
Cabinet Handbook

**Tasmanian Government
Department of Premier and Cabinet
Cabinet and Executive Council Office**

Level 4, 15 Murray Street
HOBART TAS 7000

For general enquiries: Cabinet.Office@dpac.tas.gov.au

For Cabinet and Executive Council process enquiries: 6185 6088

Document title	Cabinet Handbook
Contact details	Cabinet.Office@dpac.tas.gov.au
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Acronyms	
AEC	Authorised eCabinet Contributor
ASA	Agency Security Advisor
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CM	Content Manager
DPAC	Department of Premier and Cabinet
DTF	Department of Treasury and Finance
GBE	Government Business Enterprise
IDC	Interdepartmental committee
LRF	Longer range forecast
OPC	Office of Parliamentary Counsel
SOC	State-owned company
TAS-PSPF	Tasmania's Protective Security Policy Framework

The Cabinet Handbook is maintained by the Cabinet and Executive Council Office (Cabinet Office) in DPAC.

Cabinet Office welcomes any suggestions or ideas either for improving the content and readability of the handbook or for improving the processes in which the Cabinet Office is involved.

Resources supporting the development of legislation, preparing and presenting matters to [Executive Council](#), and information specific to the management of [Tasmanian boards and committees](#) is available on DPAC's website. Cabinet Office is available to advise and assist on matters of procedure. Please contact the Cabinet Office by emailing Cabinet.Office@dpac.tas.gov.au for assistance.

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Definitions

- **eCabinet system:** eCabinet is an electronic workflow system that enables Cabinet processes for the Cabinet Office, Ministers' Offices, Ministers, Tasmanian Government departments and the Cabinet Secretary.
- **Cabinet submissions:** For the purposes of the guideline, include a Documents submitted by a sponsoring Minister for consideration by Cabinet (e.g., a Cabinet minute).
- **Department(s)/Agencies:** All Tasmanian Government departments as defined by the *Tasmanian State Service Act 2000*.
- **Authorised eCabinet Contributor:** An Authorised eCabinet Contributor (AEC) is an eCabinet user nominated by a department to facilitate the advisory or comment request process and to administer the distribution of Cabinet decisions relevant to that department.

AECs access requirements for each department is customised based on how frequently the department engages in the Cabinet process. This ensures that high-frequency departments have multiple users with access to reduce single person dependency, while low-frequency departments do not use resources maintaining access controls which are not needed.

- **Agency Security Advisor:** Person/people nominated to perform security functions or specialist services related to security within a department (required by all state bodies under the TAS-PSPF).
- **Tasmania's Protective Security Policy Framework (TAS-PSPF):** A central framework which establishes nationally consistent protective security standards and coordinates a whole-of-government approach to the protection of Tasmanian Government resources.

1 Introduction

The Cabinet Handbook outlines the procedures, conventions and expectations that support the effective operation of Cabinet and its support processes. It is designed for anyone involved in the development of Cabinet documentation and processes supporting Cabinet business.

This handbook provides a framework to ensure the efficient, effective, professional, and timely presentation of matters for consideration by Cabinet. For good governance, adherence to the procedures is essential.

Effective Cabinet confidentiality requires strict observance of the security requirements for Cabinet documents by Ministers, their staff and public sector officers.

The Cabinet Office is responsible for the routine administration of Cabinet matters and acts in accordance with policies established by Cabinet and the procedures set out in this handbook.

Cabinet meets almost weekly throughout the year and the Cabinet Office adheres to a strict timetable of activity in preparation for each meeting.

It is the responsibility of preparing officers to ensure that material meets the standards set out in this handbook when preparing Cabinet documents.

The Cabinet Office has a responsibility to ensure, as far as possible, that submissions meet the minimum quality standards set out in this handbook and to provide support on all aspects of Cabinet processes to Ministers, ministerial offices, and departments on administration matters.

1.1 Principles of Cabinet

- 1.1.1 Cabinet is ultimately responsible for the approval, development, and coordination of the policies of the government.
- 1.1.2 Cabinet processes are established by the Premier to ensure all Ministers are bound by the same rules and by high standards of probity and accountability.
- 1.1.3 Cabinet is collectively responsible for the performance of the government. Each Minister acts jointly with and on behalf of Cabinet colleagues in their capacity as Ministers. This is known as 'collective responsibility' and enhances joint support for and adherence to all decisions made in Cabinet. Cabinet Decisions are binding on all Cabinet members as government policy.
- 1.1.4 Consultation is an essential element of the Cabinet process.

- 1.1.5 Information considered by Cabinet is to be of the highest standard. To ensure informed decision-making can occur, the advice submitted to Cabinet should be analytically rigorous, strategic in context, and practical and relevant to the needs of Ministers. [Consultation](#) with relevant departments and stakeholders is an essential element of ensuring Cabinet are fully informed when making decisions for government.
- 1.1.6 The deliberations of Cabinet and its Committees are to be conducted in a secure and confidential environment, and ongoing confidentiality of Cabinet and related records must be maintained.
- 1.1.7 It is the responsible Minister who presents matters to Cabinet for discussion. Ministers are responsible for the proposals they bring forward, even where detailed development or drafting may have been done on their behalf by officers.
- 1.1.8 Similarly, the decisions of Cabinet are put into effect by individual Ministers whose actions are often authorised under particular Acts of Parliament or under provisions endorsed by the Governor-in-Council. Cabinet Decisions have no legal standing until put into effect by the Parliament, Executive Council or the Minister.
- 1.1.9 At all times, departmental officers and ministerial staff must act in support of Ministers' obligations to abide by Cabinet conventions and their Minister should be advised if there is, or appears to be, a breach of these conventions.

