of Personal Interests will be reviewed. Any disclosures of interest made by National Council Members at a meeting will be recorded in the minutes, together with any decisions made by the National Council on the management of those interests.

6.9. Annual Reporting

The AELERT Leadership Team will report to the National Council on an annual basis on the performance, achievements, activities, operations and financial statements of the preceding financial year. The report will also provide an assessment of the performance of AELERT against the objectives set out in the Strategic Plan and Work Plan. Once endorsed by the National Council, the annual report will be published on the AELERT website.

6.10. Performance Evaluation

The National Council will subject itself and AELERT's corporate governance arrangements and processes to a performance evaluation conducted by a qualified independent external assessor at least once every three years.

Specific timing of the performance evaluation is outlined in the Annual Agenda Plan (see section 7.2). This timetable may be varied at the discretion of the Chairperson in consultation with National Council members.

7. NATIONAL COUNCIL & CEO APPOINTMENT AND REMUNERATION

7.1. Appointment and Termination

7.1.1. National Council Chairperson

The National Council Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson are appointed via an open vote between the National Council Members every three years. This process allows for National Council members to nominate themselves or other National Council members for these positions. The person who has been nominated must accept the nomination in order for their name to stand for the positions.

When nominations have been completed, the nomination process is declared closed and those National Council members who have agreed to let their names stand are then candidates for Chairperson and/or Deputy Chairperson. The candidates with the most votes for each role are then appointed.

7.1.2. National Council Members

All members of the National Council are appointed through an expression of interest process with nominations open to people across Australia & New Zealand who possess the skills, capabilities, and experiences sought for National Council members.

National Council members are appointed for a period of up to three years. An appointed National Council member may be eligible for reappointment for one further period of up to three years. Following the initial establishment of the National Council, member terms will be staggered so that generally a third of the positions on the National Council will be vacated each year.

The National Council will discuss its composition and upcoming (re) appointments at least twice annually. In doing so, the National Council will:

- consider its medium-term objectives in relation to National Council composition, considering the strategic objectives and risks of AELERT,
- maintain a succession plan for National Council members,
- maintain a National Council skills and capabilities matrix, which maps current and desired skills, experience, and demographics amongst National Council members,
- ensure that a majority of National Council members represent AELERT member agencies,
- initiate processes for identifying suitable candidates for appointment to the National Council.

A National Council member may resign from the National Council by providing a written resignation to the Chairperson. National Council members are requested to offer a minimum of four weeks' notice of their intention to vacate their committee and representative role and to provide connection to any colleagues that might be interested in taking their place.

7.1.3. Chief Executive Officer

Appointing and, should it be necessary, terminating the employment of the Chief Executive Officer is a decision of the National Council. The National Council considers, reviews, and makes decisions by the National Council on the remuneration, conditions of employment and annual performance of the Chief Executive Officer.

7.1.4. Acting Chief Executive Officer

The National Council delegates authority to the Chairperson to appoint an Acting Chief Executive Officer under certain circumstances, those being:

- a) in the event the Chief Executive Officer is absent from duty, or is for any other reason unable to perform their functions; or
- b) in the event the position of Chief Executive Officer falls vacant without notice.

The exercise of this delegation is subject to the limitations and conditions specified in the National Council's resolution. Under any circumstances, if any person assumes the role of Acting Chief Executive Officer for any period, the Chairperson must report accordingly to the National Council at the next meeting of the Council after the acting period occurs.

7.2. National Council Remuneration

The National Council members will be paid daily fees at a rate consistent with determinations by the Commonwealth Remuneration Tribunal for Boards and Committees of a similar level. Those daily fees are currently:

Chair	Deputy Chair	Member
\$572	\$502	\$431

The amount of a daily fee paid to a National Council member for a meeting day is:

- a) if the member’s qualifying meeting daytime is less than 2 hours—40% of the daily fee; or
- b) if the member’s qualifying meeting daytime is at least 2 hours and less than 3 hours—60% of the daily fee; or
- c) otherwise—100% of the daily fee.
- d) Qualifying meeting daytime is time that a member spends on a meeting day:
 - attending a formal meeting; or
 - on authority business; or
 - on official travel time.

Consistent with the Commonwealth *Remuneration Tribunal Act 1973*, if a person is employed full time by the Commonwealth (or a business owned by the Commonwealth) or in the administration of a Territory and is appointed to a part-time office, the Act prevents that employee from being paid for that part time office. The office holder may, however, be entitled to receive travelling allowance in connection with the part-time office commitment. State and Territory public servants are also excluded from receiving remuneration (except for travel allowance).

8. NATIONAL COUNCIL MEETINGS

8.1. Meeting Schedule

National Council meetings will be held at least quarterly and up to monthly in accordance with the requirements of AELERT to perform its functions in an effective and timely manner.

