

TENTH BOARD MEETING

**Draft Minutes of Meeting held at the University of Technology, Sydney on
Thursday 15 December 2011**

Present

- Hon Margaret Reynolds, Chairperson
- Penny Holloway, Local Government Managers Australia
- Cllr Genia McCaffery, ALGA
- Prof John Howard, University of Canberra
- Stephanie Foster, Department of Regional Australia
- Peter Allen, ANZSOG (by teleconference)
- Chris Champion, IPWEA (representing John Truman)

In Attendance

- Prof Atique Islam, ECU
- Prof Ian Thynne, Charles Darwin University (by teleconference)
- Professor Mark Evans, ANZSIG Institute
- Prof Graham Sansom, Director ACELG
- Melissa Gibbs, Assistant Director ACELG
- John Ravlic, LGMA
- Sarah Artist, Assistant Director, UTS-CLG
- Paul Bateson, Program Coordinator, Innovation and Best Practice

Item 1: Welcome and Apologies

The Chairperson welcomed all those present.

Apologies were received from Prof Attila Brungs, UTS and John Truman, Institute of Public Works Engineering Australia.

Item 2: Minutes of Meeting held on 15 July 2011

Resolved: That the draft minutes of the meeting held on 9 September 2011 be adopted as a correct record.

Item 3: Matters Arising

No matters were raised.

Item 4: Board Membership

The Board was advised that Prof John Howard had resigned from the University of Canberra and that this would therefore be his last meeting as a member of the ACELG Board. His replacement will be Prof Frances Shannon, Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research), with Prof Mark Evans as her alternate.

The Chair and Board members expressed their appreciation of Prof Howard's contribution.

The Director advised that a new chair would be required for the Programs Committee and proposed that given the technical nature of the Committee's role, the Director (and in his/her absence, the Assistant Director) assume the position. This had been the practice when Prof Howard was unable to attend, and had been acceptable to consortium members.

Resolved:

- **That the Board express its deep appreciation of the contribution made to ACELG by Professor Howard, and send appropriate letters to both Professor Howard and the Vice Chancellor of the University of Canberra.**
- **That the Director become chair of the Programs Committee.**

Item 5: Secretariat Update

The Director reported that the second half of 2011 had been a very busy and stressful period, and that some additional professional and administrative resources are proposed for 2012 (see Item 9). He also reported on his latest visit to Wellington as part of the Don Trow Fellowship at Victoria University. Three further visits are planned for the first half of 2012.

The Director advised that his role as a member of the federal government's Expert Panel on Constitutional Recognition of Local Government had now come to an end.

The Board was also advised that the Director's current 3-year contract expires at the end of September 2012, and that he would not be seeking a renewal. Prof Brungs would report to the next meeting on proposed arrangements for selecting a new director. Several Board members indicated their interest in taking part in the selection process.

Resolved:

That the information be noted and the Board await further advice from Prof Brungs on proposed arrangements for appointing a new Director.

Item 6: ACELG Awareness and Impact

The Director and Assistant Director reported on progress in increasing awareness of ACELG's activities. They referred in particular to the very strong response to the Research Forum held on 14-15 December, the success of the advancing leadership program in the Northern Territory, the Excellence in Local Government Leadership program, broad participation in ACELG projects, continued frequent requests for conference and seminar presentations, and the ready acceptance of ACELG by State and Territory agencies as a policy adviser and project manager.

The director also reported on an approach by the publisher of *Local Government Manager*, which is published privately on behalf of LGMA, seeking a commitment by ACELG to advertise in the magazine.

Board members raised a number of issues including:

- The need to update ACELG's communications strategy, including advertising and promotion more broadly, linkages between ACELG partner websites etc
- The desirability of developing quantitative and qualitative indicators to measure ACELG's impact. To this end, Prof Mark Evans offered to develop a methodology for developing appropriate indicators
- The need to identify indirect impacts, such as ACELG's role in enabling the activities of other organisations and developing new networks.

