

Premier's Circular

Number:	2010/04
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TITLE

ATTENDANCE OF MINISTERS AT MINISTERIAL COUNCILS

POLICY

Participation in national Ministerial Councils is to be managed so as not to divert time, finances and effort away from local interests to the State's detriment.

To this end, Ministers are required to adhere to the following guidelines:

- for each Ministerial Council, the State should be represented in person at only one meeting of the Ministerial Council each year. If more than one Minister is a member of the Council, only one may attend the meeting where Western Australia is represented;
- Western Australian delegations to Ministerial Councils are to be limited to no more than three participants, inclusive of the Minister who is attending;
- other means of participating in Ministerial Councils, such as the use of teleconferencing and Telepresence, are to be employed where possible;
- agendas for Ministerial Council meetings are to be provided to the Department of the Premier and Cabinet two weeks in advance of all meetings. The outcomes of meetings should also be provided no later than two weeks following a Ministerial Council meeting. Meeting agendas and outcomes should be directed to the Deputy Director General – Policy Coordination; and
- every effort should be made to utilise Telepresence facilities to replace air travel and reduce travel costs.

BACKGROUND

Since 1992, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) has utilised a system of Ministerial Councils as a mechanism to deliver national reforms and to support and improve cooperative federalism. The COAG 'Review of Ministerial Council' will result in fewer Councils than currently exists. The (soon to be established) Standing Councils will encompass a broader range of portfolios, organised by policy area and will initiate, develop and monitor national reform in their respective areas.

Ministerial Councils can play a useful role in promoting and protecting Western Australia's interests. However, given the substantial costs and time involved, the level of Western Australian Ministerial attendance at Council meetings needs to be carefully managed.

The Government has established a Telepresence facility which will assist Ministers and their agencies to participate in national meetings. There is total of 21 Telepresence units in Australian capital cities, including two in Perth, available for use. Substantial travel savings are expected from the use of this facility.

The establishment of the Telepresence facility represents a significant investment and every effort should be made to derive the benefits for which it was designed. Should you wish to make enquiries about using the Telepresence facility please contact the Department of the Premier and Cabinet on 9222 9869.

Colin Barnett MLA

PREMIER

For enquiries contact:	David Smith 9222 9364 Deputy Director General - Coordination Department of the Premier and Cabinet
Other relevant Circulars:	2009/04
Circular/s replaced by this Circular:	