8.2. Annual Agenda Plan

Under the direction of the Chairperson, the Leadership Team maintains Annual Agenda Plans for meetings of the National Council meetings. The Annual Agenda Plans includes:

- dates of meetings
- key business items
- strategic discussion topics
- standing and cyclical business items
- business items requiring reporting back or further discussion at a later date.

Under the direction of the Chairperson, the Leadership Team may adjust the approved Annual Agenda Plan as necessary.

8.3. Meeting Agendas and Papers

The preparation of all meeting agendas is coordinated by the Leadership Team, under the direction of the CEO, and in consultation with the Chairperson. Preparation of the agenda is informed by the Annual Agenda Plan.

Ordinarily, the agenda and meeting papers for National Council meetings are distributed at least seven days prior to the meeting.

8.4. Minutes and Action Items

The Leadership Team is responsible for taking the minutes of each National Council meeting. Ordinarily, minutes shall be prepared within 5 working days of a National Council meeting, and

following clearance by the meeting Chair, released to National Council members for comment for a period of 5 working days.

The Leadership Team is authorised to act on draft minutes of National Council meeting once the minutes have been cleared by the meeting chair.

The minutes will be presented at the next meeting of the National Council for formal approval or approved out of session after consulting with members as agreed by the chair.

The Leadership Team is also responsible for preparing a report to each National Council meeting on completed and outstanding actions arising from previous meetings.

8.5. Quorum and Voting

Quorum shall consist of the Chair, the Deputy-Chair in their absence and half of the total number of members plus one.

National Council decisions are generally to be consensus – based. Where a vote is required to determine a decision, each member will have one vote. The Chairperson will have a casting vote in the event of an evenly cast ballot.

8.6. Out of Session Decisions

The National Council may make decisions out of session, with a quorum as defined above required for decisions.

9. NATIONAL COUNCIL SUPPORT

9.1. Induction

New National Council Members will be offered a formal induction program. The content of the program is determined by the Chairperson and the CEO, and the program is co-ordinated by the Leadership Team. Each induction program is tailored to suit the skills, knowledge and experience of the inductee and any specific knowledge they require to discharge their responsibilities effectively.

9.2. Travel and Accommodation

The travel and accommodation entitlements of National Council Members are consistent with the Commonwealth Remuneration Tribunal for Boards and Committees of a similar level. The following principles are to be applied in the administration of travel and accommodation entitlements:

- a) National Council members are not expected to gain or lose financially as a result of travelling on official business.
- b) National Council members must only incur expenses or commit AELERT to meet expenses, where funds are lawfully available to do so.
- c) Travel may only be undertaken where its purpose is consistent with the duties of the National Council Member.
- d) When making travel arrangements, the following are to be considered:
 - (i) the necessity of travel and potential alternatives to travel, such as teleconferencing or videoconferencing
 - (ii) the total cost of travel, including value for money
 - (iii) the travel-related policies and procedures of the Department and any policies made by AELERT
 - (iv) the flexibility to maintain an appropriate balance between work and home responsibilities, as well as safety and security.

9.3. Independent Legal, Accounting and Technical Advice

National Council Members may, when they judge such advice necessary for them to discharge their responsibilities as National Council Members, request that they be provided with independent legal, accounting, or technical advice on relevant matters at AELERT's expense. National Council Members should seek such advice through the Leadership Team. The Leadership Team will consult with the Chairperson in relation to the request. Any independent advice obtained at the request of a National Council Member will be tabled at the National Council meeting following the receipt of the advice.

10. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

10.1. Role of Chief Executive Officer

The delivery and achievement of the Strategic Plan, and the management and administration of AELERT are the accountability of the CEO. The CEO reports to and is a member of the National Council through the provision of reports, briefings and presentations to the National Council, covering the performance of AELERT and key issues affecting it throughout the year, including a formal written 'CEO's Report' to every ordinary meeting of the National Council meeting.

The CEO is responsible for providing strategic, financial, and operational leadership for the implementation of AELERT's agenda and will closely coordinate and work with the AELERT National Council and Leadership Team. Specific responsibilities include:

- driving high-level strategic advice to the AELERT National Council, including on strategic priorities for the network, reform priorities, and continuous improvement
- leading the implementation of the governance framework, including a revised Charter, annual reports, financial reporting, and reporting on activities and outcomes
- leading the implementation of the financial membership model and ensuring AELERT provides value for money to its members
- leading engagement with State, Territory and Commonwealth government agencies to develop and align AELERT's strategic agenda and priorities
- developing high quality business strategies and plans ensuring their alignment with short-term and long-term objectives
- driving excellence and quality in regulatory practice and embedding a culture and practice of continuous improvement
- representing AELERT, contributing to positive proactive relationships with agency, practitioner and affiliate members, the regulatory practice community, and cross-jurisdictional networks.

