



Somerset Dam Improvement Project

Community Reference Group

October 2024 Terms of Reference (ToR)



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Background

Seqwater's Dam Improvement Program

Dams are long-life assets which require continual assessment, monitoring and maintenance. While Seqwater dams were built to high standards, many were built some decades ago. Methodologies and data used to estimate extreme rainfall events have significantly improved and industry engineering standards and risks have progressed since dams were originally built.

Seqwater's Dam Improvement Program is ensuring its dams comply with the latest safety standards and continue to function safely during extreme weather events in line with regulatory requirements. More information can be found at Seqwater's Dam Improvement Program website here: <https://www.seqwater.com.au/dam-improvement-program>

Somerset Dam Improvement Project

Project Overview

Seqwater is finalising the Detailed Business Case (DBC) for the Somerset Dam Improvement Project, which will inform the design for the main dam upgrade. When completed, the project will help reduce risks associated with extreme weather events, achieve regulatory compliance, and ensure the continued reliability of this water source for the South East Queensland region for years to come.

While detailed planning is underway, Seqwater has identified an opportunity to undertake some of the project scope early, which has been confirmed as Early and Enabling Works.

To read more about the status of the Somerset Dam Improvement Project, head to the Somerset Dam Improvement Project website at <https://www.seqwater.com.au/project/somerset-dam-improvement-project>

Community Reference Group

Purpose

These Terms of Reference define the role of the Community Reference Group (CRG) for the Somerset Dam Improvement Project. They provide a framework for the CRG's establishment and effective operation.

Role

The Somerset Dam Improvement Project CRG is a consultative group comprised of representatives of key stakeholder groups and local communities. This group will provide input into the development of the project and help Seqwater to share information about the project.

The Somerset Dam Improvement Project CRG will provide a formal channel for the community to be directly involved in identifying impacts and benefits associated with the Somerset Dam Improvement Project and determining appropriate mitigation measures. The group will also help Seqwater monitor and respond to social impacts during the construction period and evaluate the effectiveness of mitigation measures.

The Somerset Dam Improvement Project CRG will work collaboratively with Seqwater to provide input for the submission of the DBC. This input will build on the information provided by the former CRG.

The outcomes of Somerset Dam Improvement Project CRG meetings will be shared on the Seqwater project website. Photos of the workshop process may also be shared on the website. The opinions or input of individual members will not be shared.

Seqwater will consider and respond to all feedback and suggestions made by the group. Seqwater will retain final decision-making authority.

Former CRG

The CRG formed for the Somerset Dam Upgrade in 2019 and 2020 was focused on developing and implementing a voluntary Social Impact Management Plan (SIMP) for the Somerset Dam Improvement Project (formerly the Somerset Dam Upgrade).

Objectives

The objectives of the Somerset Dam Improvement Project CRG are to:

- Provide input to appropriate sections of the DBC to ensure both community and Seqwater needs are represented, project impacts are addressed where possible, and any opportunities and benefits are considered and maximised.
- Assist in refining the potential social impacts of the project and possible mitigation measures by confirming or updating information provided by the former CRG in 2020.

- Actively involve the community and key stakeholders in planning to ensure project delivery meets community expectations, including for the Early and Enabling Works.
 - Raise awareness and understanding of the project in the community through the active sharing of information between well informed CRG members and their local networks.
 - Improve Seqwater's understanding of community impacts and concerns related to the project.

Scope

The scope of the Somerset Dam Improvement Project CRG is to inform the development of appropriate sections of the DBC, identify impacts and benefits associated with the Somerset Dam Improvement Project and determine appropriate mitigation measures. The group will also support Seqwater to monitor and respond to social impacts during the site activities and construction period, including for the Early and Enabling Works, and evaluate the effectiveness of mitigation measures.

Issues and impacts to be monitored during the next phase of the project will relate to:

- Community amenity
- Recreational facilities
- The natural environment
- Social values and impacts
- Water supply
- History and cultural heritage
- Business and economic impacts.

CRG membership

Participation in the Somerset Dam Improvement Project CRG is voluntary. Participation is open to key stakeholders and residents who live, work, recreate or have another interest in Somerset Dam.

A maximum of 15 members will be appointed to the group, unless Seqwater identifies compelling reasons to extend this number. CRG membership does not attract any form of remuneration.

The CRG is not a decision-making group.

The CRG aims to represent a diverse range of community viewpoints. To ensure that a broad and balanced range of interests, concerns, and social, economic and environmental perspectives are included in the CRG, membership will be based on principles of demographic representation (within the identified project area).

