

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN LIVESTOCK RESEARCH COUNCIL (WALRC)

CHARTER OF OPERATIONS

Last updated: March 2020

Description: The Western Australia Livestock Research Council (WALRC) is a combination of leading beef and sheep producers, industry representatives and major funders of on-farm livestock systems research, development and adoption (RD&A).

1. WALRC Charter

- I. Provide a clear process and structure for Western Australian livestock producers, industry and RD&A co-investor representatives to have input, review, debate and consolidate on-farm RD&A issues.
- II. Foster effective communication of on-farm RD&A outcomes and provide advocacy for continued RD&A service provision in Western Australia.
- III. Provide representation on national RD&A decision making bodies engage in the process of determining national investment priorities and maintaining a balanced portfolio.
- IV. Link with relevant livestock industry Strategic Plans to ensure complementarity and cohesion to help drive Western Australian livestock industry priorities.

2. WALRC Functions

- I. Engage a pool of informed, knowledgeable industry and co-investor representatives who can advise on and prioritise on-farm RD&A issues identified by stakeholders in the WA sheepmeat and southern beef industries.
- II. Work with stakeholders to help build a culture of whole of industry knowledge sharing and collaboration
- III. Provide independent advice on state and sector on-farm RD&A priorities and strategies, including advice on future on-farm RD&A capability and investment needs.
- IV. Encourage two-way communication of programs, results and events between members of the WA livestock industry, including (but not limited to) grower groups and state and national farmer organisations,
- V. Assist with the co-ordination of large on-farm RD&A programs that transcend state and regional boundaries
- VI. Offer guidance and recommendations specific to on-farm RD&A, to Peak Industry Councils RD&A agencies, committees and forums, including the provision of representation in other

forums where requested.

- VII. Provide the capability for rapid response and consultation on emergent on-farm RD&A issues.
- VIII. Assist represented co-investors in the planning, co-ordination and delivery of major on-farm RD&A programs.
- IX. Contribute to inter-agency and co-investor RD&A co-ordination and networking, and building broader industry, agency/government and public awareness of the value of livestock systems on-farm RD&A.
- X. Grow industry capability through professional and personal development opportunities for the Council's immediate members and succession needs
- XI. Foster and encourage students to consider the livestock systems industry as a valued career option

3. Specific WALRC roles

- 1. Liaise and work with the state-based network of producer groups (who provide representation of the Western Australian agricultural region and southern Rangelands), co-investors and other industry stakeholders;
- 2. Operate as an independent forum, providing joint producer/co-investor advice to the RD&A decision-makers and funders on actual or potential on-farm RD&A matters and programs of sector and/or national significance; and
- 3. To serve as the central point of contact on non-policy matters related to sheepmeat and southern beef on-farm RD&A.

4. Membership

WALRC has three levels of membership, the value of which will be determined by WALRC on an annual basis and as per the table over describing FY 2021

FY 2021 Membership Schedule

Member	Description	Eligibility	Maximum members	Representative on management committee	FY 20/21 Fee	Term of membership
Tier 1	Tier 1 members are bodies corporate, where the member in consultation with WALRC identifies the individual that will represent it at WALRC General meetings. Substitute persons are permitted for general meetings.	Must be actively involved in the design and/or delivery of Research, Development, or Extension	The number of Tier 1 members must not exceed the number of Tier 2 members	The members will elect 3 representatives from Tier 1 to sit on the committee of management.	\$8000 plus GST	Annual, on submission of membership fee
Tier 2	Tier 2 members are producer members (and natural persons as defined in the constitution) where the member has been appointed through an open call selection process as defined in the charter of operations	Tier 2 members must carry a property identification number (PIC) from the southern half of WA; be actively involved in producing sheep and/or beef and be able to meet the WALRC producer member selection criteria	There are currently contracted funds for sitting fees/travel for 8 producer members	The members will elect 3 representatives from Tier 2 to sit on the committee of management	No fee, justified as these persons already by a levy to MLA	Three years, with eligibility to re-stand for a further three years
Tier 3 Associates	Tier 3 members are co-opted by the committee of management to fulfil a specific linkage/skill set that is considered to add value to the WALRC objectives. Tier 3 members are bodies corporate, with WALRC identifying the individual that will represent the member at general meetings.	Not for profit organisations and for profit service providers are eligible to apply for Tier 3 Associate membership in response to a call for EOI every 2 years. Applicants must be non-competitive to Tier 1 members and demonstrate the value they bring to WALRC, in order to be considered for this membership.	A maximum of three Tier 3	Associate members are not represented on the committee of management	No fee	Two years.

