

# **Namoi Catchment Action Plan**

## **Part A Policies and Procedures for Quality Natural Resource Management**

**Approved by the  
Minister for Natural Resources**


**January, 2007**

Prepared by Namoi Catchment Management Authority



Under section 23 of the *Catchment Management Authorities Act 2003*, I approve the Namoi Catchment Action Plan.

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The Hon Ian Macdonald MLC  
Minister for Natural Resources  
January 2007

## MINISTER'S FOREWORD

Our natural resources are our most precious asset. They underpin the prosperity of our society today, and will determine the wellbeing of the generations of tomorrow.

Today, more than ever, we are aware of the challenges facing our environment. Expanding population and industry can threaten the very natural resources which they survive upon. It is our task to ensure that sustainable practices are adopted so that our natural heritage is protected from these threats.

But the challenges faced vary enormously from region to region, and unfortunately do not come with a "one size fits all" solution.

We recognise that the people best-placed to combat these challenges, are the people that live in the community itself. That is why the lemma Government has taken a new direction in natural resource management by creating our Catchment Management Authorities (CMAs), to face those challenges at a local level.

To tackle these issues, each CMA has developed its own Catchment Action Plan (CAP) in close consultation with their own communities – 13 in all.

13 unique plans to address the myriad of unique and complex issues experienced in each of the 13 regions. From the Coast to the Far West, the challenges faced and the solutions required are vastly different. As a consequence these CAPs are as diverse as the people and landscapes of our wonderful state.

There can be no doubt that the CAPs represent a major step forward in our quest for continuous improvement in natural resource management in NSW. Their development has also provided an invaluable opportunity to assess the present condition of our lands and waterways.

The purpose of the CAP is to provide a roadmap to ensure that we not just protect these resources but enhance them for the enjoyment and viability of future generations. The CAPs tell us not just where we need to go but how we should get there. Most importantly, we can monitor our progress against the CAPs, providing the trigger to alert us, should we take a wrong turn.

The 10-year CAP models complement other natural resource management plans, including regional strategies, water sharing plans and regional conservation plans. Intertwined, they provide us with the tools to take control of our future and ensure that we use our natural resources in an intelligent, balanced and sustainable manner. Importantly, CAPs also have a key role in addressing the priorities in the State Plan.

CAPs however, should not be thought of as an end in themselves. They are a living breathing document, that will require revision as new information comes to hand, and as we learn from our experiences.

Within each CAP you will find a wealth of information about the natural resources of each catchment. As well as a blueprint for the future – management targets and goals for us all.

The NSW Government has endorsed this CAP following the advice of the Commissioner of the Natural Resources Commission to me, in my capacity as the Minister for Natural Resources.

I would like to personally thank the Chairperson, Board members and staff of the CMA for their tremendous commitment and hard work in preparing this CAP. Not only are they pioneering the NSW Government's new statutory model, but they have also had to 'hit the ground running' – and succeeded admirably.


They have worked in partnership with local communities, farmers, environmental groups, Aboriginal communities, local governments, industry, as well as the NSW and Australian Governments to identify the highest priorities and investments for their particular catchment. This CAP is the result of a great deal of effort from people with wide-ranging backgrounds and views on natural resource management, working in a spirit of cooperation.

I would also like to thank the individuals, groups and organisations that contributed to this CAP's development by either making submissions or contributing their time, knowledge and expertise during its development.

I commend this CAP to you, and urge you, your group or organisation to consider how you may take part in its implementation. The CMA's contact details are available at [www.namoi.cma.nsw.gov.au](http://www.namoi.cma.nsw.gov.au).

Let's work together to manage our precious natural resources for generations to come.

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The Hon Ian Macdonald MLC  
Minister for Natural Resources  
January 2007

## Document Control Procedures

### Controlled copy:

The latest version of the Catchment Action Plan can be found on the Namoi Catchment Management Authority website [www.namoi.cma.nsw.gov.au](http://www.namoi.cma.nsw.gov.au).

Document control rests with the Strategic Planning Manager for the Namoi Catchment Management Authority, 155-157 Marius St Tamworth NSW 2340.

The only valid copy of the Catchment Action Plan is the one which shows the latest version number. This is described as when the document was last printed and can be found in the Version and Amendment List. All other copies are uncontrolled copies.

### Version and Amendment List

Document	Controller	Version Number	Date
Namoi Catchment Action Plan - Part A	Program Manager – Strategic Planning S.G. Donaldson	Final Draft for Submission to NRC and Minister _V5	10/07/2006
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*The Namoi CMA is an independent statutory authority governed by a Board reporting directly to the Minister for Natural Resources. The Namoi CMA was established in 2004, and operates under the Catchment Management Authorities Act 2003, which requires the CMA to develop a Catchment Action Plan.*

*The Namoi CMA Environmental Policy, determined by the Board, sets the context for achieving the vision:*

*“Vibrant Communities and Landscapes for the Future”.*

*“The Namoi CMA stands ready to provide the innovation, discipline and clear thinking required to achieve this vision. We talk the language of commerce and environment together. That’s what makes us different and makes the future so exciting”.*

*Our environmental policy includes a commitment to consider environmental, social and cultural, and economic aspects in our decision making about Natural Resource Management (NRM) and the delivery of related programs.*

## CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

Times change, Governments come and go, and policy is reworked, revised and, many times, just regurgitated from history. Plans are put in place and more often than not that's where they stay - 'some place'. Millions of dollars have been spent on many programs - planning, educating, researching, improving, monitoring, preaching!

Still, there is a great diversity of opinion, many times expert based, on the actual state of our resources and whether they are improving, in decline or static. Our knowledge of our most basic natural resources; soil, land, water, vegetation and people, and in particular what is happening to those resources, is sporadic, both in area and in detail. Consequently, the required management responses are, in some cases, equally poorly known and understood.

Our management has tended to be in the same vein as the short term election cycles, which force changes in policy direction. Our resources do not respect such short forays into their behaviour, nor do they have the ability to respond in these timeframes.

There needs to be changes in the way we manage our resources. We must change our time horizons, be more precise in the aspects that need continual watching, be more informed on the things we need to look out for and be more disciplined in our resolve to keep our resources healthy.

The Namoi Catchment Management Authority has articulated this change in mindset in the Namoi Catchment Action Plan. I commend this plan to everyone in the Namoi Valley and to all those who share our vision.

The Namoi Catchment Management Authority stands ready to provide the innovation, discipline and clear thinking that will be required. We talk the language of commerce and environment together. That's what makes us different and makes the future so exciting.

The Namoi CMA will not be able to do any of this alone. Our commitment to success will stand beside the many others who also strive for the same '*Vibrant Communities and Landscapes for the Future*'.

A handwritten signature in black ink, enclosed in a thin black rectangular border. The signature is stylized and appears to read 'Jim McDonald'.

Jim McDonald  
Chairman,  
Namoi Catchment Management Authority

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All notations in [blue](#) are documents which are hyperlinked and available to the public through the [Namoi CMA website](#). The documents shown in [blue](#) are in preparation and will be placed on our website once endorsed by the Namoi CMA Board. By adopting a web-based approach, rather than including the contents within the Catchment Action Plan, documentation can be kept up to date, as new knowledge, evaluation and review processes result in revised versions of reports and procedures.

Documents in [orange](#) are confidential working documents held within the Namoi Catchment Management Authority (CMA)<sup>1</sup>, relating to investment or staff. However, these documents are available to the Natural Resources Commission for the purposes of recommending approval of the Catchment Action Plan and for Auditing the Natural Resource Management Systems of the Namoi CMA against the State-wide Standard for Quality Natural Resource Management.

Notations in [mauve](#) are not available electronically and have been referenced. They are available in the [Namoi CMA offices](#).

<sup>1</sup> The Namoi Catchment Management Authority is referred to throughout this document as Namoi CMA

## THE NAMOI CMA BOARD

The membership of the [Namoi CMA Board](#) at the time of the developing the Catchment Action Plan was:

Jim McDonald	Chairman	Quirindi	Farmer
Jeff Austin	Deputy Chair	Walgett	Engineer, Mediator and Facilitator
Ed Colless	Director	Walgett	Farmer & Grazier, Executive Officer-agribusiness company
Bob Hudson	Director	Quirindi	Natural Resource Management & Agribusiness Consultant
George Paul	Director	Gunnedah	Retired Accountant and Businessman
Heather Ranclaud	Director	Quirindi	Mixed Farmer, Community Services Co-ordinator
Brian Tomalin	Director	Hanging Rock	Grazier, formerly Manager-commercial business.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Namoi Catchment Action Plan is the strategic framework which will guide natural resource management for in the Namoi Catchment over the next ten years. All organisations and individuals involved in natural resource management are encouraged to adopt this framework. The Namoi CMA was established in 2004, and operates under the *Catchment Management Authorities Act 2003*, which includes a requirement to develop a Catchment Action Plan.

The Namoi CMA Environmental Policy sets the context for achieving

*“Vibrant Communities and Landscapes for the Future”.*

The policy includes a commitment to consider environmental, social and cultural, and economic aspects in our delivery of natural resource management programs, and outlines how we will do this through our investment principles.