2 Cabinet Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 Governance and operations

- 2.1.1 A group of Ministers known as Cabinet as the prime decision-making body is not explicitly provided for in the *Constitution Act 1934* or by any other Tasmanian law.
- 2.1.2 The Cabinet comprises the Premier (as Chairperson) and all Ministers, and may include other members of Parliament, at the Premier's discretion.
- 2.1.3 Typically, Cabinet meets on a weekly basis. Ministers and other members of Cabinet are expected to attend every meeting, or provide the Premier with reasons why they are unable to attend.
- 2.1.4 The Cabinet Secretary may be a person appointed to that role under the *Constitution Act 1934*, a Parliamentary Secretary to Cabinet appointed by the Premier, a member of Cabinet nominated by the Premier, the Secretary of DPAC, or their nominated delegate.
- 2.1.5 Departments that prepare documentation for the consideration of Cabinet are doing so on behalf of the responsible Minister. It is the Minister who presents matters to Cabinet for discussion. Ministers are responsible for the proposals they bring forward, including when detailed development or drafting may have been done on their behalf.

2.2 Collective responsibility

- 2.2.1 The responsibility of Ministers for government decisions requires collective adherence to all resolutions agreed in Cabinet. Cabinet Decisions reflect collective deliberation and are binding on all Cabinet members as government policy.
- 2.2.2 The Cabinet process is designed to support the convention of collective responsibility. Cabinet members must be provided with all documents sufficiently in advance of a meeting so that they are aware of the business coming to Cabinet and able to give matters adequate consideration.

- 2.2.3 Cabinet's ability to reach collective decisions is aided by departments ensuring adequate prior consultation on matters which come to Cabinet so that major differences between portfolios are resolved, or understood, before discussion in the Cabinet room.
- 2.2.4 The confidential Cabinet environment allows frank and open discussion to reach a united conclusion which is binding on all members of Cabinet.
- 2.2.5 If a Minister is unable to publicly support a Cabinet Decision, the proper course of action is for them to resign from Cabinet. Ministers must support the collective decisions and the policies formulated by Cabinet in public debate.
- 2.2.6 A member of Cabinet who has a material interest in a matter to be discussed in Cabinet must:
- i. Advise Cabinet Office prior to circulation that the Cabinet documents should not be circulated to them; and
 - ii. Declare the interest at the commencement of the meeting. The Minister may be required to absent themselves from discussion on that matter.

2.3 Cabinet confidentiality

- 2.3.1 Cabinet is the highest decision-making body of government and the types of matters considered by Cabinet can have significant implications for the government and for the broader community. The unauthorised or premature disclosure of Cabinet information can be damaging to the government and its public policy agenda.
- 2.3.2 Everyone involved in the Cabinet process is responsible for confidentiality – this includes Ministers, ministerial staff and departments.
- 2.3.3 Cabinet confidentiality is supported by restricting the distribution of and access to Cabinet documents, and any documents prepared for Cabinet, generated to support Cabinet matters, or which reveal decisions and/or deliberations of Cabinet.
- 2.3.4 Cabinet documents must be securely handled, stored and disposed of, and accessed on a strict need-to-know basis.

- 2.3.5 Ministers, ministerial staff and departments cannot make public statements or comment on policy proposals they are bringing to Cabinet. Any public discussion would pre-empt Cabinet deliberations and breach the confidentiality of Cabinet matters. Identification of individual Ministers with particular views would undermine the collective basis of agreed outcomes on which Cabinet relies. Each portfolio Minister is responsible for direction and public presentation of policy within their portfolio responsibilities, and other Ministers should avoid separate policy stances becoming matters of public debate.
- 2.3.6 It is inappropriate for Ministers to accept invitations to speak about or publicly comment on matters outside their portfolio area without prior approval from the Premier. Where Ministers are required to speak publicly about an issue that crosses portfolio boundaries, the Minister should either obtain a collective view from Cabinet or discuss the issue with the Premier and other responsible Ministers before commenting.
- 2.3.7 Ministers must ensure there is no announcement of policy initiatives or expenditure commitments which have not been given Cabinet authority or, where appropriate, Governor-in-Council approval. In exceptional cases where prior Cabinet approval is not possible, proposed announcements must be approved by the Premier.

2.4 Security of Cabinet documents

- 2.4.1 All information prepared for the purpose of consideration by Cabinet, as well as the deliberations and decisions of Cabinet, is confidential. Ministers, ministerial staff and departments have a responsibility to protect the confidentiality, integrity and availability of Cabinet documents.
- 2.4.2 To protect the confidentiality, integrity and availability of Cabinet information, the eCabinet system has enhanced information control measures to ensure information can only be accessed by specified users with a specific role and on a valid 'need-to-know' basis.
- 2.4.3 Once lodged in the eCabinet system, Cabinet documents are protected by unique, identifying security features and a record of the distribution of documents is maintained.

