

Minutes



Arborist Reference Group for Vegetation Management near Powerlines

Meeting Details

Organiser	Alex Lewis
Date	7 March 2019
Time	9.30-11.00am
Location	Network Innovation Centre, 229 Richmond Rd, Keswick

Attendance

Attendees	Doug Schmidt, General Manager Regulation (Chair) Kelvin Trimper, SA Tree Advisory Board Henry Haavisto, Arborist Association of Australia Brett Winkler, Active Tree Services Chris Taras, City of Charles Sturt Glenn Williams, Treenet Andrew Carrick, Botanic Gardens of SA Ben Freeman, Freshford Nurseries Kim Syrus, HMA Marlene Weise, community representative Alex Lewis, Stakeholder Engagement Lead
Apologies	Kev Connell, Manager Vegetation Peter Watton, Trees for Life
Confirmation of Previous minutes	Noted – meeting 17 December 2018
Business arising from previous minutes	Refer to agenda items

1. Welcome

Doug welcomed Brett, SA, General Manager for ATS, who has replaced Luke on the group.

2. Business arising from last meeting

2.1 Culturally significant trees and avenues of honour

Following on from the discussion regarding Stanley Flat at the last meeting, Alex, Kelvin and Glenn met with Heritage SA to discuss the idea of creating a fund to manage heritage vegetation near powerlines that is of cultural/ community value but not heritage listed and doesn't meet the current PLEC criteria for underground projects.

The following action was proposed:

1. Understand the extent of the issue in relation to trees under powerlines using Avenues of Honour dataset, National Trust list and any Council heritage tree lists.
2. Establish a Working Group with representatives from Heritage SA, LGA, National Trust, DPTI, SAPN and ARG to:
 - a. Define scope of project
 - b. Develop strategy to work with key stakeholders and identify long-term solutions
 - c. Draft approach for discussion with Government/ Ministers

Following the initial data gathering, a letter should be sent to all Council CEO's seeking nominations of areas of cultural significance and avenues of honour.

3. Regulatory Reset Proposal 2020-25

Doug provided a brief update on the Regulatory Proposal 2020-25. The AER is currently undertaking their compliance check following our lodgement of the proposal and will hold its customer forum on 4/4/19. Kelvin is attending this session as a member of the SAPN Customer Consultative Panel.

4. Regulatory amendments – 10-year review of Regulations

The current Regulations expire on 1.9.2021 and SA Power Networks is proposing a number of amendments.

The Revised Discussion Paper was out for consultation during Dec 2018/ Jan 2019. A total of 15 submissions were received – 12 supported (Councils, CFS, DPTI, Minister for Energy & Mining) and 3 strongly opposed on the basis of tree removal without paying an offset (DEW, NVC, Nature Conservation).

Whilst there are some divergent stakeholder views, SAPN has appreciated the strong participation from stakeholders and cooperative approach to finding 'balance'. These views are unlikely to shift, and on the whole the conservation groups have not been willing to collaborate or discuss reduced offsets for tree removals.

SAPN is meeting with Minister Speirs in March and the group suggested Kelvin attend to show broader customer support for the proposal.

The next step is for the OTR to call for submissions on 10-year review in March/ April 2019.

Risk-based approach

The risk-based approach Fact Sheet was tabled for feedback. Feedback received from the ARG will be incorporated into the Fact Sheet.

The need to engage with Councils, local Ministers and SAPN depots was highlighted. There is a need to consider multiple channels such as face to face, short videos, TV etc.

5. Powerline friendly list of species

The powerline friendly list of species has been finalised. A copy has been sent to every Council CEO and to all nursery centres and production nurseries affiliated with the Nursery Industry of SA.



The opportunity to launch the species list as part of National Tree Day (late July) was discussed as well as promoting as a resource for home gardens on Kim's "Outdoors Indoors" Show.

The input from Ben Freeman in developing and providing feedback on the list was acknowledged by the ARG.

Action:

- AL to meet with Kim to discuss the Show and opportunities and to get on the Powerline Friendly Species list on the HMA agenda.

6. Protocol review

The revised Protocol is now complete and next steps involve seeking endorsement from the LGA. The Protocol will be taken to GAROC (formerly Metro Local Govt Group) in April 2019 with a recommendation to go to the LGA Board.

7. Clearance surveys

A presentation on the clearance surveys undertaken to date was provided.

Discussion on how to improve and continue included:

- Link to phone – QR code, that takes customers to the survey.
- Link to survey on 30 Day Notice
- Online forums
- Undertaking a door knocking trial in TTG

8. Update on strategic initiatives

8.1 ATS branding

Five trucks have now been fitted with the signage and customer response has been positive.

8.2 Training program for contractors

The hazard tree and sapling identification training was rolled out to our internal vegetation clearance auditors. The ATS scopers will be trained in April 2019.

9. Priority issues/ focus areas for 2019

A couple of topics for focus during 2019 were suggested:

- Government – disconnect with Government (DPTI, DEW, NVC) – opportunity to align and work more closely.
- Tree Day – opportunity to promote appropriate species selection and ATS as our clearance contractors
- Heat sink/ urban heat island effect
- Tree removal and replacement– Trev's trees, tree stock and powerline friendly species
- Drone and LiDAR technology – mapping pruning pre/post and tree canopy, data sharing opportunities



10. Other business

- **CCP update** – the CCP and Reference Groups are undergoing an internal SAPN review. An external workshop is being held in March 2019. The review doesn't include the ARG as it is ongoing and operating very effectively as a group.

11. Next meeting: Tuesday 4 June, 9.30-11.00am, City of Campbelltown

