

## Hunter Local Land Services – Community Advisory Groups

### Terms of Reference

July 2014

#### Background:

Hunter Local Land Services has adopted a local service delivery model based on three districts that reflect the social economic clusters of the region. The Board of Hunter LLS has resolved to establish a Community Advisory Group for each district.

Community Advisory Groups are established under Section 33 of the *Local Land Services Act 2013*.

#### 1. Titles

There are three groups across the Hunter Local Land Services (HLLS):

- Upper Hunter Community Advisory Group
- Lower Hunter Community Advisory Group
- Manning Great Lakes Community Advisory Group

#### 2. Purpose

Community Advisory Groups are “a-political” high level advisory groups of key community stakeholder representatives that provide advice to assist HLLS in its delivery of services and functions.

#### 3. Functions

The function of the CAGs is to provide a communication, consultation and engagement forum with key stakeholder representatives to:

1. Liaise and gain stakeholder advice and input into LLS functions and service delivery across:
  - a. Agricultural Production Advice and Extension
  - b. Plant and Animal Biosecurity
  - c. Emergency Management and
  - d. Natural Resource Management
2. Establish effective communication networks between key stakeholder groups and HLLS for information exchange.
3. Identify and develop collaborative partnership arrangements between stakeholder groups and the HLLS across the functional areas
4. Identify and discuss emerging issues across the functional areas and for the development and implementation of appropriate collaborative actions to address issues.
5. Engage and consult on the development of the HLLS Strategic Plan.

6. Capitalise on investment opportunities to deliver priority projects.
7. Identify information and research needs and appropriate collaborative actions to address.
8. Provide comments and recommendations to the HLLS Board on issues as required.
9. Assist in the monitoring and reporting on outcomes of the collaborative delivery and adaptive improvement for the HLLS CAG consultation and engagement process.

#### 4. Membership

Membership will be sought in two ways:

1. Through invitation to local groups in the area that represent the interests of the following sectors. The relevant local groups will be identified by HLLS with a small number of places left available for groups that wish to put forward a case to be involved.
2. Through an open “expression of interest” process seeking community representatives from across the district to make up membership to 25 people.

Membership will be sought from the following sectors:

- Agriculture, fisheries and forestry industries
- Biosecurity interests
- Animal Health interests
- Landcare
- Country Women’s Association
- Conservation interests
- Natural Resource Management interests
- Aboriginal communities
- State Agencies (limited to the 3 most relevant Agencies for that district)
- Local government (1 elected rep per LGA in the district)
- Educational & research sector
- Other industries relevant to the region (eg mining, tourism, water supply etc)

Membership will be a maximum of 30 people to maximise the productivity of the group.

The HLLS Board will carry out a selection process for community representatives and appoint successful candidates. The Board will consider the overall skills and needs of the advisory group when selecting community representatives.

Community representatives will be selected on the following criteria:

- Ability to represent the views of their community.
- Experience in engaging in community committees.
- Experience developing partnerships and collaborations with organisations.
- Experience in business relating to agriculture, natural resource management, biosecurity or emergency management.

Members are asked to nominate an alternate. If the appointed representative is unavailable for a scheduled meeting alternate representative arrangements will be organised by the appointed representative.

Membership will be for a period of three years.

Membership of the CAGs may be expanded at any time to ensure appropriate representation from across the sectors and region.

#### **5. Role of individual members of HLLS CAG will include:**

- Understanding the functions and services of HLLS ,
- Have the support of and ability to represent their sector/organisation on the HLLS CAG in the collaborative delivery of the set functions,
- Conduit for information between their respective sector/organisation and the HLLS including the information flow into and from the CAG process,
- Building a cooperative, collaborative and effective CAG,
- Broad understanding of issues relevant to the functions and services,
- Develop background knowledge on relevant emerging issues and communicate this to the broader CAG,
- Desire to address barriers to effective implementation and willingness to assist in the development of appropriate solutions.

#### **6. Support Staff**

The District Coordinator from each district will support the CAG, additional HLLS staff may be invited to meetings as guests when their expertise is required.

#### **7. Chairperson and HLLS representation**

The chairperson shall be an appointed HLLS Director. Each Chair is responsible for briefing the HLLS Board as to the salient points/actions agreed to at that meeting.

Other HLLS Directors will attend meetings as available to support and enhance the CAG community engagement process.

The HLLS General Manager will attend the CAG meetings in an ex-officio capacity.

#### **8. Meetings**

Each CAG will meet twice a year. Meetings will generally start with a light lunch then commence at 1pm and finish before 5pm. The meetings will coincide with the two Board meetings in each District and culminate with the invited 'meet and greet' session between the local community and the Board. The HLLS Board meeting will be on the following day.

The location of meetings will be rotated around the district to allow for variety of local people to attend the meet and greet sessions.

An agenda together with relevant supporting material will be forwarded to members at least one week prior to the meeting to enable consideration of key issues. CAG representatives are required to provide RSVP's for all scheduled meetings.

### **9. Record of Meetings**

All scheduled CAG meetings are to be recorded and minuted by an allocated LLS staff member. The summary of the meeting outcomes and key actions will be placed on the HLLS website within two weeks of each meeting and all members will be notified of the website posting by email.

The status of key actions will be tabled at the subsequent meeting of the group for consideration or further action as appropriate.

### **10. Outcomes**

Outcomes from CAGs activities will include:

1. A strong collaborative partnership approach to delivery of LLS functions and services.
2. Identification of priority services, functions and projects for the district.
3. A thorough, inclusive and consultative approach to stakeholder communication, consultation and engagement across functional areas.
4. Timely and effective information exchange between stakeholder organisations and the LLS.
5. Informed collaborative delivery and responsiveness to emerging issues.

### **11. Remuneration and Resourcing**

Non-Government representatives will be recompensed for travel and relevant out of pocket expenses.

HLLS will provide catering and staff resources to support the operation of the CAG as required.

### **12. Review and Evaluation**

The operation of the CAG and Terms of Reference will be reviewed and evaluated annually.