

Premier's Circular

Number:	2017/08
Issue Date:	20/09/2017
Review Date:	20/09/2019

TITLE

STATE GOVERNMENT BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

BACKGROUND

This Circular defines what constitutes a Government Board or Committee, and provides clarity on remuneration for people who sit on these Boards and Committees. A Register of State Government Boards and Committees can be found at <http://www.dpc.wa.gov.au>

In line with the Government's commitment to diversity and gender equality on Government Boards and Committees, proposed membership should include equal representation of men and women wherever possible. Ministerial Offices and agencies should use the OnBoardWA Register whenever a nominee is sought.

POLICY

This policy applies to all State Government Boards and Committees.

A State Government Board or Committee is a body:

- (i) established for the purpose of informing government policy or strategy;
- (ii) providing oversight and appropriate governance of some government functions and activities; or
- (iii) where members are paid a fee (other than reimbursements for travel expenses).

This includes sub-committees that fall within that definition.

All establishments, abolitions (including those due to expire), changes in name, appointments and reappointments to State Government Boards and Committees are matters for Cabinet consideration. All agencies should periodically review the ongoing need for boards and committees, particularly where there are costs involved.

Agencies are encouraged to use interdepartmental working groups, drawing upon external advice and engaging in other forms of consultation that do not involve the establishment of a State Government Board or Committee and the payment of fees.

Diversity in representation

All agencies should ensure board and committee appointments reflect the diversity of the community, and also ensure the Government's target of 50 per cent representation of women is met as opportunities arise. It is recognised that some legislation may stipulate representation from particular sources, limiting the ability to meet the Government's diversity requirements.

Agencies must, in particular, ensure there is diverse representation among Board and Committee Chairs.

Remuneration

The authority to pay fees to State Government Board and Committee members derives from statutory provision or endorsement by Cabinet where applicable. The rate of any fee is to be recommended by the Public Sector Commissioner unless provided by statute.

A member of a State Government Board or Committee is not eligible for fees (other than reimbursements for travel expenses) if they are:

- (i) on the public payroll, including all current full time State, Commonwealth and Local Government employees; Members of Parliament; current and retired judicial officers (except Magistrates); and current non-academic employees of public academic institutions; or
- (ii) a former Member of Parliament and less than 12 months has passed since sitting in Parliament.

Part time public servants; elected Local Government councillors and university academics are eligible for fees when sitting on State Government Boards and Committees.

A university academic is defined as someone who is engaged primarily for the purpose of providing educational services and not administrative or other services.

Part time public servants are eligible for remuneration for membership on Government Boards and Committees if:

- (i) it is clearly demonstrated to the satisfaction of the relevant Minister that the part time public servant's Board or Committee work will happen in their own time; and
- (ii) potential conflicts of interest will be appropriately managed.

Section 102 of the *Public Sector Management Act 1994* requires employees to obtain the prior permission of their employing authority to engage in activities unconnected with their functions. Agencies and employees should be aware of this requirement.

Guidelines for the reimbursement of travel expenses are contained in the *Public Sector Commissioner's Circular 2009–20: Reimbursement of Travel Expenses for Members of Government Boards and Committees*. Principles for good governance of Boards and Committees are published on the Public Sector Commission's website <https://publicsector.wa.gov.au>

As a general guide, an individual should not sit on more than two (2) State Government Boards and Committees.

The Department of the Premier and Cabinet provides advice on the application of this Circular, including the eligibility of members to receive remuneration, supports appointment processes and maintains the OnBoardWA Register, which holds information supplied by interested potential Board and Committee applicants. The Public Sector Commission provides recommendations for Boards and Committees whose members are eligible for remuneration. Remuneration of Board and Committee members should be reported in an agency's Annual Report consistent with the guidelines issued for such reports.

Agencies facilitating the appointment of people to Boards or Committees are required to exercise appropriate due diligence which may include pre-appointment screening controls such as verification of qualifications, fiduciary responsibilities, actual or perceived conflicts of interest etc. Agencies are encouraged to consider the level of pre-screening required in the context of their Board or Committee's specific purpose or function.

Members of the public interested in serving on a State Government Board or Committee are able to register their interest through OnBoardWA at <http://www.onboardwa.jobs.wa.gov.au>

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Other relevant Circulars:	Public Sector Commissioner's Circular 2010/02