Namoi CMA worked in partnership with government agencies, industry groups, scientists and the community to develop the Namoi Catchment Action Plan. It built on the work over the last fifteen years of previous catchment management organisations in the Namoi. However, a fresh analysis of the health of the catchment and the most significant impacts affecting the catchment was undertaken.

The Catchment Action Plan establishes Catchment and Management Targets which address these significant impacts on the four key regional ‘resources’ – native plants and animals, surface and ground water ecosystems, the landscape and people and their communities. The Targets define the desired outcomes for each resource. Management Actions have been proposed to achieve these Targets. A key feature of our plan of action is working with industry, as well as individuals, environmental groups, Local Government and the Indigenous community.

The Catchment Action Plan provides the basis for delivering incentive funding provided through the Australian and State Governments Natural Resource Management Programs, as well as other funding available to the catchment community through partnerships or alternative funding opportunities.

Three-Year Rolling Investment Strategies prepared by the Namoi CMA annually will detail the distribution of the government funds provided and the amount of progress that will be achieved with these funds against each Management Target. Annual Implementation Plans provide the operational plan for the next twelve months, including activities and financial contributions from partners as well as the government.

The Namoi CMA has established comprehensive business systems, which strive to achieve best practice in delivering natural resource management outcomes. This includes monitoring, evaluation and review procedures at organisation, program and project level to ensure that adaptive management is undertaken and results in continual improvement. These systems have been developed in line with the State-wide Standard for Quality Natural Resource Management.

During the development of the Catchment Action Plan, the Namoi CMA was mindful of the structure of the document and how best to engage the community, whilst providing for a clear interpretation and meeting the requirements of the accrediting organisations. Community feedback confirmed the need to rationalise the structure of the plan. As a result, there are two documents which make up the Namoi Catchment Action Plan. They are: [Part A - Policies and Procedures for Quality Natural Resource Management](#) which outlines all the operational and business policies and procedures which make up the Namoi CMA’s business systems. [Part B – Natural Resource Management Plan](#) details the Catchment and Management Targets and their intent, and outlines the associated Management Actions and Activities to achieve these Targets.

Whilst both documents should be read in conjunction with each other in order to absorb the contents of the Namoi Catchment Action Plan, it is acknowledged that much of Part A is the document that guides the business of the Namoi CMA and may not be of great interest to the general community. However Part B – The Natural Resource Management Plan - was specifically developed so as to provide the community with the clear strategic natural resource management focus, on which the Namoi CMA will be placing its efforts over the next decade, so as to achieve the most beneficial natural resource management outcomes for the catchment.

# 1 INTRODUCTION

The [Namoi Catchment Management Authority](#) (Namoi CMA) was established in July 2004, as part of wide ranging reforms introduced by the NSW Government, to reform Native Vegetation Management in the State and devolve responsibility for the delivery of natural resource management incentive funding to regional bodies. These reforms were the outcomes of the recommendations of the [Native Vegetation Reform Implementation Group Final Report](#). This group looked at how to implement the vision established by the [Wentworth Group](#) in their [Blueprint for a Living Continent \(2002\)](#) on national environmental issues, and [A New Model for Landscape Conservation in New South Wales \(2003\)](#) on vegetation issues in NSW.

## 1.1 Namoi CMA Environmental Policy

This [Namoi CMA Environmental Policy<sup>2</sup>](#) is a public statement outlining the Vision, Mission and Core Values of the [Namoi CMA](#), including its board, management and staff. The purpose of this environmental policy is to define a vision for the Namoi Catchment and the associated environmental priorities and goals. It also outlines the Namoi CMA's commitment to environmental management and to best practice in its implementation.

### **Our Vision is:**

**“Vibrant communities and landscapes for the future”.**

### **Our Mission Statement is:**

*“To be a trusted and energetic organisation working with creativity, innovation and self motivation”.*

### **Our Core Values are:**

*The CMA and its Board will encourage decision making that uses creativity, innovation and self motivation. The Board will lead by example and assist the CMA to become an organisation that is:*

- *Outcome driven;*
- *United in its purpose for the benefit of the catchment;*
- *Energetic in pursuing its objectives;*
- *Creative and flexible in its approach to delivery of services;*
- *Displays integrity and honesty;*
- *Transparent in its work;*
- *Highly regarded by its peers; and*
- *Trusted by the community.*

**The Namoi CMA commits that its policies, strategic planning, business systems and operational procedures** will be based on the [State-wide Standard for Quality Natural Resource Management](#) developed by the [Natural Resources Commission](#). The Standard strives to achieve best practice in the following components:

- Collection and use of knowledge
- Determination of scale
- Opportunities for collaboration
- Community engagement
- Risk management
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Information management

The Standard also includes a commitment to prioritisation, adaptive management and continual improvement.

<sup>2</sup> Determined by the Namoi CMA Board at a Strategic Planning Workshop, June 2005

**The Namoi CMA commits that it will:**

- Conduct all activities in accordance with legislative and regulatory requirements;
- Continue to improve our knowledge and understanding of the environmental, social, cultural and economic aspects in the catchment, and deliver that knowledge to our stakeholders;
- Engage and consult with the community involved in the management of natural resources and cultural heritage;
- Develop and promote industry codes of practice (or Best Management Practice guidelines) to industries impacting on the catchment resources;
- Assist people who manage our natural resources to use these resources for purposes of sustainable production and maintaining viable rural communities, without loss of productive opportunities or degradation of the natural resources, including biodiversity;
- Facilitate other stakeholders, including individuals and organisations, involved in natural resource management in the Namoi Catchment to adopt the principles in this Catchment Action Plan and the accompanying [Natural Resource Management Plan](#); and
- Invest public money to achieve public good outcomes.

**The Namoi CMA will invest public money according to the following investment principles:**

- External funds will be invested according to agreed Australian and State Government Program Guidelines;
- NRM decisions will consider the “triple bottom line” ie. environmental, social and cultural, and economic aspects;
- Decisions are transparent and based on the best available information;
- Cost sharing arrangements for government investment are in keeping with public v private benefits;
- Innovation, flexibility and creativity are encouraged;
- Investment is in priority areas according to best available data and scientific principles;
- Investment is to protect environmental, social and economic assets of high value;
- Investment is in areas where progress towards achieving targets is most achievable;
- Investment is for multiple outcomes ie. in areas utilising activities that address more than one issue or target;
- Investment is to “buy outcomes” rather than “prescribe inputs”;
- Investment is in large landscape projects to achieve catchment-wide targets and landscape level change;
- Investment is preferentially with entities that have the capacity to undertake priority works, including adequate skills, ability to contribute financially and capacity to make a substantial contribution to landscape change;
- Partnerships are built with other key players in natural resource management for investment in, and delivery of, programs; and
- Existing successful programs are built on, particularly in areas where community groups or other stakeholders are able to manage their own projects.

**The Namoi CMA commits that its operations will:**

- Use appropriate indicators for regular review of the CMA's activities, business operations and environmental progress to ensure continual improvement;
- Communicate this policy, and other aspects of its business, broadly;
- Inform all employees and contractors of their responsibilities, through information management, training and communication;
- Establish business systems which achieve efficiencies in program and project management and administration;
- Minimise pollution and waste.

The Namoi CMA Environmental Policy will be reviewed by the Board at the strategic planning workshop held following the appointment of Board members.

## 1.2 Scope of the Catchment Action Plan

The purpose of the Catchment Action Plan is to set a strategic framework for all stakeholders involved in natural resource management in the Namoi Catchment for the next decade ie. 2006 - 2016.

The Namoi Catchment Action Plan will cover the strategic, operational, legislative, risk and review aspects of the:

- Business systems adopted by the Namoi CMA ie. [Policies and Procedures for Quality Natural Resource Management \(Part A\)](#); and
- [Natural Resource Management Plan \(Part B\)](#) for the Namoi Catchment, including objectives, targets and actions.

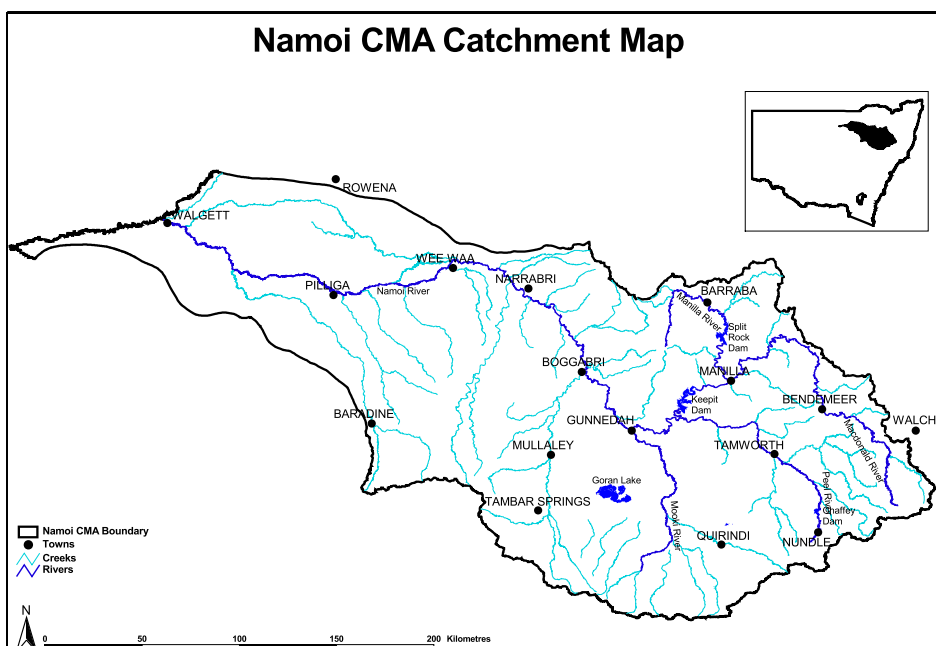
The Namoi CMA extends the scope of its interests beyond environmental issues, to achieving viable and productive communities, and to include consideration of the impacts of natural resource management on the social, cultural and economic well-being of the community. This does not extend to dealing directly with issues such as unemployment and health, but rather how we can account for these issues in consultation, collaboration, program development and project assessment, and how the Namoi CMA might add value to them through investment into natural resource management.