Membership of the CRG will include a mix from the following stakeholder groups*:

- Residents living near the construction site (Somerset Dam)
- Residents living in upstream communities

- Residents living in downstream communities
- Property owners or lessees adjacent to Lake Somerset or the Stanley River between Somerset Dam and Lake Wivenhoe
- Business owners or operators
- Tourism operators, including accommodation providers
- Recreation users of Lake Somerset
- Environment and heritage groups
- Health and community service providers**
- Industry, training and employment providers
- Emergency services**
- Other community groups.

** A member may represent one or more of these interest groups.*

*** Direct invitations to participate will be sent to members of groups marked with a double *. All other positions will be filled through an open application process.*

If insufficient nominations meeting the selection criteria are received, Seqwater may issue invitations to identified stakeholder groups that have demonstrated an ability to meet the selection criteria. This process will enable the CRG to proceed.

Operational principles

CRG members

Key objectives of the Somerset Dam Improvement Project CRG will be to:

- build community understanding of the Somerset Dam Improvement Project by encouraging members to share information with their local networks.
- provide a forum for members to discuss and share issues of community interest related to the project.
- draw on local knowledge about how Somerset Dam and surrounding areas are used by the community and visitors.
- identify the positive and negative impacts of the project on community interests.
- provide Seqwater with relevant and timely community feedback to assist in addressing issues and opportunities resulting from the project.
- provide Seqwater with a sense of community perceptions and understanding about the project.

By joining the CRG, members agree to:

- Treat other group members with respect. Allow other people to be heard, listen respectfully, and do not speak over each other.
- Protect the privacy of other group members and treat them with respect when discussing the project or CRG with other community members.

- Consider all relevant information as part of the discussion in meetings.
- Consider other people's point of view.
- Act reasonably, with honesty and in good faith.
- Undertake any agreed actions within the timeframes specified.
- Attend all meetings and site tours or advise Seqwater of inability to attend.

Members of the group are appointed to represent the interests of their local community or stakeholder group and are expected to provide a two-way channel of communication between the project and the community.

Information about the project should be disseminated to other community members, and feedback from the community should be shared with the CRG.

Seqwater

Seqwater commits to keeping CRG members informed, listening to and acknowledging concerns and aspirations, and providing feedback on how CRG input was considered in decisions.

Project team members will attend CRG meetings to represent the project and participate in the meeting but are not members of the CRG.

Seqwater may also invite representatives from local, state or federal government agencies, contractors or subject matter experts to attend meetings if deemed relevant to a particular project stage or if requested by the group. These invited representatives may be required to observe the meeting, present at the meeting, or participate in the discussion.

Seqwater's Somerset Dam Improvement Project team representatives agree to:

- Plan and organise CRG meetings, providing at least 2 weeks of notice to members.
- Provide sufficient information for members to meaningfully participate in discussion.
- Provide an independent facilitator to ensure workshops are run in a transparent and equitable manner.
- Make sure all members have an opportunity to make comments, ask questions and raise issues.
- Publish the workshop presentations and high-level meeting notes on the project webpages.
- Genuinely consider and respond to all feedback and suggestions raised in the group.

CRG independent facilitator

The Somerset Dam Improvement Project CRG will be chaired and facilitated by an independent facilitator appointed by Seqwater.

The independent facilitator will have no conflict of interest involving Seqwater, the project, local government or community organisations from the Somerset Region, and surrounding areas.

Should the independent facilitator be deemed by Seqwater to be unsuitable for the role at any stage, the independent facilitator will be removed and Seqwater will appoint a new independent facilitator.

The CRG independent facilitator's role broadly requires them to:

- Ensure that meetings start promptly and finish at the scheduled time.
- Ensure independent and fair selection of CRG members in consultation with Seqwater.
- Manage and facilitate CRG meetings in a fair and independent way with CRG members and project representatives having equal opportunity to contribute to discussions.
- Facilitate constructive debate amongst CRG members.
- Ensure that agreed actions for each meeting are undertaken and report back to the CRG.
- Develop relevant and manageable agendas in collaboration with Seqwater.
- Manage member enquiries between meetings.
- Develop meeting notes and send to Seqwater for review.
- Ensure that participation is consistent with the Terms of Reference.

Operational procedures

Meetings

It is planned that the Somerset Dam Improvement Project CRG will meet once in late 2024 and two or three times over the first half of 2025. Additional periodic meetings will be scheduled quarterly throughout the delivery of the Early and Enabling Works. Meetings will increase in frequency as the project moves closer to the start of construction on the main dam upgrade.

Meeting times will be set in advance in consultation with CRG members and the duration of each meeting will normally be a maximum of two to three hours.