- 2.4.4 In accordance with Tasmania's Protective Security Policy Framework (TAS-PSPF), Cabinet information is protected through appropriate information classification and the application of a protective marking based on the assessed sensitivity of the information.
- 2.4.5 The most appropriate classification for Cabinet information is 'OFFICIAL: Sensitive//TAS CABINET'. All documents prepared for the purpose of submission to Cabinet must be clearly identified with this protective marking.
- 2.4.6 In some circumstances, the Premier may direct a submission to be further restricted and subject to limited distribution. In these circumstances, the appropriate classification is 'OFFICIAL: Sensitive//TAS CABINET//EXCLUSIVE FOR'.
- 2.4.7 When a Cabinet document is downloaded from the eCabinet system, a watermark will be applied to the digital document detailing the individual's first and last name, email address, date time and security classification. The watermark containing the details of the individual will be present on any digitally saved or printed copies originating from this access.

2.5 Sharing, storage and disposal of Cabinet documents

- 2.5.1 Secure handling procedures apply to all printed and electronic versions of Cabinet documents, including drafts, working documents and final versions.
- 2.5.2 The following security measures must be applied at the **commencement** of the drafting process. Information that significantly and specifically contributes to Cabinet's decision making process should be treated with the same level of confidentiality as the submission itself.
- 2.5.3 During the drafting process, electronic Cabinet documents should be stored securely on an approved department content management system with appropriate audit logging and access control capabilities. Access should be restricted to persons directly involved in the development or analysis of the submission, or who have a specific role in the progression of the submission through to Cabinet.
- 2.5.4 Electronic transmission of Cabinet documents should occur through a secure department content management or workflow system, or through the eCabinet system. Authors and contributors must ensure any recipients of Cabinet documents adhere to required protections and handling. See section 8.2.7 for information about sharing Cabinet information with external parties.
- 2.5.5 Where email correspondence is required (for example to undertake consultation during the drafting process) emails must be labelled with the protective marking 'Cabinet in Confidence' in the subject heading.
- 2.5.6 Printed copies of Cabinet documents must be transmitted securely, for example, using a sealed, opaque envelope and be hand-delivered. Documents should be stored in lockable containers or cabinets and not left exposed on desks or counters.

- 2.5.7 Only the finalised version of Cabinet documents should be retained after submission to Cabinet. Previous drafts which have no continuing relevance should be securely destroyed. Printed copies should be shredded, and electronic versions permanently deleted from devices and systems (not soft deleted). Destruction is authorised in the Disposal Schedule for Short-term Value Records DA No. 2158 issued by the State Archivist, pursuant to section 24 of the *Archives Act 1983*.
- 2.5.8 Copies of Decisions distributed through the eCabinet system or final versions of submissions, when retained by departments, must be kept in a secure system and not with general departmental files. See section 10 for more information about [Cabinet Decisions](#).
- 2.5.9 Cabinet Office maintains hard copy files of all formal Cabinet documents for archiving purposes as required under the *Archives Act 1983*.

2.6 Reporting incidents of breaches of Cabinet confidentiality

- 2.6.1 If the security of any Cabinet document(s) is breached, the incident must be reported to the Cabinet Secretary through the following ways:
- i. Departments: breaches are raised with the relevant Agency Security Advisor (ASA) and reported by the relevant Head of Agency.
 - ii. Ministerial offices: breaches are reported by the Chief of Staff.
- 2.6.2 If Cabinet information is given to, or comes into the possession of, an unauthorised person, all efforts must be immediately undertaken to (in the case of written information) retrieve the information and to identify the person(s) who had access.
- 2.6.3 The advice to the Cabinet Secretary must include:
- iii. The nature of the breach;
 - iv. Circumstances leading to the incident;
 - v. The actions taken to rectify the breach; and
 - vi. Any remedial actions required to decrease the likelihood of future breaches.

- 2.6.4 The breach and its outcome will be reported to the DPAC ASA. The Cabinet Secretary will determine whether the incident requires further action, such as reporting it to Cabinet.

2.7 Regular Cabinet document security compliance check

- 2.7.1 DPAC will lead regular whole-of-government compliance checks. Findings, including any recommendations for security improvement measures, will be reported to the Secretary of DPAC and relevant Head of Agency for action.
- 2.7.2 Departments are strongly encouraged to periodically review their Cabinet security measures and processes to ensure compliance and address any process improvement requirements.

3 Cabinet Procedures

3.1 Matters that come before Cabinet

- 3.1.1 The type of matters which come before Cabinet (or a Cabinet Committee if relevant) include, but are not limited to:
- i. New policy proposals and significant or sensitive variations to existing policies;
 - ii. Proposals that require legislation or appointments;
 - iii. Proposed responses to recommendations in reports of Parliamentary committees, inquiries and other significant reports that establish or vary policy;
 - iv. Significant intergovernmental agreements, action plans and matters likely to significantly affect intergovernmental relations*;
 - v. Significant portfolio announcements;
 - vi. Proposals to refer matters to Parliamentary committees;
 - vii. Matters that may be strategic or contentious in nature; and
 - viii. Any other matter agreed in writing with the Premier.