The Catchment Action Plan is not a static document; it has been written so it can be continually upgraded. All supporting documents, as well as the Catchment Action Plan itself, will be subject to regular review and adaptive management, and consequently have been linked to websites to ensure currency. This will allow the Namoi CMA to adapt to changed circumstances eg. environmental impacts, funding availability, support of partners, scientific reviews and new knowledge, climatic influences and changing capacity of the catchment community to deliver the objectives of the Catchment Action Plan.

This plan applies to the Catchment of the Namoi River which covers approximately 42000 km<sup>2</sup> and is located within the Murray-Darling Basin in north-western NSW (see Figure 1). The Namoi River Catchment is the area bounded by the water shed of the Namoi River, and includes the major tributaries of the Macdonald, Manilla, Peel and Mooki Rivers, and Cox's, Rangari and Pian Creeks and the creeks originating in the Warrumbungle Ranges and flowing through the Pilliga Forest.

Additional information about the catchment can be found in the [Namoi Catchment Blueprint Accreditation Documentation](#), prepared in conjunction with the [Namoi Blueprint](#).

Figure 1 Location of the Namoi Catchment



### 1.3 Legislative Framework

The Namoi CMA operates under the [Catchment Management Authorities Act 2003](#), which defines the role and responsibilities of all CMAs. The objectives of this Act are:

- (a) to establish authorities for the purpose of devolving operational, investment and decision-making natural resource functions to catchment levels;
- (b) to provide for proper natural resource planning at a catchment level;
- (c) to ensure that decisions about natural resources take into account appropriate catchment issues;
- (d) to require decisions taken at a catchment level to take into account State-wide standards and to involve the Natural Resources Commission in catchment planning where appropriate;
- (e) to involve communities in each catchment in decision making and to make best use of catchment knowledge and expertise;
- (f) to ensure the proper management of natural resources in the social, economic and environmental interests of the State;
- (g) to apply sound scientific knowledge to achieve a fully functioning and productive landscape;
- (h) to provide a framework for financial assistance and incentives to landholders in connection with natural resource management.

Part 4 of the *Catchment Management Authorities Act 2003* prescribes that each Catchment Management Authority will submit a Catchment Action Plan to the NSW Minister for Natural Resources. The Catchment Action Plan is a statutory, but non-regulatory, plan approved by the Minister for Natural Resources. It has to comply with the [State-wide Standard for Quality Natural Resource Management](#) and the [State-wide Targets](#) set by the [Natural Resources Commission](#). The [Natural Resources Commission Act 2003](#) defines the role of the Natural Resources Commission in setting Standards and Targets, and in reviewing and auditing the CMAs and their Catchment Action Plans, including targets, activities and business systems.

The Act also directs the CMAs to take into consideration a range of matters to be included in the Catchment Action Plan. These include the general functions listed in the Part 3 of *Catchment Management Authorities Act 2003* that can be conferred or imposed on the CMAs, including:

- Native Vegetation Management – [Native Vegetation Act 2003](#), [Native Vegetation Regulations 2005](#), [Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995](#) and [Threatened Species Legislation Amendment Act 2004](#).
- Environmental Water Functions – [Water Management Act 2000](#), [Water Management Amendment Act 2005](#).
- Possible consent responsibilities under the [Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979](#).

Part 3 of the *Catchment Management Authorities Act 2003* also outlines the responsibility of the Namoi CMA in funding Catchment Activities. The Namoi CMA prepares a [Three Year Rolling Investment Strategy](#), which determines the amount of progress that will be delivered towards each Management Target for the funds received from the Australian and State Governments against an approved [Investment Strategy Budget](#). These funds are drawn from [Australian and State Government Natural Resource Management Programs](#), and are subject to the [NAP Bilateral Agreement](#) and the [NHT Bilateral Agreement](#) between the Australian Government and the NSW [Department of Natural Resources](#), and other [Head Agreements](#) between the Department of Natural Resources and the Namoi CMA for each approved Investment Strategy. These strategies are further developed in the [Annual Implementation Plan](#), which sets out the project level activities to be undertaken by the Namoi CMA in conjunction with their partners in each 12 month period.

The Australian and State Government Natural Resource Management Programs have strict guidelines for how the funds can be used. The programs delivered through the CMA at the time of writing the Catchment Action Plan are:

- [National Action Plan for Water Quality & Salinity \(NAP\)](#)
- [Natural Heritage Trust II \(NHT\)](#)
- [National Landcare Program \(NLP\)](#), and
- State Sustainability Funds (SSF) from the [NSW Department of Environment and Conservation](#).

Legislation relating to the management of the natural resources, which the Namoi CMA impacts on through its activities, is listed under [Legislation](#) for the respective resources ie.

[Supporting our Communities](#),  
[Sustaining our Landscapes](#),  
[Managing our Water](#), and  
[Conserving our Native Plants and Animals](#)

on the Namoi CMA website.

The [Procedures for the Collection of Science and Knowledge](#) developed by the [Science Champions Group](#) and the [Investment Procedures Manual](#) put into place systems to ensure that CMA activities are delivered in accordance with the current legislation.

## 2 ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW AND IMPACTS

### 2.1 Planning Framework

Under the [Catchment Management Authorities Act 2003](#), all CMAs are required to produce a Catchment Action Plan. This Catchment Action Plan has built on previous work of the Namoi Catchment Management Board which culminated in the [Namoi Blueprint](#). Substantial analysis was undertaken to produce the Blueprint, and can be found in the supporting [Namoi Catchment Blueprint Accreditation Document](#). Earlier documents, including the [Namoi Community Catchment Plan - Situation Statement \(1996\)](#) and the [Namoi Community Catchment Plan \(1999\)](#), developed by the North West Total Catchment Management Committee, also contributed significantly to the knowledge base and understanding of our catchment.

The Catchment Action Plan includes requirements by the Australian Government agencies of [Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries](#) and the [Department of Environment and Heritage](#). These include Matters of National Significance outlined in the [National Framework for Natural Resource Management Standards and Targets](#), and the [Joint Steering Committee Investor Preferences](#) updated in December 2005. The State Government requirements are mostly provided in the [Catchment Management Authorities Act 2003](#). In addition, Catchment Action Plans need to be consistent with the Salinity Targets agreed to between the NSW Government and the [Murray Darling Basin Commission](#). These are described in the [Basin Salinity Management Strategy 2001-15](#) and the [NSW Salinity Strategy](#). All these requirements are outlined in the advice from the [Natural Resources Commission](#) regarding the [Single Process for Review of Catchment Action Plans](#).

The NSW Government is preparing a [Natural Resources Policy](#). This policy document outlines the Government response to [State-wide targets](#) prepared by the Natural Resources Commission and the Catchment Action Plans developed by the CMAs.

Under the [Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979](#), administered by the [Department of Planning](#), the only [Regional Environmental Plan](#) affecting the Namoi Catchment is the [Orana Regional Environmental Plan No.1 – Siding Springs](#), which includes the Coonabarabran and Coonamble Local Government Areas. A number of [State Environmental Planning Policies](#) affect the Namoi Catchment, including [SEPP 44 – Koala Habitat Protection](#) which covers all [Local Government Areas in the Namoi Catchment](#).

A new [Standard Template for Local Environmental Plans](#) is due for release in early 2006. All Local Governments in the Namoi Catchment will produce revised [Local Environmental Plans](#) within the next five years. The appointment of a Local Government Officer within the Namoi CMA will provide a pro-active link through the [Namoi Local Government Group](#) to encourage integration of State and Local Government planning instruments with the [Natural Resource Management Plan](#). Most councils are producing Rural Strategies or similar documents as the preliminary phase to production of their Local Environmental Plan. The linkage between the Catchment Action Plan and other planning frameworks is addressed in the Natural Resource Management Plan.

Other Planning Instruments affecting the Namoi Catchment can be found on the [Namoi CMA website](#)

## 2.2 Initial Environmental Review Process

Information contained within both the [Namoi Blueprint](#) and [Namoi Catchment Blueprint Accreditation Documentation](#) was evaluated during the early phases of developing the Catchment Action Plan. Whilst these documents provided key information relevant to the Namoi Catchment, significant proportions were found to rely on outdated report or studies and did not adequately address a number of key components within the Namoi Catchment's natural environment. The CMA Strategic Planning Unit developed a planning process, that acknowledged the Blueprint documents and moved to a more rigorous, thorough and progressive process, which has delivered the Namoi Catchment Action Plan as a realistic and well targeted strategic planning document.

