

## Board Finance and Audit Committee

Managing Director's Authorisation

Effective Date

Patrick Hone



25 June 2024

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### 1. PURPOSE

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The purpose of this policy is to document the composition, objectives, responsibilities, and administration of the Board's Finance and Audit (F&A) Committee.

## 2. RESPONSIBILITY

Responsibility for this policy resides with the General Manager Finance and Business.

## 3. DEFINITIONS, ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Definitions link [Definitions](#)

Acronyms Link [Acronyms and Abbreviations](#)

## 4. RISK CATEGORY

This policy covers the following risk categories.

Strategic	Governance	Service Delivery	Reputational	Financial	Operational	People
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

## 5. RELEVANT DOCUMENTATION

This section contains links to internally and externally facing documents – access to internally facing documents is restricted to FRDC employees.

Relevant documentation
<b>Internal</b>
<a href="#">Board Governance Policy</a>
<a href="#">Board meeting administration procedure</a>
<b>External</b>
<a href="#">Public Governance, Performance and Accountability (PGPA) Act 2013</a>
<a href="#">Primary Industries Research and Development Act 1989 (PIRD Act)</a>

## 6. TRAINING

The updated policy will be communicated via staff meetings.

## 7. DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT

Material resulting from this procedure is to be filed to Nemo in the table below (*also see [Nemo Scenarios](#) or General Manager if unsure which metadata to use*):

Document Type/s	Finance and Audit Committee meeting papers
Functional Group	Board Administration
Action Date	Finance and Audit Committee meeting date
Function type	Meetings
Organisation	FRDC
Prime activity	N/A
Secondary activity	N/A
Document type	Correspondence, papers draft, papers final, presentation reports

## 8. PUBLICATION

This policy is to be made available on the FRDC website.

This policy is to be made available on the directors' site.

## 9. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Finance and Audit Committee are to:

1. assist the Board to discharge its corporate governance responsibilities, as required by section 45 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability (PGPA) Act 2013*; and
2. exercise due care, diligence and skill in relation to oversight of the quality and integrity of the FRDC's accounting, auditing, financial reporting, risk, and compliance systems, including the:
  - a. compliance of the financial statements with all applicable legal and mandatory professional reporting requirements as well as making informed decisions regarding accounting and regulatory policies, judgements, practices and disclosures
  - b. appointment and independence of the company's auditors
  - c. scope and results of internal audit reviews and external audits
  - d. effectiveness of systems of financial risk management, internal control and compliance.

## 10. RESPONSIBILITIES

The Finance and Audit Committee will examine any matters that it considers necessary to fulfil its objectives; and will undertake reviews and make recommendations to the Board. The Finance and Audit Committee will also examine any other matters referred to it by the Board.

### 10.1 Financial reporting responsibilities

The responsibilities of the Finance and Audit Committee in relation to financial information are to:

1. review the financial information presented by management to the Board and to the public;
2. review the FRDC's accounting policies and reporting requirements to ensure accuracy, timeliness and the inclusion of appropriate disclosures;
3. oversee the preparation of the budget (Annual Operational Plan and Portfolio Budget Statements);
4. review the draft annual financial statements prior to Board approval, focusing on:
  - a. significant changes in accounting policies and practices
  - b. major judgemental areas
  - c. significant audit adjustments
  - d. proposed departures from accounting standards
  - e. compliance with statutory and financial reporting requirements
5. ensure that the Board receives reliable and timely management information, and advise the Board accordingly;
6. consider the adequacy of funds in relation to the Retained Earnings Policy
7. review long service leave and annual leave balances
8. review all representation letters signed by management, and assess them for completeness and appropriateness; and
9. resolve any difficulties between the external auditor and management.

### 10.2 Risk Management

The responsibilities of the Finance and Audit Committee in relation to risk, policies and control are to:

1. review the adequacy of, and monitor, accounting control systems by reviewing the external auditor's written reports and by monitoring management's responses and actions to correct any deficiencies;

2. assess and monitor Financial and Operational risks and recommend strategies to the Board to manage and mitigate the identified risks through the risk management framework;
3. plan and implement actions to address risks and opportunities;
4. monitor the adequacy and effectiveness of the FRDC's risk management processes;
5. review the adequacy and currency of the FRDC's risk management policies;
6. review the effectiveness of the compliance framework for identifying, monitoring, and managing compliance with relevant compliance obligations;
7. review the adequacy of information communications technology (ICT) governance, and monitor control systems, including reviewing both external and internal ICT auditor's written reports and monitoring management's responses/corrective actions;
8. monitor the application of FRDC's administrative, operating and accounting policies through active communication with management and external auditors;
9. assist in designing the internal audits to address specific risk items as required;
10. approve the internal audit plan and provide oversight of the delivery of that plan;
11. consider and review with management any difficulties encountered during internal and external audits, and any instances of significant fraudulent activity;
12. review the adequacy of fraud controls and any instances of fraudulent activity;
13. monitor activities involving the receipt of gifts and benefits; and
14. at each meeting review the *Breaches of the code of conduct register* and the *Gifts and benefits register*.