* The Premier will approve the process for intergovernmental agreements/relations. The processes are available on the [DPAC website](#).

3.2 Types of Cabinet submissions

- 3.2.1 There are two types of submissions which progress to Cabinet – Cabinet minutes and Cabinet briefings. Minutes are decision-making submissions. Briefings are for information to be noted, to progress final Bills or for appointments to boards and committees.
- 3.2.2 Consideration should be given to matters progressing to Cabinet ‘for noting’ or ‘for information only’ as to whether they could be managed as correspondence between the Premier, Treasurer and relevant Ministers.
- 3.2.3 Generally, matters that would not need to progress to Cabinet include items such as progress updates on existing non-contentious initiatives, operational projects, or matters that do not have a significant impact on government business.

- 3.2.4 Where a Cabinet briefing that requires Cabinet to consider significant policy matters is submitted to Cabinet Office, it will be returned to the originating department for re-submission as a Cabinet minute.

Cabinet Minute

Purpose:

Contains recommendations for consideration and a decision by Cabinet

Examples:

- New policy proposals and significant or sensitive variations to existing policies.
- Proposals that require legislation or appointments.
- Proposed responses to recommendations in reports of Parliamentary committees, inquiries and other significant reports that establish or vary policy.
- Significant intergovernmental relations (the Premier approves the process for intergovernmental agreements/relations - see DPAC website).
- Significant portfolio announcements.
- Proposals to refer matters to Parliamentary committees.
- Matters that may be strategic or contentious in nature.
- Any other matter agreed in writing with the Premier.

Information to include:

- Purpose
- Recommendations
- Background
- Issues and Supporting Information Options
- Annexe Statements
- Communication Strategy
- Additional attachments (if required)

Cabinet Briefing

Purpose:

Provides Cabinet with information which does not require a decision other than to note the information

Examples:

- Appointments.
- Returning bills for final endorsement.
- Progress Reports / Project Updates.
- Committee Briefings (when seeking endorsement of the Record of Decisions made by a Cabinet Committee).
- Information for Cabinet to note.

Information to include:

- Relevant details as indicated on specific templates.
- Specific templates are available for:
 - Information Briefing; Board or Committee; Proposed Government Appointment; Proposed CEO or GBE Appointment; Final Bill Briefing; Committee Briefing and Committee Papers.

3.3 Cabinet date schedule and regional Cabinet meetings

- 3.3.1 Cabinet meetings are typically held weekly, unless otherwise determined. A schedule of Cabinet meeting dates is developed and maintained by the Premier's Office.
- 3.3.2 To protect the security and confidentiality of Cabinet meetings, the Cabinet schedule is only circulated on a need-to-know basis.. It must not be shared publicly.
- 3.3.3 Cabinet may opt to conduct its business in regional locations across Tasmania. All confidentiality, governance and meeting protocols must be maintained, regardless of location.
- 3.3.4 Portfolio Ministers may request advice specific to the location where the regional Cabinet meeting is being held through requests for Regional Cabinet Briefs. This will be coordinated by individual departments and is not considered part of the Cabinet process.

3.4 Preparing the Cabinet Agenda

- 3.4.1 Cabinet Office prepares the draft agenda for each Cabinet meeting (based on documentation and advice it has received from Ministers and matters identified in the LRF) and submits it to the Premier's Office for approval on Wednesday prior to the Cabinet meeting. The content and order of items on the final agenda are decided by the Premier's Office.
- 3.4.2 Cabinet items will not be confirmed on the Cabinet agenda unless they are lodged through eCabinet within the submission deadlines, or a late submission request has been submitted and approved by the Premier or their delegate.
- 3.4.3 Requests for late lodgement of papers must be sought using the late lodgement request form. Engagement with Cabinet Office on the intention to submit a late lodgement is vital for visibility and so it can be listed on the agenda, subject to approval (see section 7.2). Once approved, the relevant Minister or their delegate must inform Cabinet Office.
- 3.4.4 Cabinet Office electronically distributes the Cabinet agenda, together with available submissions and other documents, to each member of Cabinet, through the eCabinet system. Distribution occurs on the Friday prior to the Cabinet meeting.

- 3.4.5 Hard copy papers may be prepared for Ministers by their ministerial offices at a Minister's request, and must adhere to all sharing, storage and disposal guidelines applicable to Cabinet documents ([see section 2.5](#)).

3.5 Declaration of interest in matters to be considered by Cabinet

- 3.5.1 Cabinet Office will provide a forecast agenda for items to be discussed at the following Cabinet meeting. Should Ministers identify a potential conflict of interest in a matter to be discussed, they must:
- i. Declare the conflict of interest as soon as possible to the Premier;
 - ii. Advise Cabinet Office prior to circulation that the Cabinet documents should not be circulated to them; and
 - iii. Declare the interest at the commencement of the meeting and absent themselves from discussion on that matter if required.
- 3.5.2 Conflicts of interests may include financial, personal and/or family interests.
- 3.5.3 A Minister's declaration of interest and/or absenting must be recorded in any resulting Cabinet Decision about the item under consideration.