The cornerstone of this process was the completion of a new [Initial Environmental Review](#) as part of the development of the Namoi Catchment Action Plan. This ensured the most up to date information was used, gaps identified, and the desired approach, based on industry activities and impacts, could be adopted.

Part of the selected approach to delivering the Catchment Action Plan is to form collaborative partnerships, with industry as a key player. Many industries are moving towards Environmental Management Systems, Industry Codes of Practice or Best Management Practice Guidelines. The Namoi CMA has adopted an Environmental Management Systems approach to the Catchment Action Plan, which will be consistent with the progressive industries we wish to deal with. The Environmental Management Systems approach provides a framework, which is integrated within the Namoi CMA business systems. The system is designed to effectively identify, measure, manage and control risks and impacts whilst establishing the means for improving performance and moving towards environmental sustainability through adaptive management to achieve best practice.

An important difference from the analysis undertaken for the Namoi Blueprint, and described in the Namoi Catchment Blueprint Accreditation Documentation, and that adopted for the Namoi Catchment Action Plan is the focus on the activities of various industries and their subsequent impacts on the resources, rather than focussing on the state of the resource as the initial point of the review. This is consistent with the approach used in Environmental Management Systems.

This approach allows us to readily identify, and hence address, the cause of environmental degradation, rather than dealing with the impact or the symptom, without considering why the degradation is occurring or the likelihood of the impact occurring again.

Four key resources in the Namoi Catchment were identified that are impacted on by industry activities. These four resources are:

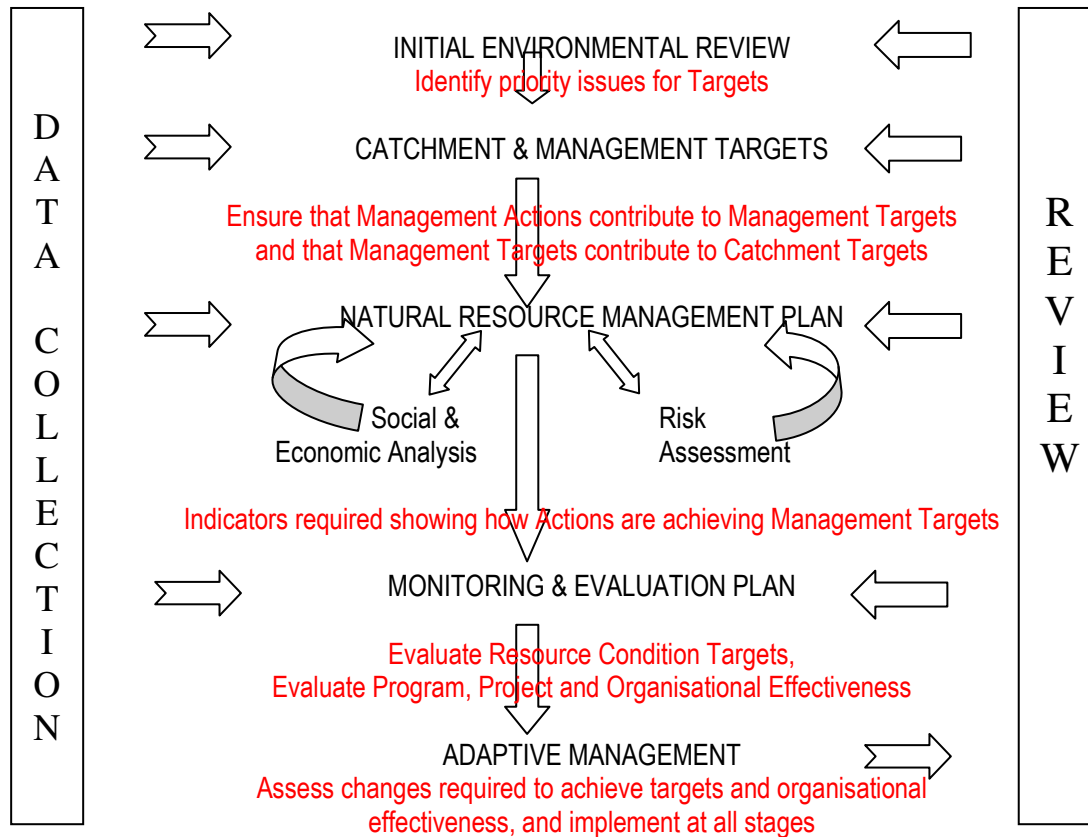
- People and their Communities
- The Landscape
- Surface and Ground Water Ecosystems
- Native Plants and Animals

[Resource Teams](#) were established to collate the data and undertake the Initial Environmental Review for each of the four major resources. These teams were oversighted by the Namoi CMA Strategic Planning Manager. Leaders for each Resource Team were selected from Namoi CMA staff who have responsibilities in the particular field. The Members of the Resource Teams were selected to provide expertise across the components of each resource. They were made up of CMA staff and Directors, agency staff, scientists, consultants, industry and community representatives and other key stakeholders.

A procedure was drawn up by the Resource Team Leaders, documented in the [Guidance to Resource Teams](#), which outlined the approach to be taken for the Initial Environmental Review, development of Targets and the [Natural Resource Management Plan](#). This included pro-formas for the collection of knowledge which ensured that all information required was collated and was consistently considered by all Resource Teams, and the necessary information would be available to undertake the Initial Environmental Review, as well as inform the Natural Resource Management Plan and [Monitoring and Evaluation Plan](#). Figure 2 illustrates the steps taken in development of the Natural Resource Management Plan; particularly how each step has been informed by knowledge and data, and the role of the review process.

[Knowledge and Data](#) collated by the Resource Teams covered Australian and State Legislation and Regulation, Policies and Strategies, Industry Codes of Practice and Best Management Practice Guidelines, Current Science, Spatial and Quantitative Datasets, Monitoring Data, Performance Indicators, as well as an initial identification of stakeholders and gaps in knowledge.

**Figure 2 Steps in Developing the Natural Resource Management Plan**



The current [Landuse Map](#) and landuse categories recorded in the Namoi were reviewed to identify the landuses and associated [Land Use Activities](#) which could impact on the natural resources. These included agricultural and non-agricultural industries that occupy land.

Fourteen broad industry sectors and their associated landuses were identified:

- Broadacre Livestock
- Dryland Cropping
- Horticulture
- Light Industrial
- Rural Residential
- Water Storages
- Land Managed for Conservation - State Conservation Areas, National Parks, Reserves
- Intensive Livestock
- Irrigated Cropping
- Forestry, including State Forests
- Mining
- Urban Residential
- Utilities and Infrastructure
- Other Public Land - Crown Lands, Travelling Stock Routes, Road Reserves, Recreation Areas

Activities were identified for each industry or landuse, and the Initial Environmental Review documented the potential beneficial and adverse impacts that these activities could have on each of the four resources. The

Review included an assessment of the trend, rate of change and overall condition of the resource, as well as a risk assessment to determine which impacts were most likely to have further significant effect on condition of the resource and hence the health of the catchment. The standard risk assessment approach, which considers likelihood and severity, was adopted and risk assessment decisions determined by the Resource Teams.

### **2.3 Priority Issues for Targets**

The [Resource Teams](#) assessed the outcomes of the risk assessment for priority issues for Management Targets by firstly determining if it was an activity or impact that the CMA could influence. The initial rank of whether it was a high priority for the CMA to address was also reviewed in light of whether industry guidelines or regulation was already adequately dealing with the issue, and therefore it was not essential for the CMA to direct additional resources to address that impact. In the latter situation, partnerships between the industry organisations or the Government agencies and the Namoi CMA will be encouraged.

These final priorities were then ranked and all “moderately high or high” priorities were considered for Management Targets. Many of the activities which lead to high priority impacts are common across a number of industry sectors. Impacts of a similar nature were grouped together, and these groups of priority issues were determined to be the “key matters” that need to be addressed in the [Natural Resource Management Plan](#). The Resource Teams took the priority issues and worked these into Management Targets for each group of impacts. A Management Target and associated Management Actions and proposed Activities were developed for each of these “key matters”.

The four Catchment Targets, which are a vision for the condition of each of the four resources, were developed to reflect the condition of the resource expected to result from the cumulative outcomes of the Management Targets. The targets were reviewed to ensure that they contributed to [State-wide targets](#) and covered the Government requirements outlined in the [Single Process for Review of Catchment Action Plans](#).

The number of Catchment and Management Targets has been kept to a minimum to ensure administrative efficiency for the Namoi CMA, including efficient financial management, reporting processes and effective on-ground delivery by operational staff.

## 3 THE NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

### 3.1 Developing the Natural Resource Management Plan

The [Natural Resource Management Plan](#) is the instrument that implements the [Namoi CMA Environmental Policy](#). It sets out the objectives (Catchment Targets), outcomes (Management Targets) and outputs (Management Actions) and outlines possible activities to manage the significant environmental impacts resulting from [Land Use Activities](#). It takes into account all legal requirements, the planning framework, Industry Codes of Practice, guidelines and standards, current knowledge and other aspects identified in the [Initial Environmental Review](#).

