



NEW SOUTH WALES

ACT-NSW Regional Management Framework

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY GOVERNMENT

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2006

The Agreement

ACT- NSW Regional Management Framework

INTRODUCTION

History

On 30 January 2004 the then NSW Premier Bob Carr and the ACT Chief Minister Jon Stanhope agreed to develop a new framework for strategic regional management. The framework will be used to resolve cross border matters and plan for better ways to provide Government services. The focus of the agreement is to facilitate both State and Territory Governments working together on cross-border issues.

The **Regional Management Framework Agreement** outlines the history, principles, agreed structure, functions and outcomes for the Regional Management Framework (RMF) and how it will be implemented.

Rationale

The Australian Capital Territory was created as an island wholly within New South Wales. While Canberra was initially developed as the seat of Australia's national government and its administrative centre, it also grew into a key regional centre in southeast NSW. As Canberra matured, and particularly since self-government in 1989, cross border issues have become increasingly important, and there is now a need for regular engagement between NSW and the ACT.

Engagement between the ACT and NSW Governments has a range of benefits. It:

- Enables cooperative leadership and management of strategic growth issues in the region;
- Encourages productive, effective and cooperative approaches to regional issues;
- Recognises the mutual interdependencies for service delivery, economic development and environmental management; and
- Improves understanding of the driving forces behind both Governments' policy and development of shared goals and strategies for the region.

Canberra, as the regional centre for the Australian Capital Region, provides a range of benefits and opportunities for southeast NSW residents in transport, education, health, retailing, research and tertiary industry. In return, the region provides many of the services Canberra is dependent on and helps support a higher level of activities, commerce and services than would otherwise occur. The surrounding region also contributes significantly to ACT residents' lifestyle pursuits, tourism, employment and business opportunities.

The Sydney-Canberra corridor is an area of strong mutual interest for NSW and the ACT. Increasingly it is recognised that many of the key factors impacting on the growth and development of the region have cross border implications.

The mutual interdependencies in the region mean that there are significant benefits to both the NSW and ACT governments from a shared approach to the management of key regional issues through developing more structured arrangements for regional

cooperation. If the full economic and social potential of the region is to be achieved it will require greater coordination across jurisdictions.

Current Regional Arrangements

Over the last decade or more, diverse regional consultative arrangements have developed on a voluntary cooperative basis. The arrangements support political, economic, environmental and social objectives. They include:

- the Regional Leaders' Forum (RLF);
- the Capital Region Development Board (CRDB);
- the ACT and Sub Regional Planning Strategy working groups;
- various environmental and planning strategies, including the ACT and Sub-region Planning Strategy, regional State of the Environment Report, NSW strategic and settlement plans, the Canberra Plan; and
- Agency based service arrangements, both formal and informal, to support cross border service delivery.

OBJECTIVES

The Agreement is based on the following principles of understanding for the development of work between the ACT and NSW to:

- Foster a closer working environment for the NSW and ACT governments;
- Advance cross border issues and improve policy development and service delivery in both jurisdictions;
- Establish adequate consultation and notification mechanisms for actions that potentially impact on the different jurisdictions;
- Develop a process for identifying and dealing with impediments to coordination;
- Establish a structure that will deal with problems before any potentially serious cross border problems emerge; and
- Develop and evolve a methodology for a new long term model for strategic regional management and cooperation.

Parties acknowledge the RMF provisions are not legally enforceable but rely on the spirit of cooperation between the two jurisdictions. This agreement is not intended to remove the power to make policy decisions from either party. The final policy decision remains firmly with each state.

FRAMEWORK IN OPERATION

Structures and Organisation

The Regional Management Framework has three key levels of cross border engagement:

First Ministers

- The Premier and Chief Minister will meet once each year, normally early in the year.

Senior Officials Group (SOG)

- The Chief Executive of the ACT's Chief Minister's Department and the Director-General of Premier's Department will form the core of a Senior Officer's Group (SOG) which will meet at least twice per year. The SOG will also be supported by

other senior staff from the *RMF Lead Agencies*, CMD and Premier's Department, who may meet more frequently to progress particular issues.