3.6 Inviting guests to Cabinet

- 3.6.1 There may be circumstances where a Ministerial office or department advise that a guest is required to attend a Cabinet meeting to present to Cabinet on a particular item.
- 3.6.2 Cabinet Office must be informed of any requests so that they can arrange for a specific time on the agenda for this to occur, particularly in the instance where there is more than one presentation, or an Executive Council meeting is scheduled for the same Cabinet meeting.
- 3.6.3 All guest attendance requires the approval of the Premier or their delegate (i.e., Chief of Staff). Cabinet Office will liaise with the Premier's Office as necessary.
- 3.6.4 Guest attendance is noted on the corresponding Cabinet agenda to ensure there is a record for future reference.

3.7 Longer Range Forecast – future Cabinet Agenda items

- 3.7.1 A rolling LRF Cabinet agenda is to be considered by Cabinet and includes:
- i. Title of the future submission;
 - ii. Responsible Portfolio (or Portfolios if a joint submission);
 - iii. Purpose of the submission;
 - iv. Anticipated date to be considered by Cabinet; and
 - v. Level of importance (low, high or critical).
- 3.7.2 The LRF will be prepared every four months by Cabinet Office based on advice from Ministers' offices in consultation with their relevant department(s). This will be provided to Cabinet.
- 3.7.3 All Cabinet items must be submitted to Cabinet within the timeframe set out in the LRF. For this reason, the forecast date must be realistic and should take into account normal consultation and submission processes.

4 Cabinet Minutes

4.1 Principles for preparing a Cabinet Minute

- 4.1.1 Cabinet minutes must:
- i. Be presented in the approved format to enable Ministers to focus easily on particular aspects of a proposal;
 - ii. Put forward facts upon which discussion can proceed;
 - iii. Succinctly and clearly identify the essential issues for consideration;
 - iv. Indicate realistic policy options and their implications; and
 - v. Make clear recommendations which ‘standalone’ so that it is not necessary to refer to the body of the minute, or to attachments, to clarify the intent of the recommendations. In exceptional circumstances where a decision must contain extensive information the detail may be included in an attachment.
- 4.1.2 Cabinet minutes must be lodged in eCabinet ten working days prior to the intended Cabinet meeting.
- 4.1.3 Cabinet minutes which do not meet standard requirements will be reassigned back to the sponsoring Minister through the eCabinet system for amendment before being placed on a Cabinet agenda.
- 4.1.4 Cabinet minutes should be as short as practicable and ideally not exceed six pages (not including attachments).
- 4.1.5 Templates including the coversheet and minute templates must be used and are available on the [DPAC website](#).

4.2 Cabinet Minute cover sheet

- 4.2.1 Each minute must have a completed cover sheet – a template is available on the [DPAC website](#).
- 4.2.2 A completed cover sheet must be uploaded into the eCabinet system with a copy of the signed minute and any attachments.
- 4.2.3 If space is inadequate to give a satisfactory summary for any of the cover sheet headings, reference should be made to the relevant paragraph number(s) in the body of the minute or to an annexe or attachment where further details are provided.

- 4.2.4 No cover sheet item should be left blank. The abbreviation “N/A” should be used if the item is not applicable.

4.3 Drafting considerations

- 4.3.1 Cabinet submissions are lodged in the eCabinet system by ministerial offices following the approval of Ministers. Prior to a Cabinet submission being lodged by a Minister’s office, departments undertake drafting and internal approvals following their own departmental process outside of the eCabinet system.
- 4.3.2 Cabinet minutes should be based on sound policy advice that is analytically rigorous, strategic in context, practical and relevant.
- 4.3.3 The purpose of a Cabinet minute should be clearly written and present all facts relevant to Cabinet’s decision. Presentation should be logical, concise and contain sufficient information to enable Ministers to focus quickly upon the issues they are to determine.
- 4.3.4 The recommendation(s) of the minute should be confined to the action recommended for approval. The recommendations form the basis of the Cabinet decision which will be recorded if the recommendations are approved.
- 4.3.5 Recommendations should be self-contained and should ‘stand-alone’. Cabinet, when making its decision, will refer to the wording of the recommendation. Being succinct and accurate when drafting the minute will ensure clarity in the discussion and recorded outcome.
- 4.3.6 Reference may only be made to Cabinet’s previous consideration of a subject if there has not been a change of government, through an election, since the decisions were made. Relevant decision numbers and dates should be cited if the same matter has previously been considered by the current Cabinet.
- 4.3.7 Specific references to Cabinet deliberations or decisions of a previous government must not be quoted and must only be summarised in a general form. Copies of documents originating under a previous government are not to be included as attachments.

