

Australasian Hydrographic Surveyors Certification Panel (AHSCP) Governance (Version - 2024)

This document sets out the governance arrangements by which the Panel conducts certification activities.

1. Composition of the Panel

The Panel shall comprise of five elected positions and the Chair, who is the current National Hydrographer of Australia or a suitably qualified Level 1 Certified Hydrographic Surveyor appointed by the national hydrographic authority. All Panel members shall be Level 1 Certified Hydrographic Surveyors representing each of the following hydrographic disciplines:

- a. Nautical Charting Hydrography
- b. Hydrography for Coastal Zone Management
- c. Industrial Offshore Surveying
- d. Education
- e. Private Practice

2. Election and Term of Office for Panel members

The term of office of the 5 elected Panel members is two years and, in order to maintain continuity, election of 2 or 3 Panel members are held annually. Nominees have to be Geospatial Council of Australia (GCA) or Survey and Spatial New Zealand (S+SNZ) members who are Hydrographic Surveyors certified at Level 1. All certified members (i.e. Levels 1 and 2) are eligible to vote at the elections.

3. Responsibilities of Panel Members

Panel members are expected to submit applicant assessments and attend meetings as promulgated. Members shall submit their checklists (in respect of assessment of applicants) prior to the meeting being held. Any member who does not submit checklists or input to action items for two consecutive meetings, without leave from the Panel, may be dismissed by the Panel.

4. Casual Vacancy

If a casual vacancy occurs, the Panel may appoint another suitably qualified hydrographic surveyor to the position to complete the term of the originally elected member.

5. Quorum for Meetings

The quorum for meetings shall be as follows:

- a. general business and re-certifications - Chair plus 3 Panel members
- b. for assessment of certification applications - Chair plus 4 Panel members

6. Conduct of Meetings

The Panel shall hold at least 3 meetings a year, usually by remote means (VTC, etc). A face to face meeting will be held annually or bi-annually. The main business during meetings will be the assessment of applications for certification. Dates of the AHSCP meetings and deadlines for submission of applications for certification shall be published on the GCA website.

7. Assessment of Applicants

Prior to a meeting, each Panel member will conduct and submit to the AHSCP Chair an independent assessment of each application based on the documentation submitted.

The application will be considered in a closed forum at the Panel meeting and a consensus decision will be made at the ultimate discretion of the Panel.

If a Panel member has or has previously had a professional relationship with an applicant, that Panel member must declare the circumstances of that relationship at the time of submitting their assessment checklist. The Panel will consider the circumstances of the relationship and decide whether that Panel member will be included or excluded from deliberations and decision making regarding the applicant. The Panel's decision with respect to this is to be recorded in the minutes.

8. Decisions of the Panel

Decisions of the Panel will normally be made by consensus of all members eligible to participate in the decision. A consensus is defined as no members wishing to vote against the proposed decision. All Panel members are bound by the decision of the Panel.

9. Appealing Decisions of the Panel

If an applicant has been denied certification, that applicant may appeal to the AHSCP Chair to have his or her application reconsidered. If the applicant is unsatisfied with the process of the Panel they may seek review through the GCA complaints mechanism.

10. Documentation

The AHSCP will maintain documentation for the governance and procedures relating to the operation of the Panel. These documents include:

- a. Australasian Hydrographic Surveyors Certification Panel (AHSCP) Governance;
- b. The Guidelines for Specialist Certification in Hydrographic Surveying;
- c. A full copy of each Certification application;
- d. Certification Assessment Checklist;
- e. List of Certified Professionals in Hydrographic Surveying;
- f. AHSCP Certification Certificates and Certification letters;
- g. AHSCP meeting agenda and minutes; and
- h. Re-certification procedures.

GCA Constitution and By Laws provide broader overarching policy documentation.

11. Disposal of Application Data and Confidential Documentation

All records of AHSCP proceedings and Applicant Documentation are to be securely disposed of once a panel member ceases to be a member of the AHSCP Panel. Applicant documentation will be retained as an archive by the Secretary of the AHSCP.

12. Confidentiality

All Panel members are required to sign the AHSCP Confidentiality Agreement when elected. This is an undertaking by the member that he or she will treat all information provided by an applicant in strict confidence and not to use it inappropriately for any reason other than AHSCP business.

13. Code of Ethics

Panel members are required to abide by the GCA Code of Ethics as the basis upon which members shall conduct their activities in order to meet community trust. Details can be found on the GCA website. [Governance - Geospatial Council of Australia](#)