



Associate Membership of WALIS

Policy

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ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP OF WALIS POLICY

1 BACKGROUND

Membership of the Western Australian Land Information System (WALIS) initially comprised those WA state government departments that collected and maintained land information to meet their business needs. WALIS was created as a mechanism to facilitate the sharing and access to this information and to reduce duplication.

Over time, membership of WALIS increased to include a range of WA state government departments/agencies that, while they collected/maintained from little to no land information themselves, required access to the information being collected by other departments. Membership of WALIS was recognised through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

In May 2006, WALIS Executive Policy Committee (EPC) endorsed a new Charter to replace the MOU. The Charter requires WALIS member agencies to cooperate with one another in terms of sharing of, and access to, spatial data; to comply with a range of WALIS standards and policies; and to support across-government projects or programs such as the Shared Land Information Platform (SLIP).

These requirements are straightforward for WA state government departments and statutory authorities. However, there are a range of other players in the WALIS community, for example local government, federal government departments and schedule one organisations as defined in the *Public Sector Management Act 1994* (such as Water Corporation). These organisations develop and maintain key datasets important to the WA community and many have been represented on WALIS Council for many years. However, they are not formally recognised as members of WALIS and are not in a position to sign the WALIS Charter as their status prevents them from being able to conform with all of its requirements.

This document sets out the policy for the category of Associate Member of WALIS.

2 ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

Organisations that have been involved with WALIS during the past few years that are not eligible for full membership of WALIS include Australia Post, Alinta Gas, Western Power and WA local government authorities. Others, such as Landcorp, the National Native Title Tribunal and Australia's Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), have indicated an interest in becoming members of WALIS. Australia Post, while never having been a member of WALIS, has been actively involved with WALIS and has had representation at WALIS Council for many years.

Local government has been represented on WALIS Council and WALIS Spatial Management Group (SMG) by nominated representatives through the Western Australian Local Government Association (WALGA). WALIS has also actively supported

the WA Local Government GIS Focus Group, that meets approximately four to six times a year.

Water Corporation, Alinta Gas and Western Power were full members of WALIS prior to the change in their status to that of schedule one organisations under the *Public Sector Management Act 1994* or private sector companies. Until the new WALIS Charter was introduced, their status as members of WALIS remained unresolved.

In addition, there are a range of companies that have a close association with WALIS, particularly through members of the WALIS Advisory Committee (WAC). WAC is a skills-based group of individuals from the private sector, education and the community whose role is to provide advice to WALIS EPC. Members of WAC do not represent their companies – however the companies from which WAC members often come regularly participate in WALIS activities. These companies have also expressed interest in being members of WALIS.

However, one of the reasons many of these organisations may be keen to join WALIS is based on the misconception that it may provide them with access to data at non-commercial rates. Under the WALIS Data Pricing and Transfer Policy, it is not membership of WALIS that determines the price an organisation pays for data. The policy stipulates that only WA state government organisations (this includes schedule two agencies) and WA local government authorities can access government data, for non-commercial purposes, at the cost of extraction. In fact, it is not necessary for a WA state government department to be a member of WALIS to access data from another department at the cost of extraction.

The Data Pricing and Transfer Policy further stipulates that all other organisations or companies, including federal government, must pay a commercial price for data, except for specific educational or research purposes. Therefore, membership of WALIS would not provide the benefit that some organisations seeking membership would like to access. However, Associate Membership of WALIS will be open to any organisation that wishes to join and sign the Associate Member MOU.

3 WHAT WOULD ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP MEAN?

The key function of WALIS is to facilitate the sharing of and access to spatial information and to reduce duplication, and in order to be effective, coordination needs to occur across as many organisations as possible

Associate Membership is a new category developed to extend the WALIS Membership base beyond WA state government departments. Associate Membership will open the doors to organisations that previously could not participate as WALIS Members and will allow them to stay up-to-date on WALIS related activities being undertaken within and across state government. Additionally this membership will provide the opportunity to influence policy and set standards, which means they can play a role in the future strategic direction of WALIS and how it operates.

4 ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

Given the range of organisations potentially interested in Associate Membership of WALIS, there are different categories of Associate Membership. While the range of organisations includes federal government, local government, community groups and private companies, the more important distinction is between data contributors and data users.

Data Users

Data users are best engaged through a users' group – which, to some degree, WAC represents. WALIS already runs a range of workshops and forums, including the WALIS Forum every 18 months, with a strong focus on data users. Through an Associate Membership status as a data user, WALIS will develop a more formalised approach to supporting data users in order to improve two-way channels of communication between WALIS member agencies and the data users.

Data Contributors

Data contributors, in terms of core datasets required by the WA State Government, is the other major category requiring formal recognition. For example, Water Corporation and Western Power both provide data through the Shared Land Information Platform (SLIP). In addition, Water Corporation sits on the WALIS SMG representing infrastructure.

Local government, regional development commissions and redevelopment authorities may be primarily users of data; however, some may become significant data contributors. The South West Development Commission, for example, is a major partner in SLIP.

