

Community Affairs Resourcing and Management Agreement Policy and Procedures

Purpose

The purpose of this policy and its procedures is to confirm the Outback Community Authority's (the Authority's) commitment to the provision of efficient and accountable administration and management of outback communities¹.

The Policy establishes a framework and guidelines for the allocation of financial resources to support the development, growth, and wellbeing of outback communities. Its objective is to address some of the unique needs and challenges faced by our remote and sparsely populated regions.

This policy aims to support:

- the appropriate administration and authorisation of Community Affairs Resourcing and Management Agreements (CARMs) in accordance with the *Outback Communities (Administration and Management) Act 2009 (the Act)*
- transparency, consistency, fairness, and equity in the provision of CARM Agreements to outback communities
- the effective and efficient use of available funds and resources
- the distribution of funds based on required criteria and objective factors such as community needs, geographical and environmental considerations, and other relevant factors.
- funds being used for their intended purposes.

Policy Statement

The Authority is committed to performing the functions and objectives intended by **the Act**.

CARM Agreements between the Authority and an incorporated outback community body must meet the requirements of **the Act**, relating to any or all of the following:

- the financial and other support to be provided by the Authority
- the provision of public services and facilities by community organisations and the governance of those organisations
- the participation of community organisations in an insurance scheme arranged by the Authority
- the authorisation of community contributions for a specified purpose.

¹ Outback Communities (Administration and Management) Act 2009 s4(a)

Community Engagement

The Authority supports and encourages community engagement by involving community members in formulating a CARM request. Community engagement fosters a sense of ownership and empowerment to the community and enables CARM Agreements to align with each community's unique needs and aspirations.

Challenges

The Authority recognises the unique challenges faced by outback communities when presenting requests for a CARM Agreement including (but not limited to):

- logistical challenges
- administrative support
- gathering stakeholder input
- cost estimates, timelines and supporting documentation
- developing proposals that align with the community's needs and goals; and
- possible limited experience and capacity in navigating the funding application process.

The Authority will provide guidance and assistance to all Associations on request through the provision of a dedicated Community Development Officer (CDO).

Insurance

Relevant Insurances will be arranged by the Authority through Local Government Risk Services (LGRS).

OCA will pay LGRS and forward an invoice for 50% of the total amount to the relevant association for reimbursement.

Insurance may include motor vehicle insurance, industrial special risks (includes building insurance), general liability insurance, personal accident, aviation liability insurance and mine insurance.

The responsibility for providing associations with a copy of their insurance policy lies with LGRS.

Community Contribution Schemes

The Authority commits to supporting those communities willing to participate in a Community Contribution Scheme (CCS). When communities participate in a CCS they make a financial contribution to services that meet the particular needs of their community. This collaborative approach encourages a sense of pride and ownership.

A CCS is a levy paid by the landholders within a community for the purposes of planning, carrying out, making available, supporting, maintaining or improving an activity that is, or is intended to be, of particular benefit to the outback community in that area or to visitors to that community.

CARM Agreement Principles

1. Eligibility

CARM Agreements will only be made with Incorporated Associations that are established to represent their community, have membership and are operating within the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act 1985, and who are meeting the requirements of this Policy.

Examples of *eligible* items and activities that may be included in a CARM Agreement request include:

- Governance and administrative support
- Insurance
- Waste management
- Town maintenance
- Maintenance of public facilities
- A contribution to the cost of utilities in Association owned community venues
- Support for ongoing programs that seek to build social cohesion or meet particular needs of a specific group, e.g youth.

Examples of *ineligible* items and activities that will not be funded in a CARM Agreement include:

- Sponsorships (covered under the Sponsorship Policy).
- Infrastructure projects (covered under the Project Support Funding Policy).
- Events
- Conference attendance
- Sports participation (individuals and teams).

2. Funding

Funding allocations will be contingent on the Authority's budget planning and resource allocation.

- Each eligible Association will receive an allocation of money to support its governance and administration.
- When considering the allocation of discretionary funding priority will be given to those services and activities needed for communities to function with a reasonable level of livability.