Resolved:

- **That the information be noted**
- **That a further report on communications strategy, including advertising, and measurement of ACELG's impact be prepared for the next meeting**
- **That the publisher of Local Government Manager be advised that ACELG's Board appreciates the magazine's regular coverage of ACELG activities and will consider advertising specific projects or events in those cases where funds are available for that purpose.**

Item 7: Research Progress Report

The Research Program Manager reported on progress with the Research and Policy Foresight Program, including the work of the Research Advisory Committee, current and recently completed working papers, the Research Forum held on 14-15 December, and dissemination of research findings.

Board members highlighted the importance of practical application of ACELG research, including strengthening links with related organisations, providing advice to State agencies and local government associations, incorporating research findings into professional development programs, and the scope for a partnership with the soon-to-be-established Regional Policy Institute.

Resolved:

- **That the information be noted**
- **That a further report on disseminating and operationalising ACELG research be prepared for the next meeting.**

Item 8: Programs Report

Prof Howard and the Director reported on the Programs Committee meeting held on 11 November. They advised that less work than originally planned would be completed during 2011, but considered this was largely due to a very ambitious work program plus some delays with LGRF projects that were beyond ACELG's control. Most of the outstanding work is scheduled to be completed in the first quarter of 2012.

The Board discussed several specific issues:

- **ANZSOG Leadership Program**

Peter Allen and Prof Evans tabled a report on the inaugural Excellence in Leadership program and presented a number of recommendations for adjustments to the program in 2012. Discussion focused on the financial viability of the program and the need to find ways to involve more senior elected members.

- **Innovation and Best Practice**

The Board noted new arrangements for the Innovation and Best Practice program to come into effect following Prof Howard's retirement. Prof Howard tabled a paper outlining ideas for extension of the work program, focusing in particular on promoting innovation. Board members highlighted the importance of practice-focused outputs. Cllr McCaffery reiterated ALGA's support for the work on social media and the opportunity to hold a special session based on ACELG's work in that field at the 2012 General Assembly. Board members strongly endorsed that approach.

- **Aspiring Leaders Program ('Advancing Leadership')**

The Director reported on progress in expanding this program, including the launch of the Graduate Certificate in Leadership in the Northern Territory; arrangements for the 2012 LGMA Management Challenge, which is to become a subject in the graduate program; and negotiations with the University of Tasmania and University of Adelaide to become program partners.

Board members recommended involving Minister Crean in the 2012 Management Challenge finals.

- **Women in Local Government**

The Chair reported on a meeting with Cllr Dariea Turley, President of ALGWA, to discuss concerns regarding the progress of the 50:50 Vision – Council for Gender Equity program. She advised that ALGWA is preparing a funding submission to extend the program for an additional 12 months, including renegotiated targets for participation, integration with similar state-based programs, and stronger partnerships with other national bodies (in particular, the LGMA, ALGA and ACELG itself) to extend the program’s reach and appeal. She expressed the view that the fundamentals of the program remain important and valid, and that ACELG should continue to help where it can. Board members stressed the need to follow-up on these proposals and to ensure that effective delivery arrangements for the program are in place, including strengthening and re-focusing of ALGWA’s role. It was agreed that a meeting between ALGWA, ALGA, LGMA and ACELG should be held as early as practicable in the New Year.

- **LGRF Projects**

The Director reported on progress with the five national projects under the Local Government Reform Fund for which ACELG is responsible. He advised that meetings had been held with all relevant sections of the Department of Regional Australia and with the States/NT to progress those projects that require jurisdictional sign-off, and that as a result of those meetings considerable progress is being made. The draft Workforce Strategy will be finalised in February/March 2012, and in relation to national data sets and the National Assessment Framework for asset and financial management, Tasmania, South Australia and the NT are working with IPWEA and the ACELG secretariat to design a model data collection pro forma and online portal, to be rolled-out nationally during 2012.

Board members highlighted the importance of an effective mechanism for regular monitoring of progress with major and complex projects, and the value of a collaborative approach. Stephanie Foster provided an update on the work of the Local Government Minister’s Forum and in particular its interest in establishing a benchmarking framework. She noted that this could build on ACELG’s current projects.