10.2. Delegation to Chief Executive Officer

The National Council delegates responsibility and accountability for the day to day operation of AELERT to the Chief Executive Officer. Day to day to operations include:

- directing and leading staff to ensure the vision, knowledge, skills, and support to meet and maintain high standards and operate to statutory and budgetary requirements
- overseeing all operations and business activities to ensure they produce the desired results and are consistent with the overall strategy and mission
- Negotiating the provision of services with unlimited member agencies on an individual basis, having regard to the resources available, consistent with any Membership Policy in place at the time
- Negotiating with agencies on an individual basis to determine a suitable membership tier and fee for those agencies consistent with any Membership Policy in place at the time and

where reducing fees would be consistent with AELERT's objective to make membership accessible and affordable to all environmental regulatory agencies and their regulatory practitioner staff.

The Chief Executive Officer is to exercise their delegated functions in accordance with the Host Department's administrative framework.

11. LEADERSHIP TEAM

11.1. Host Agency

Leadership Team staff are employed by the host agency (currently the Department) under that department's usual terms and conditions of employment. The host agency will provide recruitment support to Leadership Team staff (and to the Chair of AELERT for the CEO role) at the appropriate level commensurate with required work level standards and available funding. Positions are funded by the AELERT budget.

The Department and AELERT may from time to time enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to guide the relationship between the two organisations.

The AELERT Chair, in consultation with the National Council member representing the host agency, will ensure that Leadership Team staff are managed in accordance with the Department's administrative framework, including but not limited to compliance with the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*, recruitment, security, performance management, work health & safety, remuneration, leave and other conditions and entitlements.

11.2. Role of the Leadership team

The National Council is supported by the Leadership Team. The Leadership Team is currently comprised of a CEO (SES), an Executive Officer (EL1) and a Communications and Project Officer (APS6), however the composition may change over time based on the strategic needs of AELERT. Any changes will be made as a decision of the CEO in consultation with the National Council.

The team is supported by key regulatory staff in member agencies who are Chairs of AELERT Working Groups and Communities of Practice.

The Leadership Team engages with, and is responsive to, the AELERT Chair and National Council. The Leadership Team leads and delivers AELERT business by implementing AELERT's Strategic Plan and delivering key activities in pursuit of AELERT's purpose and objectives.

The Leadership Team is responsible for the day to day strategic, financial, and operational activities of AELERT. Specific responsibilities of the Leadership Team include:

- providing high-level and strategic advice to the National Council, including on strategic priorities and operational program for the network, reform priorities, and continuous improvement
- engagement with Local, State, Territory and Commonwealth agencies to develop and influence AELERT's strategic agenda and deliver value to members
- driving excellence and quality in regulatory practice and advice to embed a culture and practice of continuous improvement
- representing AELERT, contributing to positive proactive relationships with agency and individual members, the regulatory practice community, and cross jurisdictional networks
- developing high quality business strategies and plans ensuring their alignment with short- and long-term objectives
- developing and implementing business activities to ensure they produce the desired results and are consistent with the AELERT strategy and mission,

- administering high level governance, secretariat and administrative support to the AELERT National Council
- implementing AELERT's Communication Strategy, including managing AELERT's website and delivering curated content through social media and newsletter production
- driving and coordinating AELERT events and conferences, including stakeholder liaison, project management and working closely with conference organisers.

11.3. Expectations for Leadership Team, decision making, and culture

National Council members have access to management and AELERT information through the Chairperson, and the CEO. National Council Members are entitled to request documents or information through the CEO at any time.

In leading and making decisions for AELERT and in shaping its culture, it is expected that the CEO and the Leadership Team ensure that:

- a) All AELERT employees comply with the APS Code of Conduct, including to at all times behave in a way that upholds the APS Values and Employment Principles, and the integrity and good reputation of AELERT and the APS.
- b) Resource allocation decisions and operating expenditure are made with due reference to their impact on the financial condition of AELERT, and the associated impact on the achievement of the Strategic Plan.
- c) The provision of information to the National Council is consistent, coherent, and complete.
- d) The National Council is promptly advised if plans or budgets will not be achieved, and that the role of the National Council is respected.
- e) The Leadership Team is organised with processes for ensuring long term succession planning, attracting, and retaining talent, building a capable and agile management team, and ensuring equal opportunity.

12. LEADERSHIP ADVISORY PANEL

12.1. Role of the Leadership Advisory Panel

From time to time, AELERT may establish a Leadership Advisory Panel.

The Leadership Advisory Panel may be comprised of current and former leading regulatory experts, academics, community representatives including first nations representatives, and other relevant advisors.

The Leadership Advisory Panel supports the AELERT National Council and Leadership Team by providing expert advice on request, on matters including, but not limited to, environmental regulation, emerging areas of risk, community engagement, marketing and events, and academic advice.