The Natural Resource Management Plan was developed by [Resource Teams](#), plus additional stakeholders from industry or community with expertise in managing the resource. An expert panel workshop, focusing on each of the four resources, was held to determine the appropriate strategies and actions necessary to achieve the Catchment and Management Targets. Activities relating to planning, research, implementation, education and monitoring were considered and, where appropriate, given a priority for implementation. Potential partners and targeted clients were also identified. The outcomes of these workshops are documented in the [Management Action Workshop Outcomes](#). The process is described in [Resource Workshop Process](#).

An additional meeting was held with Strategic Planners from six of the seven Local Councils in the Namoi Catchment, to consider how best to integrate the objectives of the Catchment Action Plan and State and Local Government environmental planning requirements eg. Regional and Rural Strategies, Local Environmental Plans.

The deliberations from the Catchment Action Plan process were summarised in [Resource Summary Tables](#). Relevant key information was incorporated into a [Catchment Action Plan Summary Document Oct 2005](#), which was distributed widely in conjunction with eleven community forums. The deliberations from these forums and written submissions are documented in the [Community Consultation Outcomes October 2005](#). All realistic and achievable suggestions, that were in keeping with CMA policy and our legislated roles and responsibilities, were taken into consideration, and incorporated into the [Draft Natural Resource Management Plan](#), distributed for public comment in January 2006. The suggestions arising from the written submissions received from this second round of public comment were again incorporated, wherever practical, into the Catchment Action Plan.

Inclusion of Management Targets and Management Actions in the Natural Resource Management Plan demonstrates the commitment of the Namoi CMA to improving environmental performance across all natural resource managers in the Namoi Catchment. While Activities have been proposed for all Management Targets as part of the development of the Catchment Action Plan, they will be reviewed and revised regularly against priorities, progress, and the operating environment at the time.

As the Catchment Action Plan is a strategic framework for natural resource management for all stakeholders in the Namoi Catchment, the Management Targets, Actions and Activities for each Target are based on the need for all Natural Resource Managers to address the environmental impacts if the [Vision for the Catchment](#) and the Catchment Targets are to be achieved. The proposed Actions and Activities have not been limited to either currently available funding, or issues that are specifically the responsibility of the Namoi CMA.

These specific responsibilities, including budgetary aspects and milestones towards achieving the Catchment and Management Targets for the [Australian and State Government Natural Resource Management Programs](#), will be dealt with in the [Three Year Rolling Investment Strategy](#) and [Annual Implementation Plan](#). Indicative budgets for government funding, availability of other sources of funds, opportunities for partnerships and level of investment by partners, as well as capacity of land managers to participate, will be known at that time.

The Review Procedure of the Draft Natural Resource Management Plan included:

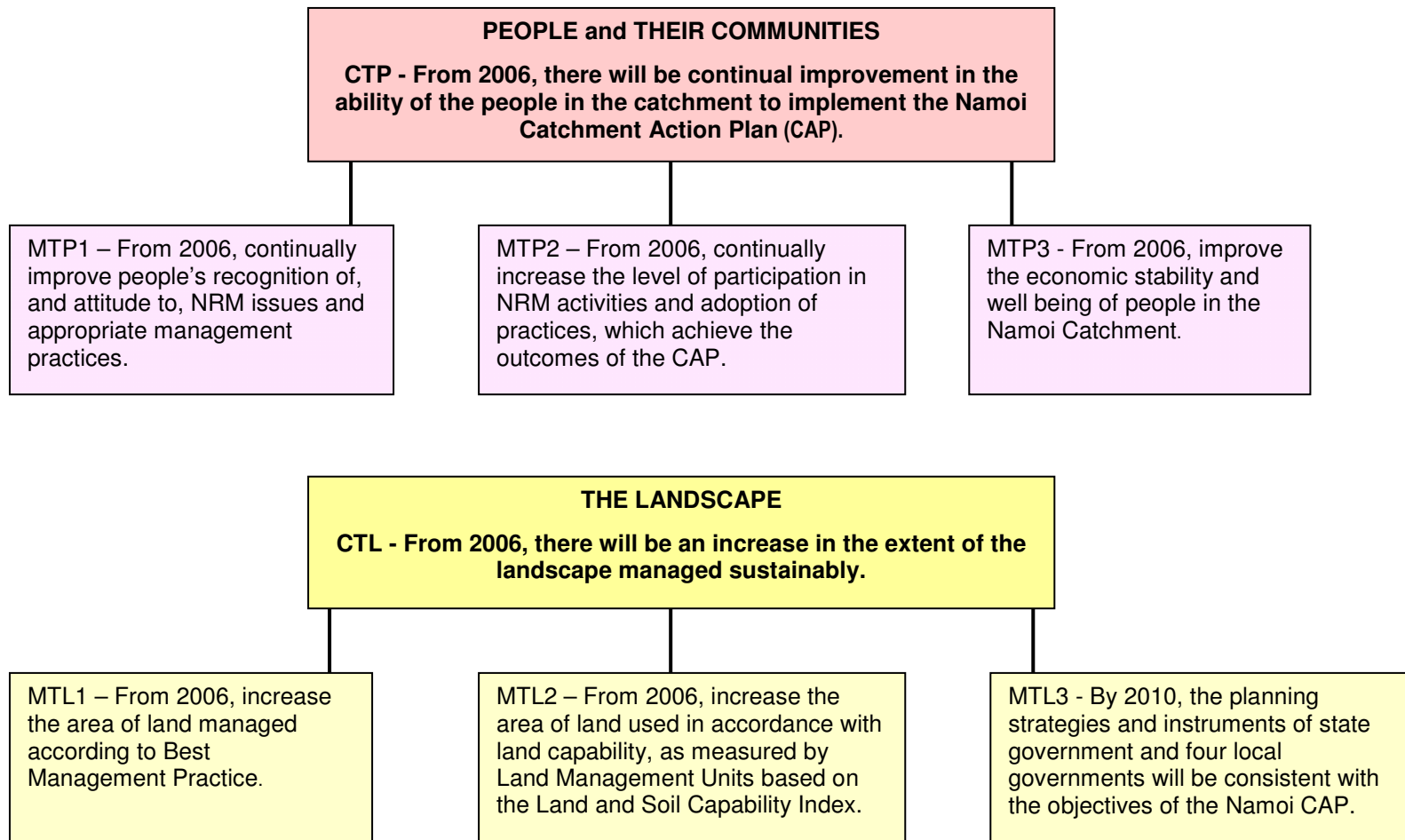
- [Namoi Catchment Action Plan Consultation Strategy](#);
- [Community Consultation Outcomes October 2005](#);
- [Consultation Outcomes February 2006](#).

