

# PZJA Fisheries Management Paper No. 1

TRL RAG Meeting  
31 March 2016



Australian Government

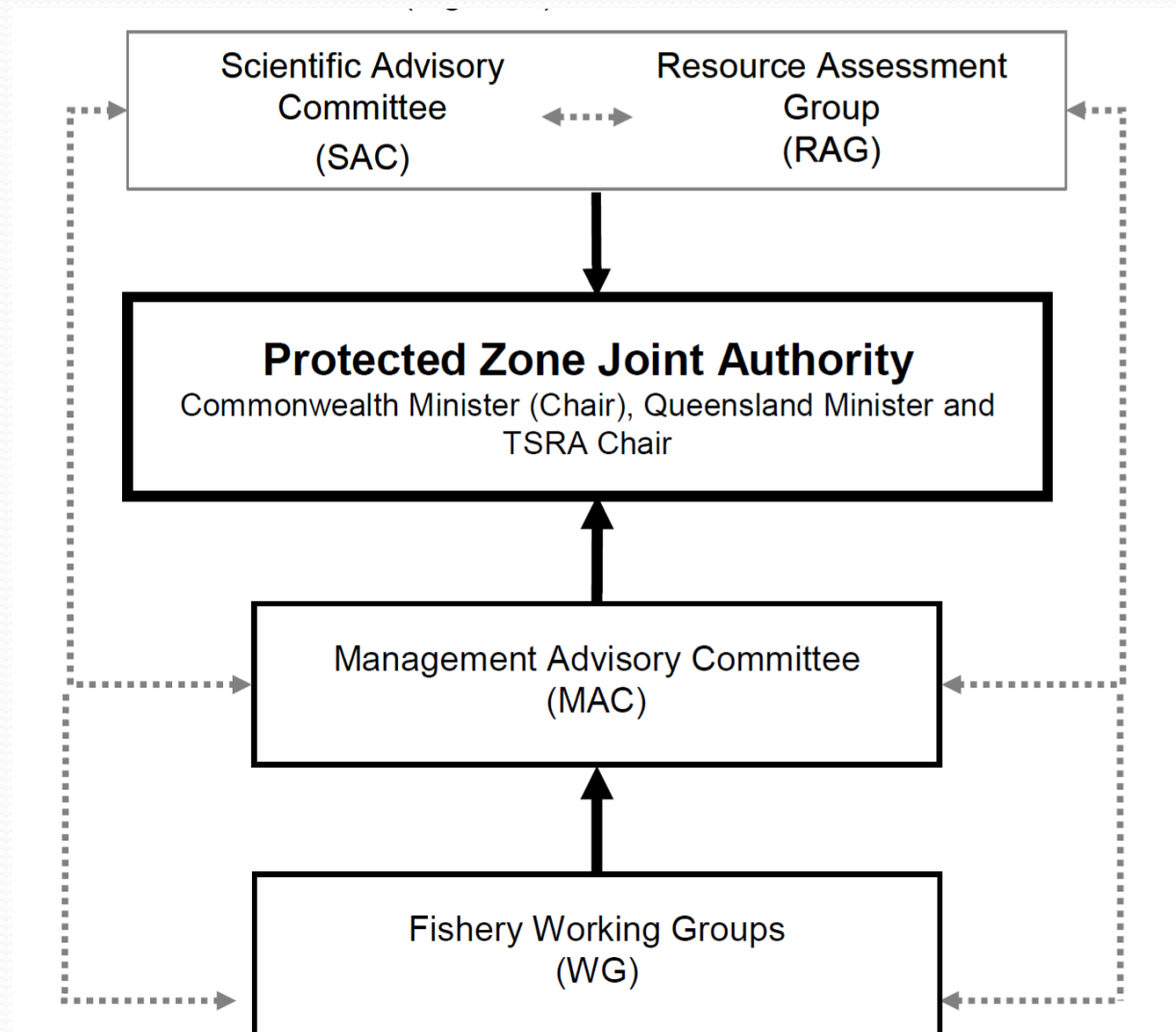
Australian Fisheries Management Authority



# Purpose

- Policy for the operation and administration of Resource Assessment Groups (RAGs) and other associated consultative groups.
- Outlines key decision making processes associated with the delivery of advice in the pursuit of the PZJA's legislative objectives.

# Consultative Structure



# Key Principles

- i. RAG is advisory rather than decision-making;
- ii. RAG should provide expert advice that best pursues PZJAs legislative and policy objectives;
- iii. The PZJA seeks, through its consultative processes, to obtain best quality information and advice;
- iv. The PZJA will make decisions based on the best advice (and information) available at the time;
- v. Committees/groups should have defined roles and there should be minimum overlap in responsibilities; and
- vi. Advice and reporting should be a transparent and open process.

