

Western Lands Advisory Council

October 2015

On 28 June 2002, a Bill to amend the *Western Lands Act 1901* was passed through the NSW Parliament. One of those amendments relates to the establishment of the Western Lands Advisory Council.

What has changed?

The Minister for the Department of Primary Industries - Lands (the Department) is now advised by the Western Lands Advisory Council, a broadly based statutory advisory body.

The Western Lands Advisory Council is comprised of 15 members representing groups that have an interest in the Western Division. It comprises:

- an independent chairperson;
- four people representing lessees in the Western Division (with two nominated by the NSW Farmers Western Division Council, one representing the Pastoralists Association of West Darling, and one to be non-aligned);
- one person representing the interests of environmental protection groups as nominated by the Nature Conservation Council of NSW;
- two people representing local government as nominated by the Western Division Group of the Shires Association of NSW;
- one person representing Catchment Management Boards;
- two people representing the interests of Aboriginal people (with one nominated by the NSW Aboriginal Land Council);
- the Western Lands Commissioner;
- one person representing the Minister for the Environment;
- one person representing the Minister for Resources and Energy; and
- one person representing the Minister for Primary Industries.

What are the principal functions of the Western Lands Advisory Council?

- to advise the Minister on matters relevant to the objects of the *Western Lands Act 1901*;
- to advise the Minister on matters affecting the administration of the Western Division; and
- to consult with people and organisations that have an interest in any matter affecting the administration of the Western Division.

How will this affect me?

Western Division people have an effective voice for communicating directly with the Minister for concerning the administration of the Western Division or the *Western Lands Act 1901*.

People with concerns on any issues relating to the administration of the Western Division or the Western Lands Act should contact the most appropriate representative on the Western Lands Advisory Council.

Individuals who wish to be considered for appointment on the Western Lands Advisory Council should approach their respective nominating organisation to seek support.

Why change?

The 2002 amendments represented the most important and historic package of reforms to the management of the Western Division since the enactment of the Act in 1901.

In the past century, the Western Division has changed a great deal, but the legislation underpinning its management has lagged behind. The result was that social and economic opportunities for Western Division residents and visitors have been unnecessarily restricted, and some administration was excessively cumbersome.

The 2002 amendments to the Act provided the people of the Western Division with administrative systems and legislation more suited to the 21st century.

They allow for improved economic, soil and environmental outcomes for the Western Division and enable lessees and people living in the division to build increased security, flexibility and resilience into their operations.

More information

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