- 4.3.8 Reference should be made to relevant policy commitments given by the current government. These should be specific and provide Cabinet with the key strategic factors of the proposal and their alignment with government's existing priorities. General or vague reference to main policy documents (e.g., consistent with the Economic Strategy document) is inadequate.
- 4.3.9 Graphs, tables and illustrations may be used to clarify issues, either within the body of the minute or as an attachment. The purpose and manner of how Cabinet should interpret the visual information should be clear.
- 4.3.10 The options for Cabinet's consideration must be stated, with the preferred option clearly identified. Section 5 allows for a succinct discussion of the benefits and disadvantages of each option and information provided in section 4 may also assist to build a case for the preferred option.
- 4.3.11 Except in a limited number of cases, Cabinet minutes that only provide a choice of "accept" or "reject" are generally considered to be inadequate, and consideration should be given as to whether any alternative appropriate options exist.
- 4.3.12 All Cabinet submissions must be signed by the sponsoring Minister prior to being uploaded into eCabinet. Joint minutes must be signed by all sponsoring Ministers and dated when the last Minister signs.

4.4 Attachments to Cabinet Minutes

- 4.4.1 Reports or other printed material attached to a submission do not need to be retyped to meet the style guidelines referred to in this handbook.
- 4.4.2 All attachments to Cabinet minutes, other than those shown as standard annexes, should be itemised in a list at Annexe 6.10 showing the attachment number and title.
- 4.4.3 Attachments should be clearly identified by number (for example, Attachment 1) at the top right-hand corner of the first page.
- 4.4.4 Any reference in the body of a submission to an attachment must clearly identify the attachment and, where appropriate, the page number, paragraph, or table number.

4.5 Annexe statements

- 4.5.1 Annexe statements are attached after the body of the minute, following the Minister’s signature block. There are nine statements which provide Cabinet with specific advice across key strategic policy considerations.
- 4.5.2 The Cabinet minute template and proformas (where specific information is required) have been developed and should be used for each statement. Failure to provide this information may result in Cabinet Office reassigning the Cabinet minute back to the relevant ministerial office for possible return to the originating department for amendment.
- 4.5.3 Where there is no impact/relevant information, the Cabinet minute should simply state that there are no impacts. Headings for each of the statements should not be deleted.
- 4.5.4 Information must be provided for each annexe statement, or alternatively should clearly indicate that this particular aspect of policy is not impacted. Details about what is required are listed below and in the Cabinet minute template:

Impact statement	Guiding advice
<p>Budget Impact Statement – 6.1</p>	<p>DTF should be consulted on all Cabinet minutes.</p> <p>Minutes requesting additional funding will not be considered until DTF’s evaluation of the submission is available.</p> <p>Minutes requiring additional funding for a department should not be submitted to Cabinet if the net cost is less than 0.5 per cent of the department’s total discretionary expenditure. Clarification should be sought from DTF if there are any queries about meeting this criterion.</p> <p>Cabinet may decide to refer consideration of financial implications to the Budget Committee of Cabinet before a final decision is made.</p> <p>If the submission has no financial implications for any government department, a clear statement to this effect should be included at Annexe Statement 6.1. If such a statement is included, it is not necessary to include the Budget Impact Statement proforma.</p> <p>When there are financial implications, an explanation should be included at Annexe Statement 6.1 as well as the completed Budget Impact Statement proforma which details the financial implications of the proposal. The Statement must</p>

Impact statement	Guiding advice
	<p>detail:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact on revenue and expenditure even if the net effect of the proposal is nil; and • The effects in the current financial year and the three succeeding financial years. <p>DTF cannot approve funding but can assess the revenue and/or cost estimates and advise whether funds additional to the Budget are required. Funds can only be approved by the Treasurer.</p>
<p>Economic and Employment Impact Statement – 6.2</p>	<p>The aim of this statement is to provide an analysis of any direct or indirect impact on the Tasmanian economy, particularly for specific industry sectors, regions/localities, or persons.</p> <p>The statement should describe how the proposal will lead to job creation and economic growth in Tasmania, including regional and local impacts. For example, how will the proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide support and greater certainty for business and investment in the State, (e.g., by making it cheaper and easier to do business, or improve access to economic opportunities); • Stimulate and support the economy and build on our competitive strengths (e.g., in the fields of agriculture, tourism, energy, mining and forestry); and/or • Support Tasmanians to equip themselves with the skills they need to fully participate in the Tasmanian economy, and ensure Tasmanian businesses have access to an appropriately skilled workforce. <p>Any impact on Tasmanian business is to be addressed, including an indication of what action is planned to mitigate any adverse impacts.</p> <p>Where the proposal involves a major procurement activity, details are to be provided on how the competitiveness of Tasmanian businesses will be assessed and, where appropriate, improved (e.g., joint ventures).</p> <p>In addition, the potential impacts of a proposal, including efficiency and financial impacts, at an individual enterprise level, as well as the broader economic and employment implications, should be considered. In taking these issues into account, consultation with Tasmanian businesses is encouraged.</p>
<p>Social/Community Impact Statement</p>	<p>The aim of the Social/Community Impact Statement is to identify the impact of each proposal on the wellbeing of</p>

