

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Health Committee

1. Reporting

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Health Committee (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander WHC) will report directly to the RANZCOG Board.

Indirect reporting on matters involving other College committees may be required from time to time, which includes the following: Women's Health Committee (WHC), He Hono Wāhine Committee and RANZCOG Women's Health Foundation.

Informal reporting and communication is required by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander WHC Chair to the RANZCOG Indigenous Network Group (RING) to the extent permitted by the College's *Confidentiality Policy*.

2. Date of Establishment

The Indigenous Women's Health Committee was established as a full committee of Council on 17 July 2009 and later renamed as the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander WHC in July 2014, reporting to the RANZCOG Board.

3. Functions and Responsibilities

To act as an advocate for and provide advice to the RANZCOG Board with regard to matters relating to the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women.

The responsibilities of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander WHC include the following:

- To promote and facilitate culturally acceptable and ethical research in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women's health;
- To support and develop educational programs and resources for health professionals in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women's health;
- To provide information for RANZCOG constituents on matters relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women's health;
- To facilitate educational opportunities for Fellows and members of the RANZCOG as it relates to their care of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in both remote, rural, and urban areas in Australia;
- To liaise with other medical colleges, societies, and professional bodies in matters of common interest in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women's health;
- To liaise where necessary with the He Hono Wāhine Committee on matters of mutual interest;
- To liaise where necessary with the RING on matters where wider consultation is required;

The Committee shall have the power to appoint ad hoc working parties to undertake particular tasks relating to the development/research of policy and related issues being considered by the Committee. Terms of reference for any working party(s) established are to be developed and approved by the RANZCOG Board.

Any recommendations to the RANZCOG Board regarding initiatives or modifications to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander WHC policies, procedures, and/or activities that require resources not already funded, must be accompanied by:

- the source of funding and how the funding will be raised; and
- a budget detailing all expenses involved.

4. Membership

All appointments to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander WHC will be made by the RANZCOG President for the relevant term of office.

The CEO and President discuss and consult with the Committee Chair on suitable candidates to select from the Board and/or Council.

Appointments will be for a period of two (2) years, that is, the full Council term, and in accordance with RANZCOG Policy *Tenure of Appointment to RANZCOG Committees and External Bodies*. Members who serve the maximum number of consecutive terms may be eligible for membership following an absence of one (1) term.

The membership of the working group may include but not be restricted to:

- A RANZCOG Fellow who identifies as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander who shall Chair the Committee
- A RANZCOG Fellow/ Diplomat/Associate (Procedural or Advanced Procedural)/Trainee who identifies as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, who shall be Deputy Chair;
- Two (2) Senior Fellows, who shall be non-Indigenous, including one (1) RANZCOG Board Member or RANZCOG Councillor;
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Fellows, of which there is no limit;
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Trainees who have completed their written and oral exams, of which there is no limit; and
- Up to two (2) Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Diplomates/ Associate (Procedural or Advanced Procedural).

All members (including ex-officio members) of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander WHC have voting rights. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander WHC may request from the RANZCOG Board the ability to co-opt up to two (2) individuals with limited tenure and particular expertise as felt necessary from time to time in order to progress specific matters related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women's health.

Ex-officio members are:

- RANZCOG President; and
- RANZCOG CEO.

All Committee members (including Ex-officio) shall have full voting rights.

The Chair is a voting member of Council, in accordance with the *RANZCOG Constitution*. The Chair, or a nominated representative, shall be the official Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representative on the following committees: the RANZCOG Women's Health Foundation and the Women's Health Committee.

By accepting the invitation to be a member of the Committee, individual members must comply with the *RANZCOG Code of Conduct* and conduct themselves in a manner that reflects the standards of professional and ethical behaviour expected by the College, and agree to abide by the following College policies, procedures and guidelines:

- *Attendance Policy and Procedure for Members of RANZCOG Bodies;*
- *College Organisational Values;*
- *Confidentiality Policy: Board, Council and Committees;*
- *Conflict of Interest Policy; and*

- *Conduct of Meeting Policy.*

5. Management and Coordination

Management of the day-to-day operations of the working group will be coordinated by the RANZCOG People, Wellbeing and Facilities Directorate.

6. Chair

The Chair and Deputy Chair shall be appointed for a period of two (2) years by the RANZCOG President. Where possible, the Chair shall be an existing member of the Committee.

The Chair can serve the maximum of two (2) consecutive two-year terms subject to any additional provisions specified in the *Tenure of Appointment to RANZCOG Committees and External Bodies Policy*, as well as clause 10.4 of the *RANZCOG Constitution*, which governs the term of office of RANZCOG Councillors.

