

## 1. POLICY CERTIFICATION

Policy title:	<b>Policy Framework</b>
Policy number:	<b>COR001</b>
Category:	<b>Council Policy</b>
Classification:	<b>GOVERNANCE</b>
Status:	<b>Approved</b>

## 2. PURPOSE

This Policy Framework outlines the development, classification, and categorisation of all policy and related corporate documents for Roper Gulf Regional Council. It sets levels of policy and related corporate documents, and associated authority and responsibility for each level.

This document is the authoritative framework setting consistency, control, clarity, and quality in the development, approval and review processes associated with policy, and prevails over all other corporate documents of Council to the extent of the conflict or inconsistency.

## 3. ORGANISATIONAL SCOPE

The Policy Framework applies to the Policy and associated corporate document development and adoption process. It prevails over all other Policy and corporate documents of Council.

## 4. POLICY STATEMENT

Policy statements (policies) are Council's formal position on a particular subject matter, and are strategic in nature rather than operational. As such, Policy is made (adopted) by Council.

Organisational Directives carry the same weight of policy, however they are standing instructions to the Organisation and made by the Chief Executive Officer. They are more prescriptive and operational in nature than policies.

Council policy prevails over all directives and corporate documents on event of inconsistency, to the extent of the inconsistency.

Divisional Directives are a smaller, divisional versions of their Organisational counterparts, and are made by General Managers for application to their own divisions.

In the Roper Gulf Regional Council Policy Framework, there are two (2) types of corporate document with the weight and authority of policy:

- Council Policies; and
- Organisational Directives

Policies and Directives have subordinate corporate documentation, which support their implementation and compliance.

The Policy Framework aims to support the development of policy statements which:

- Comply with, and are reflective applicable law;
- Are capable of withstanding close judicial and ministerial scrutiny;
- Is well written, clear, concise and fit for purpose manner;
- Has clearly defined objectives, legislative requirements, and compliance mechanisms;
- Has a standardised layout;
- Conforms to applicable standards and guidelines;

## 5. DEFINITIONS

<b>Approval levels</b>	A policy document will be endorsed and approved by different people within the organisation. See the diagram at the end of this document for clarification of who has authority to endorse and approve different types of policy documents.
<b>Categorisation</b>	Selection of the appropriate category of policy, according to its level, content and purpose. The category allocated by the Policy Coordination Officer will be either Council Policy, Organisational Directive or Supporting Document.
<b>CEO</b>	Chief Executive Officer
<b>Classification</b>	Allocation of the appropriate classification of the policy, according to the content and limitations of the policy: (1) Office of the Chief Executive Officer (OCEO); (2) Corporate (COR); (3) Services (SERV); (4) Infrastructure (INF).
<b>Consultation</b>	Consultation is the compulsory process of meeting with identified, relevant stakeholders to seek information, advice and feedback. It must take place prior to, and during development of any policy document and supporting documents.
<b>Council Policy</b>	A formal statement of Council outlining strategic directions and/or adherence to statutory or other corporate requirements.
<b>Corporate Document</b>	Official and authoritative documents of Council which prescribe strategic goals and their execution, being of an operational, implementation or compliance nature. Examples include Standard Operating Procedures, Manuals, Method Statements, Templates and Pro Formae.
<b>Endorsement</b>	Formal support for the applicable corporate document from relevant stakeholders. Endorsement should be seen as an essential step on the way to formal approval.
<b>Formal approval</b>	The authoritative process by way of which corporate documents attain official status.
<b>Organisational Directive</b>	A specific, Organisation-wide instruction made by the Chief Executive Officer, which carries the authoritative weight of Policy but is Operational rather than Strategic in nature. It is an executive counterpart to Policy.
<b>Policy Coordination Officer</b>	The Policy Coordination Officer is a staff member appointed by the Chief Executive Officer to ensure Policy and Corporate Documents are compliant with applicable authorisation and review requirements.
<b>Policy Development and Review Cycle</b>	The stages of the policy development cycle are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of a policy need;</li> <li>• Development of the draft policy document and supporting documents;</li> <li>• Consideration and endorsement;</li> <li>• Consideration and approval;</li> <li>• Implementation; and</li> <li>• Ongoing monitoring and review of the policy.</li> </ul>
<b>Policy Drafter</b>	The author of the draft policy document.
<b>Policy Owner</b>	The staff member responsible for the implementation and integrity of the applicable policy.
<b>SLT</b>	Strategic Leadership Team
<b>Standard Operating Procedures(SOP)</b>	A specific, prescriptive document which outlines the execution of a specific task and/or implementation of a prescribed goal.
<b>WHS</b>	Work, Health and Safety

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## 6. PRINCIPLES

### 6.1 Compliance

Policies must comply with, and be reflective of all applicable law including Acts, their statutory instruments, and case law.