5. Membership Representation

The WALRC members will be drawn from three membership categories, where eligibility is such that without major reform of the way in which red meat priorities are identified, it is unlikely that membership will be greater than 20 natural persons or bodies corporate. This is because:

Tier 1: The membership framework is such that it prevents the number of Tier 1 members (RD&E designers and deliverers) being greater than the number of producer members. Tier 1 membership terms are annual and effective on submission of membership fees.

Tier 2: The MLA contract of 2020 is such that it funds sitting fees and travel for 8 (only) producer members (Tier 2), where eligibility and selection criteria is determined by MLA in consultation with the general members of WALRC. Producer members are appointed by an appointments sub-committee for a 3-year term and are eligible to apply for a second x 3-year term.

Tier 3: The WALRC committee of management (Dec 2019) has determined that Associate Members (Tier 3) will be by invitation in order to fill a specific need that advances the objects of the association, where their term is for two years.

6. Tier 1 selection criteria

Tier 1 members shall be bodies corporate, who are actively involved in the design and/or delivery of red meat Research, Development and Extension and have a current financial membership. WALRC and the Member will agree by mutual consent on the person representing the Body Corporate at WALRC general meetings. Tier 1 members may send a substitute person to attend general meetings.

WALRC will seek that Tier 1 members provide a representative that has:

- 1) A senior managerial role in R,D & A portfolio management and/or project management
- 2) The ability to consider on-farm R,D & A opportunities on a broad scale, beyond own experience and skill set
- 3) To show commitment to, and have credibility in, industry as well as strong networks in the livestock systems industry and/or the ability to build those networks
- 4) Excellent communication skills including the ability to work constructively in a team and communicate with producers in individual and group situations

7. Tier 2 Selection criteria - Producer members

Tier 2 members are individual persons who respond to an open call for expressions of interest for vacant membership position (from the 8 maximum membership positions available) and who are able to successfully demonstrate to an appointments sub committee appointed by the committee of management, that they have extensive knowledge of on-farm research, development, extension and/or adoption issues in the livestock systems industry, along with:

- 1) Demonstrated skills in farm management on a commercial scale in beef or sheep production;
- 2) The ability to consider on-farm R,D & A opportunities on a broad scale, beyond own experience and/or region;
- 3) Commitment to industry, including strong networks in the region and/or the ability to build those networks;
- 4) Excellent communication skills including the ability to work constructively in a team and communicate with scientists in individual and group situations; and
- 5) Be a member of a producer group.

8. Tier 3 Selection criteria - Associate members

WALRC will issue a call for expressions of interest for up to 3 Associate members (bodies corporate) where the body corporate and the individual representing them, can provide a clear value proposition to advancing the WALRC objectives and where WALRC can see evidence of mutual benefit of the association.

Because it is likely most Tier 3 entities that fill the criteria will be not for profit, the intent is that there is no membership fee payable. However, in lieu of the membership fee, the Tier 3 member should provide a clear in-kind benefit to WALRC and be self-funding of expenses.

9. WALRC Chair (Independent)

The WALRC Chair will be contracted by MLA following industry wide advertising and appointed by a selection panel comprising an MLA representative, a WALRC co-investor member (Tier 1), a Producer member (Tier 2) and an independent person.

The Constitution warrants that the WALRC committee of management may admit the Independent chair into any membership class, despite the independent chair not necessarily satisfying the criteria for admission to that class, in order for the chair to be able to vote.

The roles of the Chair will provide the following services which conform to the MLA contract:

- Chair WALRC meetings and co-investor liaison.
- Chair and facilitate the priority setting workshops and collation of the outputs into WALRC priorities for each year and submission to MLA.
- Attend Red Meat Panel Meetings, representing producer, co-investor and WALRC interests
- Represent WALRC at CCA R,D&A meetings(4/year)
- Oversee producer consultation forums including setting theme, speaker input, facilitating/chairing the sessions.
- Coordinate the WALRC media profile
- Annual and strategic planning.
- Provide direction to Executive Officer (EO).