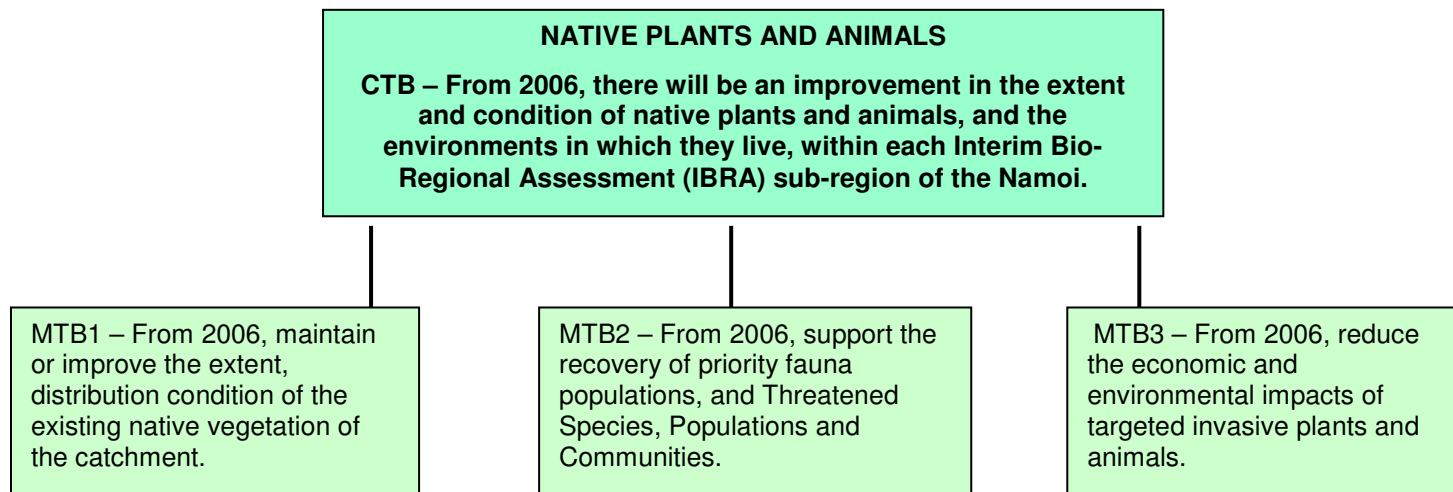
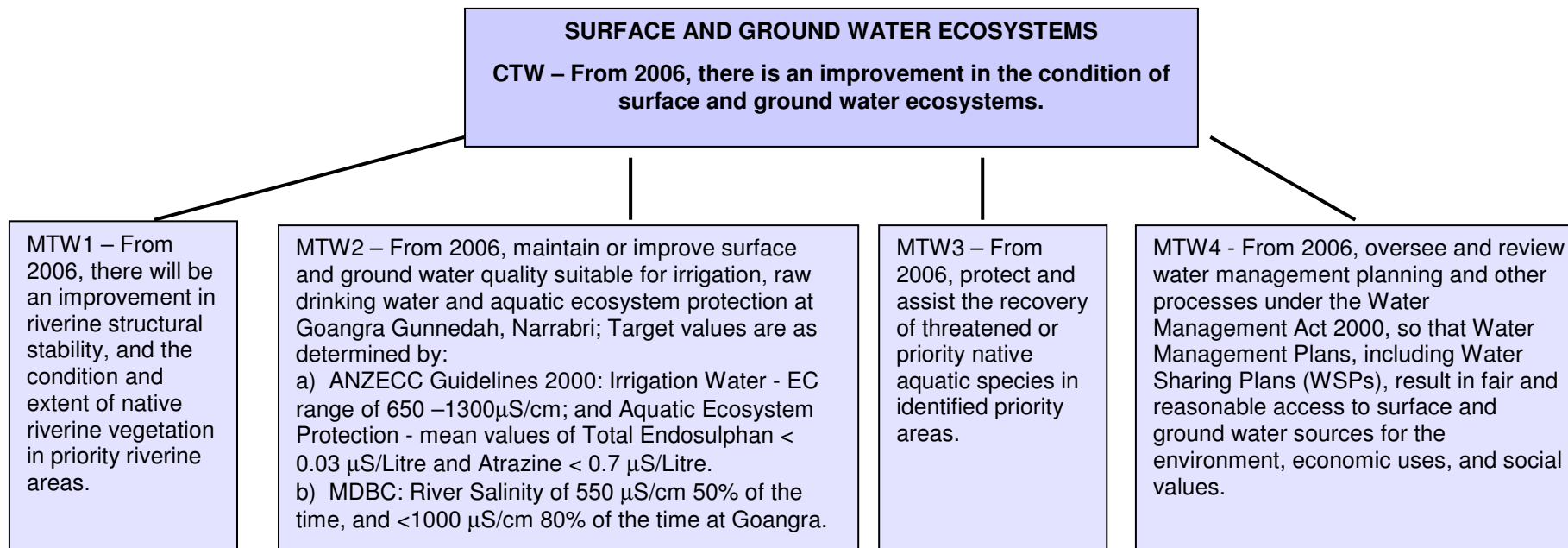
The Natural Resource Management Plan will be subject to annual review, with procedures defined in the [Monitoring and Evaluation Plan](#).

### 3.2 Summary of the Natural Resource Management Plan

The Natural Resource Management Plan is based on four resources. For each resource, a Catchment Target and Management Targets have been developed which address the most significant impacts of landuse activities on these resources. These are shown below in Figure 3.

Figure 3 Catchment and Management Targets in the Natural Resource Management Plan





## 4 IMPLEMENTATION AND OPERATION

The [Namoi CMA](#) has established comprehensive natural resource management systems to ensure transparency, accountability, efficient business systems and effective implementation of the Catchment Action Plan and the associated [Natural Resource Management Plan](#). These policies and procedures have been developed in line with the [State-wide Standard for Quality Natural Resource Management](#).

### 4.1 Structure, Roles and Responsibilities

The [Namoi CMA](#) is a statutory authority with a Board that reports directly to the Minister for Natural Resources. The [Namoi CMA Board](#) consists of a Chairperson and six Board Members, with appointments being merit based.

The CMA is subject to the control and direction of the NSW Minister for Natural Resources. It is obliged to provide information and material to the Minister in relation to its policies, programs and procedures, and to conduct its business as defined in the [Catchment Management Authorities Act 2003](#). All Board members have undertaken Corporate Governance training and have passed the [Australian Institute of Company Directors](#) Course. Additionally, Board members are subject to the [Public Service Code of Conduct](#), and the [Corporate Governance and Financial Management Manual for the Catchment Management Authorities](#).

The [Role of the Board](#) includes setting policy and direction, assessing risk, approving budgets and financial reports, determining delegations, approving minor variations to Property Vegetation Plan outcomes under the [Native Vegetation Regulations 2005](#). The Board has established a [Risk and Audit Subcommittee](#), with authority delegated in accordance with Section 18 of the [Catchment Management Authorities Act 2003](#). The Subcommittee considers all matters dealing with sound business practices and is authorised by the Board to investigate any activity within its terms of reference and to make appropriate recommendations to the Board.

The [General Manager](#) and other staff are employed under the [Public Sector Employment and Management Act 2002](#). The structure and reporting lines are shown in the [Organisational Structure](#). The positions responsible for various components of the Catchment Action Plan are provided in Section 5.1. The roles of all staff are defined in their [Position Profile](#). These roles are further developed annually in individual [Workplans](#) that include performance targets, and are subject to six monthly reviews with their line manager. All staff are subject to the Public Service Code of Conduct.

The Catchment Management Authority's corporate support services (including financial management, human resources, property, legal, information technology and fleet management services) are provided by the [Department of Natural Resources](#) under a [Corporate Service Level Agreement](#).

### 4.2 Financial Control and Risk Management

The Namoi CMA abides by all the same policies, procedures and financial delegations as all NSW Public Sector organisations. All policies are contained in a central register which are available in the [Catchment Management Authorities Administration Manual](#). Under the [Public Sector Employment and Management Act 2002](#), the General Manager is responsible for the general conduct and efficient and effective management of the Namoi CMA.

The [Public Finance and Audit Act 1983](#) provides the framework for achieving accountability and efficient use of public moneys. An [Annual Report](#) is presented to NSW Parliament in accordance with [Part 3 of the Catchment Management Authorities Act 2003](#), the [Annual Reports \(Statutory Bodies\) Act 1984](#) and the [Annual Reports \(Statutory Bodies\) Regulation 2005](#). It details the activities, achievements and audited financial accounts of the Namoi CMA's operations during the financial year. It also lists all relevant statutory information that the Namoi CMA complies with.

There is also a responsibility under the [Public Finance and Audit Act 1983](#) to ensure that effective internal controls are in operation. Monthly financial reports are presented at each Board meeting and dealt with in detail

by the [Risk and Audit Subcommittee](#) of the Board. The Minister for Natural Resources under Section 12 of the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983* sets [Financial Delegations](#), which places upper limits on the amount of expenditure that certain staff positions can approve.

Under the conditions of the [NAP Bilateral Agreement](#) and the [NHT Bilateral Agreement](#) and the State [Head Agreements](#) with the Namoi CMA and other contractual obligations relating to the [Australian and State Government Natural Resource Management Programs](#) funding, the Namoi CMA is required to provide biannual financial and milestone reports towards achieving targets, and an Annual Programs Report on Investment Strategy expenditure. Release of investment funds is dependant on progress in achieving targets. The Namoi CMA has designed and adopted a [Contract Database](#) to monitor and collate contracted financial information and management target data as well as record key stakeholders contact details. Key benefits from this database include:

- the availability of commitment reports regarding investment funding and targets; and
- all Namoi CMA staff have access (read-only) to up to date information regarding clients, contracts and funding, which assists contract management.

The Risk and Audit Subcommittee oversees the implementation of the [Risk and Audit Procedures](#) based on the [Catchment Management Authorities Risk Report 2005](#) prepared by Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Australia. An [Operational Risk Assessment Procedure](#) has been developed to further minimise our exposure to mismanagement of public funds and the outcomes implemented through the [Investment Procedures Manual](#).

The Namoi CMA participates in the [Treasury Managed Fund](#) self-insurance scheme that provides work cover, legal liability, motor vehicle, property and miscellaneous cover. One of the conditions of this insurance coverage is the requirement to place a high priority on the implementation of sound risk management practices.

The Namoi CMA has established an Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) committee to ensure we meet the requirements of the [Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000](#). Procedures are in place in the [OH&S Manual](#) to identify potential risks, and managers are responsible for [Risk Assessments](#) being undertaken for all work practices and locations.

The Namoi CMA has a representative on the [Joint Barwon DNR / CMA OH&S Committee](#). The role of this Committee is to receive and review safe work practice situations which cannot be resolved between staff and management and to pass on updated work practice and other information from Work Cover and other agencies onto member organisations.

### **4.3 Investment Procedures Manual – including the Determination of Scale**

An [Investment Procedures Manual](#) has been developed which puts into practice the [Namoi CMA Environmental Policy](#) and delivers the [Three Year Rolling Investment Strategy](#). This manual brings together all CMA procedures, both strategic and operational, that relate to investment in programs, projects and other catchment activities. The procedure addresses issues relating to the components of the [State-wide Standard for Quality Natural Resource Management](#).

The Namoi CMA has established a process for determining priorities for geographic areas and assets where investment funds and staff resources are focussed.