### **10.3 Auditors**

The responsibilities of the Finance and Audit Committee in relation to auditors are to:

- (a) meet with the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) and the internal auditor to review their proposed audit strategies and any other issues arising;
- (b) report to the Board on:
  - (i) the efficiency and effectiveness of the external and internal audit functions,
  - (ii) the scope of the ANAO audit strategy,
  - (iii) any issues arising from the annual review meeting, the ANAO report and recommendations, and
  - (iv) the effectiveness of internal controls and adequacy of systems as identified by the internal and external auditor;
- (c) ensure that audit report recommendations are actioned appropriately;
- (d) review the audit plans of the external auditors; and
- (e) review internal auditor performance and periodic market testing.

### **10.4 Compliance with legal and regulatory obligations**

The responsibilities of the Finance and Audit Committee in relation to compliance are to review regular reports provided to it by FRDC management on corporate governance compliance (including making recommendations to the Board on the outcomes of investigations into compliance incidents). This includes oversight the FRDC's compliance with applicable Work Health and Safety (WHS) legislation. The FRDC targets a best practice standard for WHS compliance.

### **10.5 Shared risk and risk transfer**

The responsibilities of the Finance and Audit Committee in relation to shared risk and risk transfer are to:

- (a) review the adequacy of FRDC's insurance program; and
- (b) ensure the risk framework identifies and quantifies shared risks and included appropriate risk mitigation strategies.

## **11. RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **11.1 Membership and attendance at meetings**

- (a) The Finance and Audit Committee is selected during the first Board meeting of the new Board term (generally every three years in September in connection with the new Board induction)
- (b) The Finance and Audit Committee will comprise of at least three directors appointed by the Board as follows:
  - (i) The Chair of the Committee
  - (ii) a minimum of two other members
  - (iii)
  - (iv) and at the Board's discretion, may add an independent expert member (sourced from outside the FRDC);
- (c) If the Chair of the Committee is unable to attend the meeting, the Chair will appoint a Deputy Chair who will act as Chair for the purposes of that committee meeting, unless otherwise specified;
- (d) The recommended appointment term will align with the current Board term;
- (e) The members, taken collectively will have a broad range of skills and experience relevant to the operations of the FRDC;
- (f) At least one member of the Finance and Audit Committee will have accounting or related financial management experience with an understanding of accounting auditing standards. All Finance and Audit Committee members should be financially literate. Where a member does not have the requisite expertise upon initial appointment, financial literacy will be attained within a reasonable period of time after his or her appointment;
- (g) If an independent member is appointed, they will be appointed for an initial period not exceeding three years, and preferably so as to provide continuity between FRDC Boards. He/she may be reappointed after a formal review of his/her performance, for a further three-year term;
- (h) A quorum of the Finance and Audit Committee is any two (2) members of the Finance and Audit Committee;
- (i) Any director will be entitled to attend meetings of the Finance and Audit Committee as an observer, and the Finance and Audit Committee may call on any internal or external expertise to attend its meetings;
- (j) The Finance and Audit Committee Policy may consider the allowance for Board members to build skill sets in consideration of the terms of the Policy
- (k) FRDC management may attend meetings, as determined by the Chair, but will not be members of the committee;
- (l) A representative(s) of external audit will be invited to attend meetings of the committee, as an observer(s);
- (m) Members will have unlimited access to both internal and external auditors, to all FRDC staff, and to all FRDC information; and
- (n) The secretary of the Finance and Audit Committee will be the Company Secretary, or another person nominated by the Chair.

### **11.2 Meetings**

- (a) Meetings of the Finance and Audit Committee will be held not less than three (3) times a year. Special meetings may be convened as required to fulfil the Finance and Audit Committee's responsibilities.
- (b) Meetings may be held in person, by telephone or by video conference, or by any combination of these media. The Finance and Audit Committee may give its approval by circular resolution given by all members.
- (c) The Company Secretary, or other person nominated by the Chair, will take the minutes of the proceedings of all Finance and Audit Committee meetings

### **11.3 Authority**

The Board delegates authority to the Finance and Audit Committee, within the scope of its responsibilities, to obtain such outside information and advice as it needs (including market surveys and reports). The Finance and Audit Committee will not have the authority to make a decision on the Board's behalf and will make recommendations to the Board on all matters requiring a decision.

### **11.4 Sub-delegation**

The Finance and Audit Committee may, at its discretion, delegate some or all of its objectives and responsibilities to the Chair and may delegate any of its objectives and responsibility to a sub-committee of the Finance and Audit Committee.

### **11.5 Board reporting**

The Finance and Audit Committee will report to the Board after each meeting and circulate the minutes to the Board as soon as practical.

## **12. ATTACHMENTS**

#	Description
Nil	Nil




# Board Finance and Audit Committee policy

Final Audit Report

2024-07-16

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