To ensure relevant, timely feedback and information sharing, Seqwater reserves the right to alter the frequency of CRG meetings to coincide with the different construction phases which may change during the project. Advanced notice of changes to meeting schedules will be provided to CRG members.

Meetings will be held at a suitable venue convenient for members of the CRG and in the vicinity of Somerset Dam. The meeting location will also be managed by the secretariat and any changes to venue will be communicated with advance notice.

CRG secretariat

Administrative services and report compilation will be provided by the Somerset Dam Improvement Project team who will function as the CRG secretariat.

The secretariat's role includes:

- Reviewing and distributing meeting notes.
- Managing meeting schedules.
- Managing meeting locations.
- Managing reviews and distribution of reports.

The CRG independent facilitator will assist the CRG secretariat in developing agendas, reviewing draft notes and managing communication between CRG members and the CRG secretariat.

Agenda items

All CRG agenda items must be forwarded to the secretariat 10 working days before the next scheduled meeting.

The CRG agenda, with attached meeting papers, will be distributed at least five working days before the next scheduled meeting.

Meeting notes

Meeting notes of each CRG meeting will be prepared by the independent facilitator. A draft copy of the notes will be provided to Seqwater to review, followed by all CRG members no later than 14 working days following each meeting.

Meeting notes will be made available to the CRG at the subsequent meeting and provided to Seqwater to be published on the Somerset Dam Improvement Project web page <https://www.seqwater.com.au/project/somerset-dam-improvement-project>.

CRG governance and conflict of interest

The independent facilitator shall convene Somerset Dam Improvement Project CRG meetings. Members of the CRG are required to declare any actual or perceived conflicts of interest during the application process.

A conflict of interest arises where Seqwater's interests are actually, potentially or perceived to be in conflict with your private interest and where these may be seen to influence your actions while participating in the Somerset Dam Improvement Project CRG – for example, if a company you work for is bidding on work associated with the project.

If an actual or potential conflict of interest arises in relation to any topic, group members will be required to inform Seqwater and the rest of the Somerset Dam Improvement Project CRG as soon as practicable.

Review

The role, membership and operation of the CRG will be reviewed annually to evaluate the CRG process. Seqwater reserves the right to activate a review at any time.

Seqwater reserves the right to replace any CRG member who they feel is not representing the interests of the community or is no longer associated with the relevant group/s.

Proxies

No proxies will be accepted for the CRG. If a CRG representative is unavailable to attend a meeting, an apology should be provided to Seqwater in advance of the meeting where possible.

Information confidentiality

CRG members may be granted access to project information that is not yet available to the public. It is also possible that some of the information made available to the CRG may be classified as confidential by Seqwater.

It is the responsibility of the person/s disclosing confidential information to ensure its confidential nature is made known to the CRG.

CRG members should:

- Only express their own views or the views of the organisation they represent to the public and media and not attempt to represent the views of the broader CRG.
- Ensure all media enquiries related to the CRG are directed to Seqwater.

Media

Members must not speak to the media on behalf the group without authorisation from Seqwater. No member of the group will discuss views or opinions expressed by another member of the group without their prior consent.

Privacy

Seqwater will use the personal information of CRG members for the purpose of managing meetings and activities, sharing information and for any other purpose specifically related to the CRG.

It will only be used for another purpose when permission has been requested and provided. Seqwater will not provide your contact information to any other party without consent. Group members are free to discuss the outcomes of meetings with other people.

The views and opinions expressed by other members of the group are confidential and must not be shared outside the group.

Disputes, differing views and consensus

Disputes and complaints should be documented in writing and sent to ProjectInfo@seqwater.com.au. Seqwater's complaints management process is available on our website [Feedback and Complaints](#) page.

Should a dispute arise, which cannot be resolved, the matter may be referred to the independent facilitator and the Somerset Dam Improvement Project team. The final decision on action will lie with Seqwater.

Replacing CRG members

Any member of the group who does not attend two consecutive workshops without providing a reason to Seqwater will be assumed to have left the group.

Seqwater will select replacement members who represent similar community interests. Existing applications to join the group will be considered first and if no suitable replacement is found, Seqwater may issue direct invitations to identified stakeholder groups or alternatively, seek additional applications for new members.

Dismissal

Should any member not abide by the terms set out in these Terms of Reference, the member will be removed from the CRG.

Non-attendance at two (2) meetings without prior notice and a reasonable excuse will result in the member being removed from the CRG.

By signing here, you agree to the Somerset Dam Improvement Project CRG Terms of Reference:

Signed and agreed

Member name

Member signature

_____ date _____

Witnessed

Facilitator name

Facilitator signature

_____ date _____

Contact details

Seqwater email: ProjectInfo@seqwater.com.au
Seqwater phone number: 07 3432 7000