10. WALRC Committee of Management

The WALRC the committee of management shall comprise 7 persons including the Independent chair of WALRC.

The members shall elect six persons to the committee of management at the AGM to work with the Independent chair to address matters of governance and management under the following criteria:

- 3 x Tier 1 members (including MLA which is considered Tier 1)
- 3 x Tier 2 members

The role of the committee of management is to:

- Provide support to the Chair and EO.
- Provide rapid response on emergent on-farm R,D&A issues, where opportunities and/or timeframes for full council deliberations do not exist.
- Oversee the preparation of the annual budget and financial accounts and make recommendations on income and expenditure.
- Oversee an annual performance appraisal of WALRC and its members and submit – to the council – recommendations for changes and reappointments as needed.
- Annually review the Council's funding base and make recommendations on the level of co-investor contributions.
- Seek additional avenues of funding other than through members
- Ensure that the Committee meets at least twice a year either in person or via teleconference to address budgets and any other financial matters before the Members.

11. Office Bearers

In addition to the Independent chair, the WALRC committee of management shall appoint two vice chairs, selected from within the committee of management:

- 1 x Tier 1 Research/Extension member
- 1 x Tier 2 Producer member

Vice chairs will be called upon to provide leadership and representation for their relevant sector.

Specifically, the WALRC vice chair Producer Member will be asked to represent WALRC at Red Meat Panel or equivalent meetings, where a producer is required for meeting composition.

WALRC shall not appoint a treasurer, but rather its Committee of Management will appoint a finance sub-committee to provide the financial governance and banking signatories and to manage the performance of the executive officer whom will undertake WALRC's book-keeping. The Committee of Management can freely appoint additional sub committees to meet specific needs under the terms of the Constitution.

12. Attendance at Meetings

WALRC conducts four meetings per year plus producer (Tier 2) members are expected to attend the annual priority setting meeting (June) and the annual R&D review panel (November).

Producers who are unable to attend the priority setting and review panel meetings may be asked to resign if the executive committee resolves that these absences constitute resignation, in a manner as guided by the constitution.

13. Executive Officer (EO)

The Executive Officer will be contracted by MLA and appointed by a representative of MLA, the WALRC Coordinator and an independent party, for a three-year term. The EO will provide the following services:

- Manage the WALRC finances and administration (secretariat) as directed by the WALRC executive committee.
- Plan and organise face to face meetings (likely to be four per year) for WALRC including meeting venue and accommodation for members.
- Plan and organise producer consultation meetings in coordination with WALRC chair and producer members.
- Develop the three year strategic plan, annual operating plan and budget for approval by WALRC executive committee.
- Develop an annual communications plan based on the annual operating plan and budget.
- Prepare promotional materials, press releases and other electronic resources.
- Maintain and develop a communications database.
- Plan and organise teleconferences as required.
- Record and distribute meeting minutes and action list for all WALRC meetings.
- Provide additional support to the WALRC Chair, and communications to industry as required.

To underpin WALRC operations, the EO will be appointed with the following experience and skills:

- Experienced provider of secretariat services, including financial administration, minutes and meeting correspondence, travel and venue bookings. Agricultural industry experience is desirable.
- Media liaison and public relations experience, including preparation of promotional materials, press releases and electronic communication resources.

14. Budget

WALRC will have its own budget with which to run the functions of the organisation, which will be overseen by the Committee of Management and specifically a finance sub-committee and reviewed annually with MLA.

15. Meeting Format and Frequency

WALRC is to meet at least four (4) times per year. Meetings may alternate between faced to face and phone meetings. However the June meeting to review the collected RD&A priorities and one the November meeting (for producer members only) to review RD&A applications, must be face-to-face.

WALRC regional meetings will be held optionally with an open, facilitated forum prior to the WALRC meeting, where any interested parties are invited to attend and provide input regarding on-farm R,D&A issues. Interested parties may include all producers, grower groups, Sheep Producers Australia representative, Cattle Council representative, community groups, processors, live export representatives, training institutions, grains industry representatives, Grower Group Alliance, WAFarmers, Pastoralists and Graziers Association, NRM groups, stock agents, transporters and any other groups thought to add value to the forum.

The formal WALRC meeting will then be a closed meeting with only WALRC members and any invited guests. When meeting in regional areas, a field trip may be incorporated into the programme.