The Namoi CMA initially prioritised areas and actions using subcatchments boundaries defined in the [Stressed Rivers Assessment Report – Namoi Catchment \(1999\)](#) and the [Interim Biogeographical Regionalisation of Australia \(IBRA\)](#) (Environment Australia, 2000). These datasets provide a spatial framework for analysis of regionally consistent natural resource information. The outcomes of the initial prioritisation process which provided direction for the [Three Year Rolling Investment Strategy 2004-7](#) is presented in that document and the processes and datasets used have been documented in the [Investment Prioritisation Outcomes 2004](#).

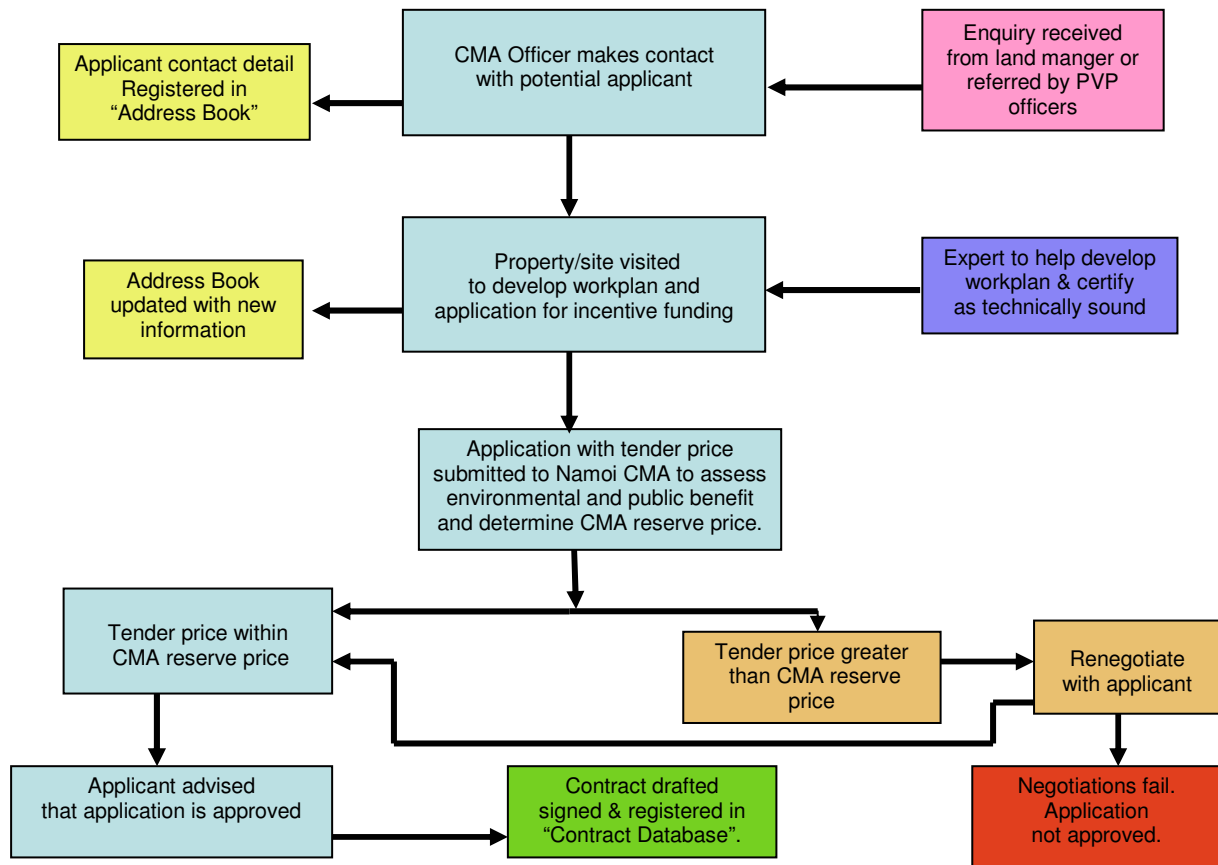
Spatial information relevant to each Management Target, such as the extent, impact or the condition of the resource, is analysed for each defined geographic area. The outcomes of the analysis is combined into a single

outcome for each Catchment Target, and the subcatchments or IBRA regions ranked according to the need for investment and effectiveness of possible works programs. Outcomes were then reviewed to identify subcatchments where investment is a priority across a number of Catchment Targets, providing the opportunity to maximise investment efficiency by achieving multiple outcomes. This prioritisation process identifies areas where targeted investment in on-ground activities will be most effective in achieving Catchment and Management Targets. In certain circumstances, investment will be made outside of priority areas if the project has significant public and environmental benefits.

On-ground project proposals are developed and negotiated between the applicant and staff of Namoi CMA before submitting funding applications. On-ground projects need to include a mix of activities in order to achieve multiple outcomes towards one or more of the Catchment or Management Targets in the Namoi CMA's [Natural Resource Management Plan](#). All projects need to demonstrate a clear environmental benefit, be well planned, technically sound and provide significant public and environmental benefit. Applicants must contribute towards the total cost of the project in cash and/or in-kind to cover the private benefits. The amount that the Namoi CMA is willing to invest into on-ground works in each project is assessed using an **Environmental Benefits Index**, which takes account of the investment principles outlined in the Namoi CMA Environmental Policy. The process is illustrated in Figure 4.

Namoi CMA can engage in contractual agreements, with any legal entity who can provide benefits within the Namoi Catchment, including individuals, groups, companies, trusts, Local Government or Government agencies. Payments are based on the reporting of successful achievement of milestones. Project approvals require the works to be completed within three years, and maintained for a further ten years. Contract managers monitor and evaluate projects according to the level of risk.

**Figure 4 Application Process for Namoi CMA Incentive Funding**



#### **4.4 Training, Awareness and Competence of Staff and Contractors - including Collection and Use of Knowledge**

There is a commitment to provide all staff with appropriate training to ensure that they are competent to carry out their duties, and minimise the risk of causing any significant environmental impact. On commencement of duty, the line manager responsible for the new employee will provide the [Induction Manual](#) and instruct staff in appropriate aspects. Induction Manuals are available in hard copy in each office and on the electronic filing system.

The minimum competencies for each staff position are determined by the [Position Profile and Selection Criteria](#). Staff are required to complete a [Skills and Training Needs Audit](#) to ensure appropriate recognition of existing skills and provide a basis for determining what additional training is required. Training programs are agreed to between a staff member and line manager as part of [Annual Workplans](#). A [Register of Staff Training](#) is maintained.

The Skills and Training Needs Audit also provides a useful means of filling gaps in our skills base due to the size of the organisation (less than 35 staff). The identification of staff with skills and experience outside of their existing job description is an effective means of increasing the extent of our expertise, sharing peak workloads, and providing opportunities for personal development.

The CMA has a [Science Champions Group](#), whose role is to ensure that the Namoi CMA and its staff use the best available science and knowledge. The [Procedures for the Collection and Use of Knowledge](#) developed by this Group ensures that Science and Knowledge is utilised in all natural resource management business systems of the Namoi CMA, and that staff are kept up to date with the latest knowledge and information.

Namoi CMA contractors and suppliers can also potentially have an adverse impact on the environmental resources of the catchment or on the credibility of the Namoi CMA to deliver the Catchment Action Plan. In addition, management has some responsibility for their safety and guidance as to how to best avoid these potential consequences. Contract managers will ensure that these responsibilities are included in the contract documents and / or that contractors and suppliers are briefed on any specific environmental measures that may be required of them.

#### **4.5 Community Engagement - including Consultation and Communication and Opportunities for Collaboration**

The Board has established an Engagement Subcommittee, which operates under the [Engagement Subcommittee Terms of Reference](#). This subcommittee oversees the [Engagement Strategy](#). It also reviews engagement and consultation strategies for major CMA activities, such as Native Vegetation Management, Water Reforms and the Catchment Action Plan. The [Engagement Strategy](#) provides 'good practice' principles to be considered in the planning of public events. It also includes a framework to determine priorities for developing partnerships, evaluating costs and benefits of potential collaborations, and reviewing the success of these alliances. Partnerships relating to sponsorship are managed in line with the [Sponsorship Policy](#).

The Namoi CMA is also committed to its [Partnerships Policy](#), which is part of the Engagement Strategy. The Partnerships Policy will guide the development and strengthening of fundamental links with the community, industry, local government and stakeholders within the catchment. Stakeholders who may be potentially interested in collaborating with the Namoi CMA can find further information on the [Namoi CMA website](#) or should make initial contact with the [Regional Facilitator](#) or [General Manager](#).

The [Communications and Public Relations Strategy](#), provides guidelines and procedures for communications to:

- External parties ie. clients and stakeholders; and
- Internal organisation communication.

The strategy drives our commitment to transparency, and directs that publicly funded documents will be posted on the website. It includes a [Complaints Handling Procedure](#) and a [Media Policy](#), which provides guidelines for all Namoi CMA media activities.

Where stakeholders have been identified as highly significant and requiring on-going collaboration, [Reference Groups](#) have been established. The [Namoi Local Government Group \(NLGG\)](#) is made up of representatives of the seven Local Councils and the Namoi CMA. This Group operates under the [NLGG Terms of Reference](#). The Namoi CMA is also a member of the Namoi Regional Organisation of Councils. The [Namoi Aboriginal Advisory Committee \(NAAC\)](#), made up of representatives from the nine geographic areas defined by the Aboriginal Lands Council boundaries, provides advice to the Namoi CMA on Indigenous issues. Their appointment procedure and role is defined in the [NAAC Terms of Reference](#). Other Reference Groups will be established on a needs basis.