Impact statement	Guiding advice
<p>– 6.3</p>	<p>families, small/regional communities etc. Issues that may be considered include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The effect on particular groups such as single-parent families, geographically isolated groups, people of diverse language and cultural and gender backgrounds; • The effect on access to recreational, cultural and social activities; and • Effects on the environment.
<p>Legislative and Regulatory Impact Statement- 6.4</p>	<p>This statement is to be included when a minute recommends amendments to existing legislation, the enactment of new legislation or promulgation of regulations. It should address both the regulatory impact as assessed by the government's Legislation Review Program (LRP), and the requirements of the drafting task as set out in the Legislation Drafting Checklist.</p> <p>The Office of Parliamentary Counsel (OPC) Legislation Drafting Checklist is designed to assist with the management of the government's legislative program. The checklist should indicate the proposed date for completion of drafting if such a date has been agreed with OPC.</p> <p>The Legislation Drafting Checklist must be completed and included in the Cabinet Minute at 6.10 - Other Attachments.</p> <p>Regulatory Impact – The Statement must address whether the department has complied with the LRP. The LRP procedures and guidelines outline the process for assessing whether new or amending legislation will restrict competition or have a significant impact on business.</p> <p>DTF provides advice on the processes required by the LRP. When a Minister is recommending that restrictions on competition or policies with significant negative impacts on business be introduced or continue, the text of the minute should clearly demonstrate why the proposal is warranted and how it is in the public interest.</p> <p>If a Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS) has been prepared in accordance with the LRP, this should be attached to the Cabinet minute at Annexe 6.10 – Other Attachments.</p>
<p>Intergovernmental Impact Statement- 6.5</p>	<p>Where proposals have implications for local government, the Commonwealth, or other state or territory governments, the possible effects are to be stated in the minute. Any local government, Commonwealth or jurisdictional negotiations that are proposed (or the result of any that have taken place) should be outlined.</p>

Impact statement	Guiding advice
	<p>The Intergovernmental Relations Impact Statement is to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which entities or jurisdictions have been consulted and the outcomes; • The impact of the proposal on local government, the Commonwealth Government or other jurisdictions; • Whether the proposal is likely to impose or cause additional financial or operational duty on local government; • Any impact on the capacity of entities or jurisdictions to effectively implement the proposal; • The need for further consultation and an outline of the proposed communication strategy; and • The implementation monitoring arrangements.
<p>Community Consultation and Communications Strategy – 6.6</p>	<p>This statement should identify any need for community consultation and outline a communications plan, including how and when consultation will occur. Community consultation and community engagement should be undertaken in accordance with the Tasmanian Government Framework for Community Engagement.</p> <p>A communications strategy should be attached to submissions to inform Cabinet about how departments intend to communicate decisions. A template is available on the DPAC website. Where warranted by the complexity of a project’s communications needs, a more detailed communication strategy, in an alternative format as determined by the department, is acceptable to Cabinet.</p> <p>Draft text for a media release (if required), should be included with the communications strategy template. If a draft release is not available, it needs to be indicated when it will be available and who is responsible for drafting.</p> <p>Minutes which require a communications strategy will not be included on the Cabinet agenda until a strategy approved by the department’s Communications Manager is provided.</p> <p>The information contained in the strategy should be referenced on the minute cover sheet. If a communications strategy is required for a Cabinet minute, the template should be included as an attachment at Annexe 6.10 – Other Attachments.</p>

<p>Prior Consultation Statement – 6.7</p>	<p>The prior consultation statement relates to consultation undertaken prior to lodgement of the minute in the eCabinet system (see Section 8.2).</p> <p>The departments and other bodies consulted should be listed and the outcome of such consultations summarised, for example, whether there is general support or if there are outstanding issues. If there are unresolved issues, the statement should describe how they might be resolved.</p>
<p>Tasmanian Brand Statement – 6.8</p>	<p>The aim of the Tasmanian Brand statement is to assess the impact of each proposal, and to identify and maximise strategic opportunities.</p> <p>Providing comment on how the proposal will contribute to the contemporary understanding of Tasmania as a brand and mitigate any risk that the proposal presents to the Tasmanian brand.</p>
<p>National Agreement on Closing the Gap Statement – 6.9</p>	<p>This statement should identify policy proposals that have impact on Closing the Gap National Agreement priority reforms and improved outcomes for Aboriginal people and organisations in Tasmania. The National Agreement commits parties to change the way that governments work with Aboriginal communities to improve outcomes for Aboriginal people.</p>
<p>Other Attachments – 6.10</p>	<p>A list of the number and title of other attachments to be presented as supporting documents for the minute should be included. Attachments should be clearly labelled and numbered 'Attachment 1,' 'Attachment 2', etc.</p> <p>Attachments related to Annexe Statements include items such as a Regulatory Impact Statement, Legislation Drafting Checklist or Communications Strategy.</p> <p>Electronic reports can be attached to a submission and do not need to be retyped to conform to the guidelines of this handbook.</p>

4.6 Timing for lodgement of Cabinet Minutes

- 4.6.1 All Cabinet minutes must be lodged in the eCabinet system, following signing by the sponsoring Minister(s), at least ten working days prior to the date on which they are to be considered by Cabinet. This is known as the Ten-Day Rule.

