

# The Transition of the Regional Advisory Panel into Tranche 2

## Aim

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To flag upcoming changes in the role, structure, membership and function of the Regional Advisory Panels in the second tranche of the CRCWSC.

## Current Regional Advisory Panels (RAP)

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RAPs have been established for most major Australian cities – Melbourne, Adelaide, Sydney, Brisbane and Perth.

The terms of reference outlines a role for these RAPs as a conduit between the CRCWSC and its industry partners, primarily by assisting the Regional Executive Director in delivering locally based engagement and adoption activities.

Within the CRCWSC structure these RAPs differ from Stakeholder Advisory Sub-Committees (SASC) which provide input into the delivery of research projects, and the Essential Participants' Reference Group (EPRG) which provides the CRCWSC with insights into emerging national priorities and issues relevant to water sensitive cities.

In practice the role and function of the RAPs varies across cities. Differences exist in:

- Size – the size of each RAP reflects the number of participant organisations in each region – with Adelaide being relatively small and Melbourne being relatively large.
- Membership – membership varies from officer level to executive level across and within the RAPs. One consistent theme is that organisations are typically represented by their WSUD and IWM 'champions'.
- Some RAPs (eg: Perth, Brisbane) invite non-CRCWSC partners, and have adopted a role in coordinating collaboration on city-wide water sensitive city opportunities.
- Function – some have a greater operational focus while others have targeted influencing as their priority. This difference reflects both the interests of the active members, as well as the political context in which each operates.
- Structure – some RAPs have developed sub-committee type approaches, with members working together on CRCWSC matters outside of RAP meetings. Some RAPs are chaired by CRCWSC board members and others by CRCWSC Exec.

## RAPs in Tranche 2

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The CRCWSC research program in tranche 2 (2016/17-2020/21) will be structured quite differently from tranche 1. The current A, B, C, D program structure will be replaced with the city-based projects model.

Each city will have a Transition Plan. Based on the Professor Rebekah Brown’s continuum, this plan will outline the local context and water management history of the city as well as its needs in making the transition to a water sensitive city.

These needs will form the project opportunities. CRCWSC funds/resources will be used to implement the priority projects (considered at the national level) with unfunded projects framed as a type of “prospectus” to attract and guide future funding opportunities.

Tranche 2 projects themselves will be delivered locally and will involve close collaboration between research and industry partners. Some projects may be CRCWSC-led while others may be industry-led.

The RAPs will act as a sponsor and steering committee in this process. For those familiar with the Victorian context, the RAPs could be likened to a DELWP Project Control Group in function.

Financial and project management accountability for projects will rest with a newly created Regional Manager role, reporting to the CRCWSC Executive. These Regional Managers will be established in mid-2016, initially in Melbourne and Perth. It is possible that each RAP will also be supported by a Knowledge Broker.

The RAP will be chaired by an industry partner and will continue to represent the interest of local CRCWSC partners. CRCWSC will participate through a representative of the CRCWSC Executive/leadership group.

### Issues for discussion

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The RAP will need to transition to its new role by before the end of the year. During this time it will also be responsible for scoping and prioritisation of tranche 2 CRCWSC projects.

In making the transition, consideration may be given to:

- Size – what is the optimum size for an effective steering group?
- Skills and membership – both in terms of organisations (CRCWSC partner and non-partners) as well as level of representation from each organisation.
- Governance – what structure will be effective and participatory?
- Terms of reference – how does the function and focus need to change?
- Timing of changes – to minimise disruption to the Tranche 2 process, engender ownership of Tranche 2 projects and enable “handover”.

### Next Step

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Input is sought on a process to make this transition – Responsibility for the transition of the RAP sits at the hub/city level which provides flexibility to scope an appropriate process.

Input is also sought in a review of the current RAP – what to Start; Stop; Keep?