CARM Agreement Cycle

- The Authority will communicate with eligible incorporated associations a minimum of three (3) months prior to its closing date to inform them about the CARM Agreement process and encourage them to apply.
- Completed applications must be lodged by the deadline date of each funding cycle.
- It is the responsibility of Associations to notify the Authority of any assistance required to complete the proposed CARM Agreement request no later than four (4) weeks before the funding cycle closing date deadline.
- No late CARM Agreement requests will be accepted unless a written extension request is provided to the Director, Office for the Outback Communities Authority a minimum of one (1) month prior to the submission closing date.
- It is intended that funding provided in a CARM Agreement be expended in the financial year/s specified in the agreement, and not accumulated year on year.

Reporting Responsibilities

Each incorporated body who has entered a CARM Agreement must provide independently reviewed financial statements by 31st January each year to qualify for funding in the following year. If independently reviewed financial statements are not provided within the required timeframe, funding may be reduced by 50% for the ensuing year.

Should the incorporated association have an annual turnover of \$500,000 or more, audited financial statements must be provided by the due date.

Independently reviewed financial statements provided after the deadline date will not guarantee qualification for funding for the following year.

Prior to full payment being made, a constitutional meeting of the incorporated association must be held and evidence provided to the Authority in the form of minutes that the CARM Agreement was discussed, supported and executed by the association. Such minutes are to be provided to the Authority within six (6) weeks of the execution of a CARM Agreement.

Full payment of executed CARM Agreement funding will be made into a nominated bank account within six (6) weeks of the Authority's receipt of the minutes.

Approval of CARM Agreements

The Authority will approve CARM Agreements prior to the final documentation being provided to each participating Association for execution.

Evaluation and Review

This Policy will be reviewed by Authority staff in accordance with the Policy Review Policy.

Any significant changes to the Policy will require public consultation in accordance with OCA's Public Consultation Policy and final approval by the Authority.

Procedures and Timing

Week / Month	
Early March	Associations contacted via email and asked to submit their requests for activities and funding amounts to be included in their CARM Agreement for the next financial year
Mid April	Community Development Officer to contact associations and offer any assistance required
End April	Any request for an extension to be provided electronically to the Director
End May	Due date for CARM Agreement requests to be submitted (electronically)
June	The Authority approves CARM Agreements prior to final documentation being provided to the Association
0	CARM Agreement formally approved at a constitutional meeting of the relevant association
0 - 6	Minutes of the meeting at which the CARM Agreement was approved provided to the OCA along with the executed CARM Agreement (electronically)
7 - 12	Payment of the amount specified in the CARM Agreement paid by the OCA to the association's nominated bank account
9 - 10	Executed CARM Agreements will be publicly available via the Authority's website
November	Associations reminded of the due date for the provision of independently reviewed financial statements
December	Associations reminded of the due date for the provision of independently reviewed financial statements
January 31	Independently reviewed financial statements (or audited statements if the association's turnover is \$500,000 or more) provided to the OCA electronically
February	Associations' financial statement provided to the Authority by OCA staff

Definitions

Independently Reviewed Financial Statements

Independently reviewed financial statements are financial statements that have undergone a limited review conducted by an independent accounting professional or firm. The independent reviewer issues a report expressing their conclusion regarding whether any material modifications are necessary to ensure the financial statements are presented fairly in all material respects. The report is included with the reviewed financial statements and provides users with an understanding of the level of assurance provided by the independent reviewer.

Availability/Accessibility

This Policy can be downloaded from the Outback Communities Authority website: www.oqa.sa.gov.au or it is available for inspection at the Outback Communities Authority offices located at 26 Mildred Street, Port Augusta West SA and Aerodrome Road, Leigh Creek.

Document History

Version 1.0		
Version 2.0	Adopted	20 July 2017
Version 3.0	Reviewed with significant updates including title change from Community Funding Policy to Community Affairs Resourcing and Management Policy and Procedures. Updates include clear explanation of CARM Agreements; criteria; reporting responsibilities and delegations.	TBC