The Chair is also a voting member of Council, in accordance with the *RANZCOG Constitution*. In the event of extenuating circumstances that a Fellow who identifies as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander is not available to be the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Health Chair, a Board nominee will be appointed to the position, and hence to the Council position.

The Chair shall have delegated authority to deal with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander WHC matters of a routine and administrative nature. Matters dealt with by the Chair will be tabled at the next meeting of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander WHC

The following matters will be considered by the full Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander WHC: matters on which no precedent has been established; matters of policy; new issues; specific referral matters; and matters that require the benefit of the full Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander WHC discussion.

Where the Chair is unable to act due to conflict of interest or otherwise, the Deputy Chair shall assume the role of Acting Chair, with the full powers of the Chair, until the Chair is able to return to the position or the RANZCOG Board appoints a new Chair.

In the absence of the Chair, the Deputy Chair will chair the meeting. When a meeting is convened and neither the Chair nor the Deputy Chair is present, a temporary Chair for that meeting must be appointed by those present.

7. Quorum

The number of members required for a formal meeting to proceed is half of those Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander WHC members eligible to vote plus one. Ex-officio members can be included in the quorum if in attendance at a meeting.

If Ex-officio members are not in attendance, then they do not need to be included in the number required for a quorum.

Any questions and/or motions arising from meetings shall be decided by a majority of votes of the members present and voting on that matter. In the event of a motion with equal votes 'for' and 'against', the Chair shall have a deliberative vote in addition to a vote as a member of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander WHC

If a quorum is not present, a meeting may still go ahead, with written notes recorded. Should a recommendation arise under these circumstances, the recommendation and notes must be disseminated ('flying recommendation') to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander WHC members (including those that were present at the meeting in question) requesting them to indicate their support or objection to the recommendation.

8. Flying Recommendations

A recommendation can be disseminated out-of-session (i.e., by email) to the working group for approval by flying recommendation. For a flying recommendation to be passed, a quorum must have voted and approved the recommendation. Ex-officio members can be included in the quorum for a flying recommendation if they submit a vote. If Ex-officio members do not submit a vote, then they do not need to be included in the quorum

for a flying recommendation to be effective. At the subsequent meeting, all flying recommendations and their outcome must be formally minuted.

9. Observers and Visitors

Observers and visitors must have received the prior permission of the Chair to attend meetings. Observers and visitors must leave the meeting if any matters are to be considered 'in camera'.

10. Meeting Papers – Agenda and Minutes

Request for agenda items/reports for any scheduled meeting may be sent to members 21 working days prior to the scheduled meeting date.

All agenda items may be forwarded to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander WHC coordinator by close of business 14 working days prior to the next scheduled meeting. The Chair has the right to refuse to list an item on the formal agenda, but members may raise an item under 'Other Business' if necessary and as time permits.

The agenda and meeting papers will be distributed to all members at least seven (7) working days prior to the next scheduled meeting.

Accurate minutes will be kept of each meeting. The minutes may be confined to a report of the resolutions and any recommendations.

Draft minutes are to be completed no later than 10 working days following each meeting and forwarded to the Chair for approval. It is expected that the Chair of the meeting shall approve meeting minutes within five (5) working days upon receipt.

The draft minutes and action list shall be provided to all members no later than 15 working days following the meeting.

Reports and recommendations to the RANZCOG Board are to be prepared by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander WHC coordinator, in conjunction with the Chair, and provided to the RANZCOG Board Coordinator for inclusion on the next meeting agenda of the RANZCOG Board.

The minutes shall be submitted to members for ratification at the next meeting of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander WHC.

11. Frequency of Meetings

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander WHC will meet three (3) times a year (in-person, or via videoconference depending on available budget) and at other times as required.

Consideration should be given to hold at least one (1) joint meeting annually with the College's He Hono Wāhine Committee.

12. Review of Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference should be reviewed as considered necessary, but at least every two (2) years.

13. Approval Process and Date for Next Review

Version	Date of Version	Pages revised / Brief Explanation of Revision
v1	November 2014	
v2	July 2014	
v3	May 2015	
v4	July 2016	
v5	December 2018	
v6	September 2021	
v7	May 2022	Changes to committee membership and structure.
v8	April 2023	Updated in accordance with ELT approved global change re Chair maximum tenure
v9	February 2024	Terminology change from 'welfare' to 'wellbeing' Change of membership category term to include Associate (Procedural or Advanced Procedural)

Policy Version:	Version 9
Policy Owner:	People, Wellbeing & Facilities – Cultural Diversity & Inclusion
Policy Approved by:	RANZCOG ELT
Review of Policy:	February 2026