## **4.6 Information Management**

The Namoi CMA is subject to the [State Records Act 1998](#). A [Filing Structure](#) has been established for electronic and hard copy documents, and [Filing Procedures](#), including naming protocols, have been developed. All information relating to investment expenditure, including physical and financial progress towards meeting the targets defined in the [Natural Resource Management Plan](#) is recorded in the [Contracts Database](#). Records of enquiries from clients and stakeholders are recorded in the [Address Book Database](#). Science and Information pertinent to the Namoi CMA business is stored on the internet or intranet.

An Information Tracking System will be implemented once a number of external impediments have been removed; including the provision of a system that allows all CMA officers to access the same filing structure.

Electronic data is backed up daily for all data, except financial data, and held at Department of Natural Resources regional offices in fireproof safes. Financial data is backed up from the Department of Natural Resources Parramatta server to the Bridge Street server daily, as well as downloaded onto backup tapes which are stored in secure fire proof conditions.

## **4.7 Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting**

The [Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Manual](#) will identify monitoring, reporting, evaluation and review procedures and responsibilities for all business, strategic and operational activities within the Namoi CMA. The key outcome of these activities is to support the process of adaptive management and continual improvement. This will be the responsibility of the Namoi CMA Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator. A [Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Framework for CMAs](#) has been established, with support from the Department of Natural Resources. This framework is consistent with the [National Natural Resource Management Monitoring and Evaluation Framework](#).

A [Monitoring and Evaluation Plan](#) for the [Natural Resource Management Plan](#) and associated plans ie. [Three Year Rolling Investment Strategies](#) and [Annual Implementation Plans](#), will be developed once the Catchment Action Plan is approved.

The four major components in monitoring and evaluation, with respect to the Natural Resource Management Plan are:

- resource condition monitoring to evaluate progress towards Catchment Targets and Management Targets (outcomes);
- program monitoring to evaluate the overall performance of the Namoi CMA in achieving Management Actions (outputs);
- project monitoring to evaluate whether best practice recommendations are effective and achieving the intended physical change in the landscape (inputs); and
- contract management reporting to ensure funds have been spent legitimately (accountability).

The connection between inputs, outputs and outcomes is not always readily apparent, or reflected in monitoring, in the short to medium term because of time lags in regional landscape functions. Also to be included within the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan is a “logical framework” that provides evidence, based on science and knowledge, of how inputs support the achievement of Management Targets, and in turn the Catchment Targets – which are a measure of improvement in the resource condition. Many Management Actions and Activities will benefit a number of Management Targets, even though they have been listed under only one Management Target in the Natural Resource Management Plan. The benefits accrued from these multiple outcomes will also be made apparent in the “logical framework”.

## 5 REVIEW AND ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

### 5.1 Responsibilities for Internal Systems

Listed below are the staff positions responsible for the development and maintenance of all policies and procedures in the Catchment Action Plan. Review procedures will be incorporated into all policies and procedures, and undertaken according to the frequency shown.

POLICY OR PROCEDURE	RESPONSIBILITY	FREQUENCY
<b>BOARD</b>		
Environmental Policy	Board / Senior Executive	Start of new Board Term
Risk Management Procedures	Board Risk and Audit Subcommittee	Biannually; formal review annually
Management Review	Board and Senior Executive	Annually
<b>PLANNING</b>		
Catchment Action Plan	Program Manager – Strategic Planning	Annually
Review of Environmental Impacts	Science Champions Group	Annually
Natural Resource Management Plan (NRM Plan) - Targets and Management Actions	Program Manager – Strategic Planning	Five Yearly (Benchmarks as data becomes available)
NRM Plan - Activities Plans	Program Managers – Strategic Planning & Operations	Annually
NRM Plan - Monitoring & Evaluation Plan	Monitoring & Evaluation Coordinator	Annually
Three Year Rolling Investment Strategy	Senior Executive	Annually
<b>FINANCE &amp; RISK</b>		
Financial Procedures Manual	Business Manager	Annually
NRM Program Reports	Business Manager	Biannually
Recurrent Budget	Senior Executive	Annually
Financial Audit	Business Manager	Annually
Annual Report	Public Relations Officer / Business Manager	Annually
Occupational Health & Safety Manual	Convenor – OH&S Working Group	Progressive, with formal review biannually
OH&S Risk Assessments	All line Managers	Unit assessments - Annually. As required on site
Operational Risk Assessment Procedure	Program Manager – Operations	Annually

<b>POLICY OR PROCEDURE</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>
<b>OPERATIONS</b>		
Investment Prioritisation	Program Managers – Strategic Planning & Operations	Annually, or as new information becomes available.
Investment Procedures Manual	Program Manager – Operations	Annually
Contractors Manual, including Tender Procedure	Program Manager – Operations	Annually
Contracts	Business Manager	Annual
Annual Implementation Plan	Senior Executive	Annually
External Education and Training Plan	Program Manager – with Education Officer	Annually
<b>ENGAGEMENT</b>		
Engagement Strategy - including Consultation and Partnerships Policies	Regional Facilitator and Board Engagement Subcommittee	Annually
Sponsorship Policy	Sponsorship C'ttee	Every 2 years
Communications and Public Relations Strategy	Public Relations Officer	Annually
Media Policy	Public Relations Officer	Every 2 years
<b>INFORMATION</b>		
Information Management ie. Records and Filing Policy	Business Manager / GM's Personal Assistant	Annually (Biannually initially)
Science Champions Group & Collection and Use of Knowledge Procedure	Program Manager – Strategic Planning	Annually
<b>STAFF TRAINING</b>		
Induction Manual	Program Manager - Operations	Progressive, review every 2 years
Staff Training Manual - including Skills & Training Needs Audit and Register	Senior Executive	Annually
Staff Workplans, including individual training needs	All Line Managers	Rewrite Annually Review Biannually
<b>MONITORING &amp; REVIEW</b>		
Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Manual including Procedures for Internal Review	Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Coordinator	Annually
Spot Audits on Contract Management	Program Manager – Operations	Any time
Conduct Internal Systems Review	General Manager with M&E Coordinator	Annually
Assure Compliance with Regulation & Procedures ie. Implement Corrective Action	General Manager with M&E Coordinator	As required
Preparation for External Audit	Senior Executive	As directed by Audit Office, Minister, NRC

## 5.2 Internal Review

This part of the business system is the basis for tracking and recognising opportunities for continuous improvement for the Namoi CMA, the Catchment Action Plan and for the environmental, economic and social performance of the Namoi Catchment. The General Manager oversees the internal review processes, on advice of the Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator, and reports to the [Namoi CMA Board](#) on the effectiveness of these policies and procedures, and the level of staff compliance.

The Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator documents information about performance with management and staff alike. This includes: complaints from customers including agencies and third parties, significant deviation from the operational and monitoring procedures, accidents, process improvement resulting in more efficient and effective delivery of natural resource management programs and projects, and reduction of other environmental impacts. The results of Monitoring and Evaluations, audit findings and other internal system reviews are compiled and reviewed, and lead to revisions of policies and procedures, and preventative actions.

The [Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Manual](#) outlines procedures for investigating non-conformance with the business systems described in this document – Part A of the Catchment Action Plan, taking action to correct non-conformance, and ensuring that corrective action has taken place and has been effective.

## 5.3 External Audit

The Namoi CMA is subject to external audit through the [Natural Resources Commission](#) auditing the Catchment Action Plan and associated business systems. The timing of these audits is at the discretion of the Natural Resources Commission and, depending on their estimation of risk, can vary from one to five years.

The Namoi CMA is also subject to an external audit by the [NSW Audit Office](#). An Independent Audit Report of the Namoi CMA financial records is produced by the Audit Office at the end of each financial year. This Audit Report forms part of the [Annual Report](#) that is submitted to Parliament in October each year.

## 5.4 Management Review and Adaptive Management

Senior Management will undertake an annual review of policies and procedures, and compliance with the business system. The review will result in revision of policies and procedures, and implementation of changes, as required. The review will also consider progress towards meeting the Namoi CMA's objectives, including Catchment and Management Targets. It will also provide the direction for the [Three Year Rolling Investment Strategy, Annual Implementation Plan](#) and recommendations to the Minister regarding amendments to the Catchment Action Plan.

Preventative action identified at the Annual Management Review will result from the analysis of the outcomes of internal systems reviews and external audits data. Policies and operational procedures are analysed to see if there are avenues for improvement or for solving repeat problems. To fully implement the system, proposed actions for the forthcoming funding cycles will be analysed and reviewed.

## 6 REFERENCES

Namoi Community Catchment Plan Situation Statement (1996) *Donaldson Planning & Management Services prepared for the North West Catchment Management Committee*

Namoi Community Catchment Plan (1999) *North West Catchment Management Committee ISBN 0 7347 5058 7*  
Stressed Rivers Assessment Report – Namoi Catchment (1999) *NSW Department of Land and Water Conservation Sydney ISBN 0 7347 5081 1.*