Organisations that are significant data contributors in terms of providing core datasets required by the WA State Government for efficient governance (datasets where formal data custodianship, as required by the Premier's Circular 2007/02, is recognisable) will, as part of their Associate Membership status, have a seat on WALIS Council. Many of these organisations already regularly attend WALIS Council meetings.

However, given the number of local government authorities in Western Australia, and the likelihood that many will be data contributors, it is impractical to offer each one a seat on WALIS Council. Local government will continue to be represented at Council and at the WALIS SMG level by nominated delegates as occurs has occurred prior to the implementation of this policy.

Most business of WALIS Council and WALIS SMG focuses on government spatial information. For this reason it may be considered inappropriate for community groups or private companies to sit on WALIS Council, unless they are data custodians and that, in any case, their interests are already being addressed through the WAC.

However, WALIS EPC has agreed for a 12-month trial during which all members of WALIS (full and associate) will be invited to participate in WALIS Council meetings. A review will be undertaken at the end of 2008. Should it be necessary for full members to meet separately to the Associate Members, an extraordinary meeting will be held at the conclusion of a normal council meeting.

5 BECOMING AN ASSOCIATE MEMBER

Organisations seeking Associate Membership will apply to WALIS Office for consideration, which will be granted through approval of the WALIS SMG. The organisation will be required to sign the attached WALIS Associate Member MoU.

6 DISSOLUTION OF ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

Associate Membership of an organisation may be dissolved by:

- resignation by the organisation
- the organisation ceasing to exist
- lack of support by the organisation of the principles of WALIS to the extent that the WALIS SMG and WALIS EPC consider it no longer appropriate for the organisation to remain a member of WALIS.

Western Australian Land Information System

Associate Member Memorandum of Understanding

August 2007

Preamble

The Western Australian Land Information System (WALIS) is a dynamic partnership of government agencies working with business, education and community groups to manage and promote Western Australian spatial information for the betterment of the state.

Associate Membership of WALIS is accorded to organisations that are not Western Australian state government agencies that are committed to the purpose of WALIS and support its principles.

Purpose

The purpose of WALIS is to give users easier access to increasing volumes of quality spatial information on Western Australia. It does this by working across government agencies to coordinate:

1. Development of policy relating to spatial information access and quality.
2. Deployment of systems to improve delivery of spatial information to users.
3. Promotion of the use of spatial information to foster sustainable development of Western Australia.

Principles

The underlying principles for achievement of WALIS purpose are:

1. Fostering and strengthening cooperation and collaboration among WALIS member agencies and with community, industry and the private sector.
2. Providing single point of discovery and access to spatial information for everyone without compromising security, confidentiality or privacy and, where possible, providing this information free of charge.
3. Ensuring continuous improvement in delivery of spatial information through ongoing review of data quality requirements and coverage standards.

Associate Membership status

Associate Membership is accorded to:

1. Data contributors:

- 1a. Organisations contributing datasets eligible for recognition of formal custodianship under the Premier's Circular 2007/02 that are federal government agencies or schedule one organisations under the *Public Sector Management Act* (PSMA)1994.
- 1b. Local government authorities, regional government councils, regional development commissions or redevelopment authorities contributing datasets through SLIP.

2. Data users

Organisations interested in participating in WALIS that are primarily users of government data, including federal government agencies, schedule one organisations under the *PSMA* 1994, local and regional government, community groups and private companies.

WALIS Structure

The government of Western Australia established WALIS to coordinate access to spatial information held by government agencies and facilitate cross-sectoral consultation and liaison. WALIS achieves this through committees and the WALIS Office. The current governance structure of WALIS includes an Executive Policy Committee (EPC), Spatial Management Group (SMG), WALIS Council and WALIS Advisory Committee (WAC).

The EPC is the governing body of WALIS and comprises Chief Executive Officers/Directors General of key WALIS member agencies. The role of the EPC is to provide strategic direction and endorse overall policy and strategic plans, ensuring alignment with government policies for sharing spatial information.

The strategic business of WALIS is managed by the SMG, a group of director-level representatives from agencies representing key focus areas, and representatives from local government, WALIS Advisory Committee and Office of e-Government.

WAC, whose members represent business, education, local government and community groups, provides strategic advice to the EPC and SMG.

WALIS Council, consisting of operational managers or representatives of WALIS partners, resolves operational issues between data providers and clients. All WALIS member agencies are represented on WALIS Council, as well as a representative from WAC and local government to represent the private sector/community and local government interests.

Associate Members of WALIS from the Data Contributors category that are also from the federal government agencies or schedule one organisations under the *PSMA* 1994 also have a seat on WALIS Council.

WALIS Office promotes WALIS business and manages its committees and working groups.

Endorsement

By signing this Memorandum of Understanding, Associate Members of WALIS agree to actively contribute and support WALIS policies, procedures, strategic directions and principles and, where appropriate, to incorporate them within the operation and culture of their organisation.

Name

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Organisation

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Associate Member category

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Signature

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Date

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