



Australian Square Kilometre Array Coordination Committee (ASCC)

Charter

February 2022

Objective

1. The Australian SKA Coordination Committee (the Committee) provides coordination, support and advice on the Square Kilometre Array (SKA) project in Australia and maximises the benefits to Australia. It has been established to:
 - a. Support Australia's involvement in the SKA radio telescope project and the delivery of its hosting obligations to the SKA Observatory.
 - b. Coordinate efforts to return benefits to Australia and local communities from participation in this global mega-science project.
 - c. Provide strategic advice to the Australian and Western Australian Governments on the SKA project. This includes advice on project design, implementation and related risk issues during pre-construction, construction issues and transition to the operational phase of the telescope.

Scope of Strategic Advice

2. The Committee provides strategic advice to the Australian and Western Australian Governments on:
 - a. Governance and Risk – Maintaining robust governance arrangements between national and international project partners, identifying, mitigating and managing diplomatic, political, reputational, legal, financial, scientific and technological risks to project delivery.
 - b. Site Delivery, Management and Protection – Ensuring the readiness of the Australian site for construction, and appropriate management of the site during construction and operations.
 - c. Project Design, Funding and Implementation – Providing advice on the design and implementation of the SKA project.
 - d. Stakeholder Engagement – Ensuring appropriate engagement and timely communication with stakeholders, and participation of stakeholders, involved with the SKA project in Australia.
 - e. Maximising Benefit Realisation – Maximising participation and translation benefits to project stakeholders including the Australian and Western Australian governments, members of the Wajarri Yamatji Community as the traditional custodians of the land on which the telescopes will be built, regional and national industry participants, the Australian astronomy and science communities, and the broader Australian public.

Membership

3. The Committee comprises:
 - a. One ex-officio member from the Australian Government Department of Industry, Science Energy and Resources, who will also Chair the Committee
 - b. One ex-officio member nominated by the Government of Western Australia
 - c. One ex-officio member nominated by the International Centre for Radio Astronomy Research (ICRAR)
 - d. One ex-officio member nominated by the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO)
 - e. The Chair of the Science Advisory Committee
 - f. The Australian member on the SKA Science and Engineering Advisory Committee (SEAC), and
 - g. Up to three independent members with relevant experience to meet the committee's skills and knowledge requirements outlined below.

Appointment term

4. Independent members with relevant skills and experience to meet the committee's requirements will be appointed by the Chair for a term of up to three years.
5. Independent members can be reappointed when their term finishes.
6. Independent members can resign from their position at any time. They may be discharged at any time at the discretion of the Chair if there is reasonable cause.
7. A Deputy Chair may be appointed by the Chair and may act in the Chair's absence.

Skills and knowledge

8. Members of the Committee taken collectively will have a broad range of knowledge, skills and experience relevant to construction and operations of a major international astronomy project in remote Australia, and associated benefit realisation.
9. All members should be conversant with financial management reporting.
10. At least one member of the committee must have:
 - a. Legal or related governance and legal risk management experience.
 - b. Expertise gained from construction and/or operations of each of Australia's two SKA precursor telescopes, the Murchison Widefield Array (MWA) and Australian SKA Pathfinder (ASKAP).
11. Other desirable skills and knowledge include:
 - a. Astronomy knowledge, astronomy project management across all project phases, and broader experience of the international science project environment.
 - b. Project management skills, particularly relating to engineering construction projects delivered in remote Australia.
 - c. Specific knowledge of the Mid West region of WA, particularly of key SKA project stakeholders; and stakeholder management skills more broadly.
 - d. Industry engagement and procurement experience.
 - e. Science/technology outreach and translation experience.
 - f. Big data management and science experience.

Remuneration

12. Members of the Committee are not remunerated.

Observers

13. At the Chair's invitation, internal staff or external parties may attend meetings (in whole or in part) as Observers. This is likely to include:
 - a. SKAO Australia representatives.
 - b. Australia's Industry Liaison Officer (ILO).
 - c. The Director of the Australian SKA Regional Centre (AusSRC).
 - d. Key staff supporting members of the Committee.
14. Observers will formally advise the Chair of any conflict of interest.

Independence

15. The Committee has no executive powers in relation to the operations of the Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources.

Conflict of Interest

16. On engagement and each year thereafter, members of the Committee and its sub-committees will provide written declarations to the Chair of any actual, perceived or potential conflict of interest they may have in relation to their participation on the committee.
17. Members should consider past employment, consultancy arrangements and related party issues in making these declarations. The Chair must be satisfied that the Committee has sufficient processes in place to manage any actual, perceived or potential conflict.
18. At the beginning of each Committee or sub-committee meeting, members are required to declare any actual, perceived or potential conflict of interest that may apply to specific matters on the meeting agenda.
19. Where required by the Chair, the member will be excused from the meeting or from the Committee's consideration of the relevant agenda item(s). Details of actual, perceived or potential conflicts of interest declared by members of the Committee and its sub-committees, and action taken, will be appropriately reflected in the minutes.
20. Conflicts of interest will be managed by the Chair in consultation with the Deputy Chair (if appointed).
21. If the Chair has an actual, perceived or potential conflict, it must be declared prior to the meeting commencing to the Deputy Chair or, if there is no Deputy Chair, to the Secretariat to determine the best way forward.

Meetings

22. The Committee will meet at least three times per year, and more often if required. The Chair may call a meeting if requested by another Committee member.
23. Meetings plan to be scheduled approximately four weeks in advance of scheduled SKAO Council meetings.
24. Engagement with the Committee may be conducted by correspondence.

Secretariat

25. The Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources will provide secretariat services to the Committee.

Review of functions

26. The Committee will review the appropriateness of this Charter at least annually.

Disclosure and Use of Information

27. Committee members must not use or disclose information obtained by the Committee except in meeting the Committee's responsibilities, or unless expressly agreed by the Chair.

Sub-committees

28. The Committee may establish sub-committees to assist it in meeting its responsibilities. A member of the Committee may be appointed as the Chair of the sub-committee.
29. The responsibilities, membership and reporting arrangements for each sub-committee will be documented as schedules to this charter.
30. Current sub-committees include:
 - a. Australian SKA Science Advisory Committee (ASKASAC).
31. The actions of the sub-committees will be reported to the Committee at each meeting.