### 6.2 Consistency

Terminology used in the policy should reflect used in any applicable legislation, standard, guideline, or Council's Strategic and Regional Plans.

### 6.3 Clarity

There are two (2) aspects of clarity are important in the development of policy documents and supporting documents. They are: purpose and scope.

- Policy needs to have a specific purpose and goal;
- Policy needs to have a specific, outlined scope.

**6.3.1 Clarity of approval:** All policy and corporate documents are to clearly state the date of authorisation, the authoriser, the date(s) of any amendment(s), and the date policy is due for review.

**6.3.2 Clarity of writing:** All policy and corporate documents are to be written in a clear and concise manner, capable of withstanding close judicial and ministerial scrutiny. Applicable law is to be cited concisely in the policy statement, and in full in the reference section of the policy document.

### 6.4 Stages of Policy Development

The five (5) stages of policy document development are:

**6.4.1 Identification of policy need:** The policy must have a specific purpose. It is based on an identified and scoped strategic need rather than an idle wondering into whether or not a proposition is required.

**6.4.2 Draft of policy document development:** This stage includes scoping and mapping applicable law, relevant stakeholders, commencing the consultation process, gathering background information, writing the policy document and supporting documents and incorporating feedback into later drafts.

The draft policy must identify applicable law and address any arising compliance requirements.

Draft policies which lack legal referencing and citation may not pass beyond this stage.

The Draft documents must go to the Policy Coordination Officer for final checks against template, formatting and compliance requirements before progressing to the next phase.

**6.4.3 Policy consideration and endorsement:** This stage involves presenting the policy document to the appropriate endorser as per the diagram at the end of this document for evaluation and endorsement:

- Council Policies - Strategic Leadership Team (SLT),
- Organisational Directive - Strategic Leadership Team (SLT),
- Supporting documents such as SOPs - Consideration by Manager, and endorsed by General Manager.

Consultation and endorsement are a desirable part of the policy and the corporate document development process, and must be undertaken save in exigent circumstances.

Organisational Directives are made by the Chief Executive Officer and do not require SLT agreement for authorisation.

Council adopts policies, and as such, it may adopt policies which are not endorsed by SLT, however it must provide compelling reasons for doing so, as part of the adoption resolution.

**6.4.4 Policy authorisation (adoption):** This stage involves presenting the policy document to the Council or CEO for formal approval.

Policies are Council's formal position on a particular subject matter and strategic in nature. As such Policies require the approval of Council by way of specific adoption via formal resolution. This is also applicable to substantive amendments to existing policies which do not fall within the realm of minor administrative change.

All new policies and reviewed/updated policies with significant changes must be presented to the Council for approval.

A report must be written to introduce the policy document and must be included in the Council meeting agenda, which outlines the reasons for introducing the policy, and outlines applicable law.

**Council must not adopt a policy which lacks legal referencing or citation.**

Organisational Directives are authoritative documents and carry the weight of Council policy, however they are operational rather than strategic in nature and as such they are made by the Chief Executive Officer.

Subordinate and supporting documentation such as Procedures, Divisional Directives, Method Statements etc. are made by General Managers and Managers as outlined in the Corporate Documents Instructional Hierarchy.

**6.4.5 Policy implementation:** Once Council adopts a new or amended policy, it will be formally registered by the Office of the Chief Executive Officer, recorded in the Corporate Information System, and promulgated by way of being made publicly available on Council's website, and a formal email with explanatory notes being sent out to Council, all staff, and applicable stakeholders.

**6.4.6 Policy review:** The default validity period for policies is for the Term of Council, however they may be reviewed earlier if necessary for whatever reason including legislative, organisational, or operational changes.

The Policy Owner is responsible for the ongoing monitoring, review and updating of policy.

A reviewed policy document which requires administrative, formatting or other insignificant changes which are not substantive may be amended as required with Chief Executive Officer authorisation.

## 6.5 Classification

When formulating corporate documents at policy level, the appropriate classification needs to be ascertained.

**Classifications** are used to group similar policy documents and to broadly describe the content. Classifications are subject to review.

There are four (4) classifications of Council policy documents:

- (1) Office of the Chief Executive Officer (OCEO);
- (2) Corporate (COR);

- (3) Services (SERV);
- (4) Infrastructure (INF).

Classifications are to be discussed with the Policy Coordination Officer and must be ascertained as part of the initial scoping process.

Supporting documents will use the same grouping classifications as policy documents.