# RAG role and functions

- Provide advice on
  - the status of fish stocks, target and non-target species
  - impact of fishing on the marine environment
  - stock depletion or recovery rates
  - confidence levels of the fishery assessments
  - risks to the attainment of approved fishery objectives.
- Advice should address biological, economic and wider ecological factors impacting on the fishery.
- Evaluate alternative harvest options proposed by the relevant fishery WG and/or MAC.

# RAG Terms of Reference

1. Analyse, assess, and report on the fishery status against agreed reference points, including target and non-target stocks, impacts on the marine environment from fishing, and the economic efficiency with which stocks are fished;
2. Identify improvements and refinements to assessments;
3. Evaluate alternative harvest strategies or TAC settings. This includes providing advice on confidence limits or risk levels associated with particular harvest strategies;
4. Assist the WG to develop, test, and refine sustainability reference points and performance indicators for the fishery. Advise on stock status and trends relative to these reference points and indicators;

# RAG Terms of Reference contd...

6. Provide advice and recommendations to the SAC on issues consistent with RAG functions;
7. Facilitate peer review of assessment outputs;
8. Facilitate/drive a collaborative stock assessment with adjacent jurisdictions;
9. Maintain awareness of current issues by promoting close links with the MACs, SACs and any other Torres Strait RAGs; and
10. Liaise with other researchers, experts and key industry members.

# RAG Membership

The minimum requirements for RAG membership are as follows:

- 1 x Chair;
- 1 x Executive Officer;
- 1 x Staff member from AFMA;
- 1 x Staff member from QDPI&F;
- 1 x Traditional fishing member;
- 1 x Non-Traditional Inhabitant Industry member;
- 1 x Scientific member;
- 1 x Independent Scientific member;
- 1 x Conservation member;
- 1 x PNG NFA member;
- 1 x TSRA support member.



# RAG Member responsibilities

- Put views clearly and concisely and be prepared to negotiate to achieve acceptable outcomes and compromises where necessary;
- Act in the best interests of the fisheries as a whole, rather than as an advocate for any particular organisation, interest group or regional concern;
- Be prepared to observe confidentiality and exercise tact and discretion when dealing with sensitive issues;
- Contribute to discussion in an objective and impartial manner and void pursuing personal agendas or self-interest;

# RAG Member responsibilities

- Be prepared to make the necessary commitment of time to ensure that they are fully across matters which are the subject of consideration by the committee;
- Industry Members must not have commercial interests in the same company as other members on the same RAG;
- Industry members must have the wider industry's confidence and authority to undertake their functions as a RAG member. They must also be prepared to consult with members of industry through port-level associations, regional associations and peak industry bodies as necessary; and
- Traditional inhabitant members must have the community's confidence and authority to undertake their functions as a RAG member. They must also be prepared to consult with members of community through local associations and meetings as necessary.

# Reaching Consensus

- A co-operative approach to RAG discussions is essential.
  - Can be disagreements from time to time
  - Agreement is ultimately to be reached through reasoned discussion, consultation and negotiation having regard to what is best for the fishery.
- A RAG should reach agreement through consensus and not use voting as a mechanism for achieving outcomes.
- Where agreement cannot be reached, members are encouraged to reconsider the issue and seek further information if necessary before making their recommendation.
- If a deadlock cannot be avoided, the views of members and general discussion should be well documented in the minutes of the meeting

# Disclosure of Interests

- RAG members are appointed based on their knowledge and expertise but may face potential or direct conflicts of interest.
- There may be a conflict of interest where a member:
  - has a material personal interest, including a direct or indirect financial or economic interest, in a matter being considered by the RAG; and
  - the interest could conflict with the proper performance of the member's duties
- When a RAG member recognises that a real or potential conflict of interest exists, the conflict must be disclosed as soon as possible to other members.

# RAG member behaviour

Members must:

- act in good faith in the best interests of the PZJA;
- act honestly and exercise a reasonable degree of care and diligence in the discharge of their duties; and
- not make improper use of inside information to gain an advantage for themselves or someone else or cause harm to the Authority or to another person.
- members should perform all duties associated with their positions diligently, impartially, conscientiously, in a civil manner and to the best of their ability.

# RAG member behaviour

In the performance of their duties they should:

- act in such a way, at meetings, in the field and at official functions that will be held in a high regard by the community and by industry;
- treat other members and stakeholders with courtesy and sensitivity; and
- not take, or seek to take, improper advantage of official information gained in the course of their membership.

# RAG member behaviour

Members are not permitted to discriminate against or harass any colleague, client or member of the public, particularly on the basis of:

Race;  
Religion;  
Gender;  
Political or union affiliation;  
Sexual preference;  
Political opinion;

Marital status;  
Pregnancy;  
Social origin;  
Criminal record;  
Age; or  
Physical, intellectual or  
mental disability.