Resolved:

- **That a further report on progress towards the 2012 Excellence in Local Government Leadership program, including options for greater involvement of elected members, be presented to the next meeting**
- **That Minister Crean be approached concerning a role in the 2012 Management Challenge finals, focused on the theme of low carbon communities**
- **That the Chairperson arrange a further meeting with the President of ALGWA in early 2012 to progress proposed changes to the 50:50 Vision program, and seek to include representatives of ALGA and LGMA**
- **That the Director report to the next meeting on a ‘traffic light’ or similar monitoring system for major ACELG projects.**

Item 9: Draft Programs and Budget for 2012

The Director presented preliminary estimates of the likely outcome for 2011 and a draft budget for 2012 (table below). He noted that there are still a number of issues affecting the 2011 outcome to be resolved over the next few weeks, so the draft budget is somewhat more tentative than in previous years. A final report and budget will be tabled for the Board’s approval at the March 2012 meeting. He also advised that on current indications it will be challenging (but by no means impossible) to achieve the Project Plan targets for program budgets and for \$2m in retained funds at the end of Year 5. Longer term projections will be provided at the March meeting.

Board members strongly endorsed the need for early consideration of longer term strategy, notably finding ways to maximise the scope for an ongoing sustainable operation.

Resolved:

That the draft budget be adopted, subject to confirmation at the next meeting and consideration of longer term strategy.

Item	2011 Budget	2011 Estimate	2012 Project Plan	2012 Budget	Planned c/f to 2013	Notes
Income \$000s						
Principal c/f by UTS	6795	6795	4985	5977		<i>Increased c/f due to extra interest/income + underspend</i>
Funds c/f by Partners	404	404		491		
Interest	350	350	220	250		<i>2011 included \$30K from 2010</i>
UTS	300	300	300	300		
UC	100	100	100	100		
ANZSOG	20	20	20	20		
IPWEA	20	20	20	20		
LGMA	20	20	20	20		
Other Income	1264	1114	450	352		
Total	9273	9123	6115	7530		
Expenditure \$000s						
Core Staff	580	615	610	660		<i>2012: additional staff needed</i>
Secretariat Expenses	80	80	85	85		
Temporary Staff Support	50	40				
Research and Policy	(160)398	(144)299	(150)250	(80)294	20	<i>(2012: Partnership Scheme contributions)</i>
Innovation & Best Practice	320	299	250	300	17	<i>2011 expd net of 'special payment' by UC to offset some 2010 costs</i>
Governance & Leadership						
• ANZSOG	119	39	50	72	83	
• Emerging Leaders	(40)100	(40)90	(50)100	(40)100	25	<i>(Mgt Ch – LGMA)</i>
• Governance Imp	(62)162	(20)50	(50)100	(42)105	5	<i>(SAI Global)</i>
• Women in LG	(200)275	(200)218		(10)113		<i>(ALGWA; data project; 2011 ANZSOG scholarships)</i>
Orgn Capacity Building						
• Financial/Asset Mgt	(377)601	(360)487	225	(40)391	106	<i>(LGRF – LTFP + NAF)</i>
• Other	(225)195	(160)185	(100)150	(90)265		<i>(LGRF – Data sets)</i>
Rural-Remote and Indigenous LG	(150)341	(140)236	150	(50)270	60	<i>(Northern Australia Water)</i>
Workforce Development						
▪ Practice Unit	(50)327	(50)266	200	285		<i>(LGRF – Workforce strategy)</i>
▪ Course Dev't	100	50	(100)150	100		
Total	3648	2655	2320	3040		
Drawdown of Principal	1403	818	1195	1693		
Balance c/f by UTS	5392	5977	3790	4284		
Funds c/f by Partners	233	491		206		

NB: Figures in brackets show budgeted or anticipated cash income from sources other than consortium partner contributions. All numbers rounded to nearest \$1000.

Item 10: Other Business

No matters were raised

Item 11: Meetings in 2012

The Director proposed that the pattern of Board meetings in 2012 include meetings in March/April, June/July (teleconference), September (in conjunction with the Excellence in Leadership program), and December. He suggested that Hobart would be a good venue for the March meeting: as well as Hobart being the chairperson's base, ACELG is building an effective relationship with the University of Tasmania, the Tasmanian Division of Local Government (part of the Premier's Department), and a

number of local government bodies. The Chair indicated that she could put together a program of events for 29-30 March.

Resolved:

Subject to confirmation of arrangements, the next meeting be held in Hobart on 29-30 March 2012.