### **6.6 Policy Owner**

A Policy Owner will be designated for each policy document and supporting document. The Policy Owner will bear responsibility for regular monitoring and review of the policy and for incorporating necessary changes.

The Policy Owner is also responsible to assess the revised policy document and decide whether any significant changes have been made. If it is, formal endorsement and approval needs to be gained again.

The Policy Owner is also responsible to coordinate a process to notify the necessary staff and stakeholders after a policy document has been revised.

All reviews of the documents must go to the Policy Coordination Officer for final review against compliance requirements.

### **6.7 Policy access**

Council Policies are public documents and as such are published on Council's website.

Council's Policies are stored and managed within the Corporate Information System in a manner ensures integrity and authenticity.

All Directives and subsequent corporate documents are managed in the Corporate Information System and promulgated as required by operational considerations.

### **6.8 Relationship/impact on other policies**

The Policy development process must identify and assess any potential overlap with current policies, and in the event of inconsistency, a clear hierarchy relationship must be developed.

### **6.9 Policy currency**

The current version of any policy document will be considered to be the electronic version which is publicly available on Council's website.

### **6.10 Policy numbering**

Policy document numbering will reflect the category and classification of the policy. The Policy Coordination Officer will allocate numbers during the checks done prior to presentation for formal approval.

### **6.11 Policy review**

Policies are reviewed at least once during a Term of Council, and may be done so as necessity arises.

### **6.12 Rescindment of Policies**

Policies may be rescinded if no longer current, or if they become unnecessary. The rescindment process is the same as the adoption process, and must be put to Council with an explanatory report stating the reason for rescindment.

The actual rescindment of a policy must be done by way of a formal Council resolution. Organisational Directives may be rescinded by the Chief Executive Officer as required.

**7. POLICY CONTENT**

The content of the body of the *Council Policy*, or the *Organisational Directive*, will be organised under the following headings:

1. Policy/Directive Title;
2. Purpose;
3. Scope;
4. Policy/Directive Statement;
5. Definitions;
6. Principles;
7. Applicable Law; (including Case Law);
8. Document Control.

**8. APPLICABLE LAW**

Acknowledgements (original author/source documents)	
Related Policies	<b>All RGRC policies</b>
Related Publications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Interpretation Act 1978</i></li> <li>• <i>Local Government Act 2008</i></li> <li>• <i>Information Act 2002</i></li> </ul>

**9. DOCUMENT CONTROL**

Policy number	<b>COR001</b>
Policy Owner	<b>General Manager Corporate Services and Sustainability</b>
Endorsed by	<b>Council</b>
Date approved	<b>21 October 2009</b>
Revisions	<b>October 2010 May 2017 July 2017 August 2017 July 2020</b>
Amendments	<b>May 2017 July 2017 August 2017 July 2020</b>
Next revision due	<b>August 2021</b>

**Corporate Documents Instructional Hierarchy**

<p><b>Level 1</b></p>	<p><b>Policy – Council</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overarching, Organisation-wide principles;</li> <li>• Based on applicable law;</li> <li>• Strategic.</li> </ul> <p><b>Manuals – Council</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organisation-wide application;</li> <li>• Collation of principles and instructions</li> <li>• Based on applicable law.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Organisational Directive – CEO</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standing Orders for the Organisation;</li> <li>• Strategic in nature;</li> <li>• Sets parameters / boundaries</li> </ul>
<p><b>Level 2</b></p>	<p><b>Procedures – GM</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Operational;</li> <li>• Goal / task – based and specific;</li> <li>• Implementation instructions;</li> <li>• Sets parameters and boundaries for specific tasking;</li> </ul> <p><b>Division / Unit Plans (GM / Manager)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Objectives;</li> <li>• Operational;</li> <li>• Parameters;</li> </ul> <p><b>Contracts - GM</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific;</li> <li>• Goals and deliverables;</li> <li>• Taskings and responsibilities</li> </ul>	<p><b>Divisional / Managerial / Unit Directive – GM (Division), Manager (unit)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standing Orders for Division / Business Unit;</li> <li>• Can be strategic or operational;</li> <li>• Procedural</li> </ul>
<p><b>Level 3</b></p>	<p><b>Method Statements – GM / Manager</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Task-specific implementation guides</li> <li>• Operational</li> </ul> <p><b>Pro Formae</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Operational;</li> <li>• Pre-determined parameters in accordance with L1 or L2 requirements;</li> </ul> <p><b>Templates</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Operational;</li> </ul>	<p><b>Specific Directives – GM / Manager</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific Orders / Taskings for Unit or Individual;</li> <li>• Task based</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pre-determined parameters in accordance with L1 or L2 requirements;</li></ul>	
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## Policy Development and Review Cycle