The Panel operates independently and may meet on an as needs basis to jointly formulate advice. Given the breadth of potential advice being sought, there is no quorum required for a meeting, and advice may be provided from a single (specialist) advisor, multiple advisors or the whole Panel depending on the nature of advice being sought.

Specific activities include:

- identifying issues/interests/perspectives to bring to the attention of the Leadership Team and National Council for consideration
- representing AELERT, contributing to positive proactive relationships with agency and individual members, the regulatory practice community, and cross-jurisdictional networks

- identifying and understanding AELERT member needs and identifying and providing expert advice and supporting the work of the AELERT National Council and Leadership Team
- collaborating with the National Council and Leadership Team as needed, to gather information and feedback relevant to issues under consideration/ deliberation
- undertaking collaborative work on mutual regulatory challenges with AELERT members and stakeholders,
- driving excellence and quality in regulatory practice and advice to embed a culture and practice of continuous improvement,
- contributing to business activities to ensure they produce the desired results and are consistent with the overall strategy and mission.

Membership of the Panel is fluid – the Panel may be formed to deal with a specific topic or issue of concern and then be disbanded – at other times, the Panel may have a standing membership.

Persons may be appointed to the Leadership Advisory Panel by the AELERT Chair or CEO as required. The nature and scale of the recruitment process will vary depending on the nature and extent of the advice being sought.

13. WORKING GROUPS AND COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

AELERT’s Working Groups (WG) and Communities of Practice (CoP) bring together practitioners from various agencies and jurisdictions to undertake collaborative work on mutual regulatory issues. Working Groups primarily function to complete work priorities agreed by the National Council while Communities of Practice are formed to facilitate information and knowledge sharing across the entire AELERT network.

There is no reporting relationship required between Communities of Practice and Working Groups.

13.1. Working Groups

With endorsement of the National Council, AELERT members may form ad-hoc working groups to consider specific matters and to operate for a fixed term, including to address urgent and emerging issues of strategic significance to member agencies, or that require cross border cooperation and national consistency. Working Groups are established and discontinued by the AELERT National Council and function to complete or contribute to work priorities identified in the AELERT Work Plan. A Chair will lead each Working Group and the AELERT CEO will endorse the Chair of each Working Group. Current AELERT Working Groups are:

- Better Regulation
- Capacity Building
- Legal Practice and Policy
- Operations
- Communications and Engagement
- Emergency Operations

Each Working Group has a term of reference and workplan approved. Progress is monitored and reviewed by the National Council on an annual basis.

The CEO is responsible for monitoring the membership of Working Groups.

Working Groups do not have authority to make decisions on behalf of AELERT or the National Council.

13.2. Communities of Practice

Communities of Practice are established by request from AELERT members. Communities of Practice may be discontinued either by direction of the CEO, or at request of the members of that group. Communities of Practice are a forum to encourage collaboration and knowledge sharing across AELERT in a particular area of environmental regulation. A Chair will lead each Community of Practice, endorsed by the CEO. The current Communities of Practice are:

- Environmental Liabilities
- Water Compliance
- Intelligence and analysis
- Wildlife Crime
- Waste Crime
- Aboriginal Inclusion

14. CHARTER REVIEW

The National Council will review this charter on an annual basis, at a time specified in the Annual Agenda Plan. Amendments to the charter may be proposed by National Council Members or the Leadership Team.

15. APPENDIX 1 - AELERT CODE OF CONDUCT

AELERT adopts the Australian Public Service Code of Conduct.

APS Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct requires that an employee must:

- Behave honestly and with integrity in connection with APS employment.
- Act with care and diligence in connection with APS employment.
- When acting in connection with APS employment, treat everyone with respect and courtesy, and without harassment.
- When acting in connection with APS employment, comply with all applicable Australian laws.
- Comply with any lawful and reasonable direction given by someone in the employee's Agency who has authority to give the direction.
- Maintain appropriate confidentiality about dealings that the employee has with any Minister or Minister's member of staff.
- Take reasonable steps to avoid any conflict of interest (real or apparent) in connection with the employee's APS employment and disclose details of any material personal interest of the employee in connection with the employee's APS employment.
- Use Commonwealth resources in a proper manner and for a proper purpose.
- Not provide false or misleading information in response to a request for information that is made for official purposes in connection with the employee's APS employment.
- Not improperly use inside information or the employee's duties, status, power or authority: (a) to gain, or seek to gain, a benefit or an advantage for the employee or any other person; or (b) to cause, or seek to cause, detriment to the employee's Agency, the Commonwealth or any other person.
- At all times behave in a way that upholds the APS Values and Employment Principles, and the integrity and good reputation of the employee's Agency and the APS.
- While on duty overseas, at all times behave in a way that upholds the good reputation of Australia.
- Comply with any other conduct requirement that is prescribed by the regulations.