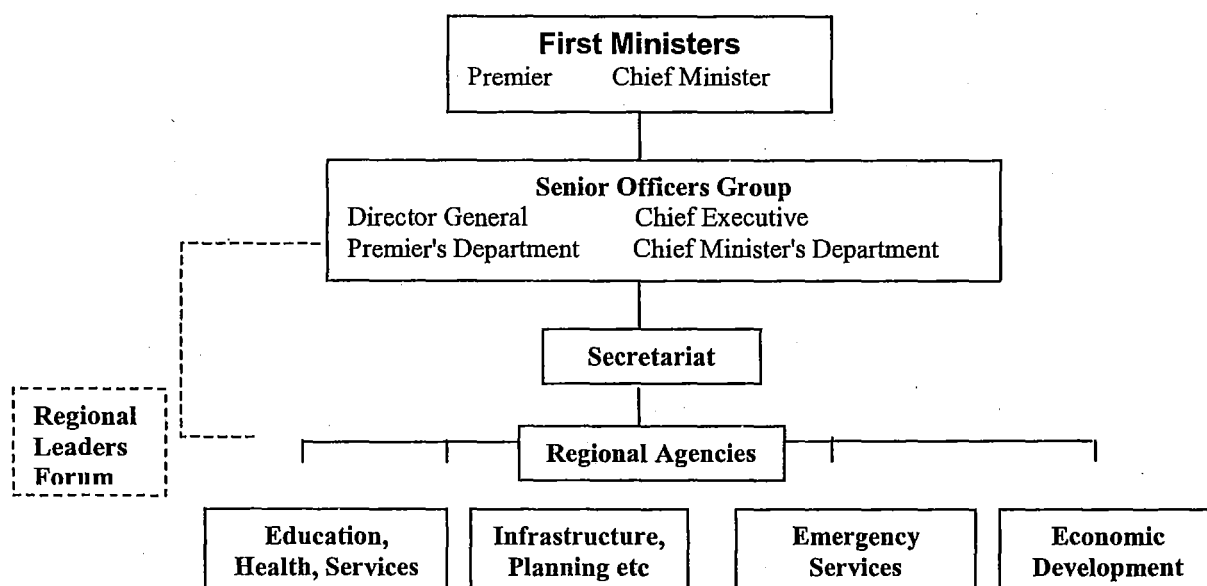
Regional Agencies

- Nominated State and Territory Agency heads will progress specific issues within the framework and report regularly on progress to the SOG.

Meetings

Initially, SOG meetings will be scheduled in April and November. Meeting schedules would then be developed on as required basis as the work program is progressed. For the ACT, CMD and for NSW, Premier's Department will coordinate the government's involvement. The approach would be seek input from agencies, develop an agenda, update the RMF work plan identifying timelines and reporting deadlines.

Figure 1 – ACT-NSW Regional Management Framework Implementation Structure



The intention of the agreement is to involve other key stakeholders such as surrounding local governments and the Australian Government as required.

Agreed Outcomes

The agreed outcomes of the RMF are to:

- Support the availability of capacity to implement and monitor the framework initiatives;
- Work towards integrating planning, resourcing and delivery of services in the appropriate areas of cross border issues;
- Progress the removal of administrative and legislative barriers to joint service delivery between the two jurisdictions;
- Ensure the long term viability of the region's natural resources and environmental quality while supporting community and economic development; and
- Formalise existing arrangements which have largely developed on ad hoc basis.

Moving to a Contemporary Model

The Governments see the opportunity to develop and advance a new, long-term model for regional management service delivery and coordination. Several options for such a model have been identified for further development through the Framework. The long-term goal to work towards is to establish a formal mechanism to manage/monitor the cross border coordination process.

STRATEGIC THEMES & WORK PLANS

Strategic Themes

The key RMF themes will be agreed to through consultation between NSW and ACT based on issues that are currently affecting the region. They will be subject to change as appropriate. Initially, the strategic themes will be:

Water and catchment management – covers issues of water supply from the ACT to NSW, and catchment management in the Molonglo and Queanbeyan Rivers.

- Strategic management of water resources and supply through a regional Integrated Water Supply Strategy (IWSS).

Settlement Patterns – this theme involves planning for urban and rural development.

- Involves cooperative management of growth and urban development issues in the sub-region consistent with key principles and objectives of the Canberra Spatial Plan and the Sydney-Canberra Corridor study (under development), particularly sustainability and containment.

Infrastructure – which will cover all hard and soft infrastructure including transport, communications and community infrastructure. While water supply would normally be included in this category its paramount importance is recognised by it having its own theme.

Economic Development – industry, business and community development, investment and marketing for the region.

- Joint approaches to economic and industry development.

Service Delivery – covers the delivery of services, particularly human services, across the ACT-NSW border.

Emergency and Consequence Management - Covers issues of National Capital Security, all levels of government and business continuity, regional security and Emergency Management.

Work plans

Establishment of Agency Work Plans

The Work Plan will be the document developed by the SOG to record and manage specific activities and projects initiated under the Framework, and to also record agency led actions that have significance to cross border interactions. In this way the work plan is not only a record of projects for the SOG, but also a description of the extent of cross border cooperation between NSW and the ACT.

The Work Plan will be advanced under a number of themes that have significant cross border consequences and opportunities. These are intended to emphasise the strategic nature of regional management. It will specify individual agency responsibilities, tasks and timelines in relation to cross border issues and facilitate clear communication.

The work plan has a particular focus on:

- Coordinating programs and services which have a potentially significant environmental or social impact in the region and which could be enhanced by joint or reciprocal statutory provisions and standards;
- Enhancing service delivery on the ground by coordination of planning or funding; and
- Facilitating opportunities for better outcomes through joint ventures.

Review and Evaluation

The ACT and NSW, through the Chief Ministers Department and Premiers Department, will jointly monitor, evaluate and document the performance of the RMF agreement and associated work plan. This will take the form of a report every 12 months to First Ministers on the progress towards the agreed outcomes and functions and matters included in the work plan. Agencies will have the opportunity to provide updates on their cross border relationships as part of the work plan.

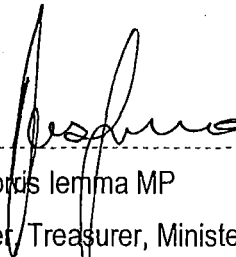


Jon Stanhope MLA

ACT Chief Minister

Date

17 JUL 2006

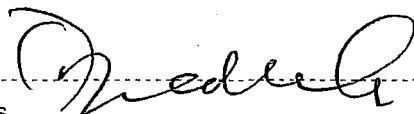


The Hon. Morris Iemma MP

NSW Premier, Treasurer, Minister for Citizenship

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