



NSWIC
NEW SOUTH WALES
IRRIGATORS'
COUNCIL

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Being a Delegate to NSW Irrigators' Council

2014

Background

NSW Irrigators Council (NSWIC) is the peak body representing holders of water access entitlements across the State.

The Council is made up of a range of Member organisations, covering regional groups (in all areas of the State), commodity groups, irrigation infrastructure operators and state wide representative groups.

Formed in September 1983, the Council itself is made up of a series of Delegates from each Member organisation. The Council is the senior policy making entity of the organisation. It elects a Board to oversee the operation of the organisational wing of Council. On a day to day basis, the organisation is engaged in lobbying, advocacy, policy research, media relations and public relations.

For more information on the Council, see our website – www.nswic.org.au

About This Document

Council has gained a great deal of profile and respect in water policy matters not only in NSW but nationally. A great deal of credit for that can be attributed to the people involved at Delegate level. Our ability to attract relevant organisations and have them engage actively with us by nominating high quality individuals has been a key to our success.

It is also the key to our future. Council recognises that voluntary roles such as this can be quite demanding. This document is designed to give you an understanding of the role, responsibility, expectations and time demands placed on a Delegate to our Council. It is designed to encourage our Member organisations to look to their future – and to the future of all water access license holders – by encouraging potential Delegates to actively considering service in a role with NSWIC.

Role of a Delegate

Each Member of NSWIC is entitled to nominate one Delegate to our Council. That Delegate takes on the role of representing their organisation in the discussions and deliberations of our Council.

Council will generally discuss and determine issues of policy directly affecting irrigators. Sometimes, those issues won't be relevant to each individual Member organisation, but we recognise that our capacity to influence decisions is maximised by speaking with a single voice.

Basic Responsibilities of a Delegate

Our Council meets “face to face” three times per year in Sydney. Delegates are expected to;

- attend these meetings;
- provide a brief written report of activity in their area (when requested);
- have read the agenda and briefing materials prior to the meeting;
- participate in debate and discussion on a range of policy matters; and
- vote on both policy matters and the election of our Board.

Note that only Class ‘A’ Members, who form the majority of our Membership, are able to vote. Class ‘B’ Members enjoy the same responsibilities and expectations except for the capacity to cast a vote.

Aside from our three face to face meetings, Council will occasionally meet either directly or via teleconference where an issue is so pressing that it requires a decision. Delegates are expected to participate in this process.

As well as considering matters raised by others with Council, Delegates are expected to bring matters, where relevant, from their own organisation to Council for support. This will involve the preparation of motions and supporting documents, with support either from your organisation or NSWIC.

Should the need arise, our Members can nominate an alternate Delegate who may attend meetings as your proxy should that be necessary.

Delegates receive a weekly email update from our office, although this can be delegated to others within your organisation if you so wish. Many organisations choose to pass some or all of this information on to their own members.

Extended Responsibilities

Some Member organisations ask their Delegate to play a greater role within NSWIC by taking on extended responsibilities. This falls into two main categories; participation in Reference Groups or election to the Board.

Where particular issues become technical in nature and require a detailed analysis and understanding, NSWIC will form a Reference Group. That Group, supported by our staff, will analyse matters in detail in preparation for recommendations to the full Council. Reference Groups generally meet via teleconference, although occasional face to face meetings are held depending on the issue at hand. Participation in Reference Groups is entirely voluntary.

The operations of Council are directed by a Board. The Board comprises six Directors who are elected from amongst the Delegates. Terms of appointment are two years, meaning three Directors are elected each year at our November AGM (one of the three Council meetings per year). The Board elects a Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Committee Chairmen from its own ranks. Directors must remain Delegates in order to continue on the Board. Please see our separate briefing on the role of Directors for further details.

Time Demands on Delegates

NSWIC recognises that our Delegates – and potential Delegates – are often limited in the time that they can offer. We do our best to minimise the time commitment involved, although our organisation does rely on our Members for the provision of timely, accurate and reflective policy advice.

From our side of the equation, we require your attendance for three days in a year in Sydney for our meetings. For many Delegates, that means travel the evening prior with a night in Sydney (or en route). We greatly prefer our Delegates to be familiar with the agenda and subjects to be discussed, although this requires the commitment of only a few hours prior to a meeting.

From your side of the equation, it would be useful to gain an understanding from your organisation what *they* expect of Delegates to NSWIC. For instance, will they provide administrative support or will you be the one that receives and distributes our information? Will they expect that you sit on Reference Groups or do they have others who may fulfil that role?

Very important...

Irrigators need NSW Irrigators Council – but Council is only as strong as the people who guide it.

Council also needs irrigators.

We need you.

Please don't hesitate to get in touch with our office (02) 9251 8466 if you have any questions about the role of a Delegate. We're happy to assist at any time.