This deadline allows for Cabinet Office to:

- i. Process the submission;
 - ii. Obtain formal written consultation comments from departments and provide these comments to the sponsoring Minister;
 - iii. Obtain written advisories from DPAC and DTF on the Cabinet submission; and
 - iv. Provide time for members of Cabinet to be briefed and to become familiar with the issues on the Cabinet agenda.
- 4.6.2 Departments must request approval to submit late Cabinet minutes. See section 7 – [Late lodgement of Cabinet submissions](#) for more information.

5 Legislative Minutes

5.1 Principles for preparing a Legislative Minute

- 5.1.1 Legislative minutes are used to assist with the approval and drafting of Legislation and to provide Cabinet with the opportunity to collectively agree on Legislative priorities.
- 5.1.2 OPC must be consulted regarding the timeframes for drafting Legislation as early as possible.
- 5.1.3 Legislative Cabinet minutes must:
- i. Be presented in the approved format to enable Ministers to focus easily on particular aspects of the proposal;
 - ii. Put forward facts upon which discussion can proceed; and
 - iii. Identify clear timeframes that include:
 - Date the drafting instructions are due to OPC;
 - Proposed date for the draft final Bill to be presented to Cabinet;
 - Proposed tabling date for introduction of the final Bill into the Parliament; and
 - Proposed consultation timeframe.

5.2 Legislative Minute Cover Sheet

- 5.2.1 Each minute must have a completed cover sheet. A template is available on the [DPAC website](#).
- A completed cover sheet is to be uploaded into the eCabinet system with a copy of the signed minute and any attachments.
- 5.2.2 If space is inadequate to give a satisfactory summary for any of the cover sheet headings, reference should be made to the relevant paragraph number(s) in the body of the minute.

- 5.2.3 No cover sheet item should be left blank. The abbreviation "N/A" may be used if the item is not applicable.

5.3 Timing for lodgement of Legislative Cabinet Minutes

- 5.3.1 All Legislative Cabinet minutes must be lodged into the eCabinet system, following signing by the sponsoring Minister(s), at least ten working days prior to the date on which they are to be considered by Cabinet. This is known as the Ten-Day Rule.

This deadline allows for Cabinet Office to:

- i. Process the submission;
 - ii. Obtain formal written consultation comments from departments and provide these comments to the sponsoring Minister;
 - iii. Obtain written advisories from DPAC, DTF and Leader of the House (where required) on the Cabinet submission; and
 - iv. Provide time for members of Cabinet to be briefed and to become familiar with the issues on the Cabinet agenda.
- 5.3.2 Departments must request approval to submit late Cabinet minutes. See section 7 – [Late lodgement of Cabinet submissions](#) for more information.

6 Cabinet Briefings

6.1 Principles for preparing a Cabinet Briefing

- 6.1.1 Briefings are used to present information to Cabinet for noting or information purposes.
- 6.1.2 The briefing format is customised according to the type of information being presented.
- 6.1.3 Cabinet briefings which do not meet standard requirements will be reassigned back to the sponsoring Minister through the eCabinet system for amendment before being placed on a Cabinet agenda.
- 6.1.4 Briefings that in effect require Cabinet to make a policy decision will not be accepted and will be returned for resubmission as a Cabinet minute.

6.2 Cabinet Briefing Cover Sheet

- 6.2.1 Each briefing must have a completed cover sheet. A template is available on the [DPAC website](#).
- 6.2.2 A completed cover sheet must be uploaded into the eCabinet system with a copy of the signed briefing and any attachments.
- 6.2.3 If space is inadequate to give a satisfactory summary for any of the cover sheet headings, reference should be made to the relevant paragraph number(s) in the body of the briefing.

6.3 Information Briefings

- 6.3.1 The format for the body of an information briefing will depend upon the subject matter being presented, but should usually be structured under the following headings:
 - i. **Purpose** - A concise statement of the reasons for presenting the information to Cabinet.

- ii. **Background** - A brief summary of the events leading up to the briefing, including any previous consideration of the matter (including relevant decision numbers and dates) by the current Cabinet*.

*Specific references to Cabinet deliberations or decisions of a previous government must not be quoted and copies of documents originating under a previous government are not to be included as attachments.

- iii. **Information** - The information being brought to Cabinet's attention should be detailed in a format that clearly and concisely present the subject matter.

6.4 Appointment Briefings

- 6.4.1 There are three types of appointment briefings – board appointments, senior and statutory officer appointments, and SOC and GBE CEO appointments.

Government Boards, Authorities and Committees

- 6.4.2 Whilst proposed board appointments are prepared as briefings, there is usually an action-based recommendation made to Cabinet (to approve or endorse the nomination).
- 6.4.3 All appointments should include a brief outline of the selection process and significant reasons for selecting the recommended candidate(s).
- 6.4.4 Re-appointments, including re-appointments of directors of government businesses, must be submitted to Cabinet in the same way as initial appointments. If the appointment is to fill a forthcoming vacancy, the name and expiry date of the incumbent must be noted in the briefing.
- 6.4.5 All briefings for proposed board appointments must include a sizing statement prepared by DPAC. Sizing statements set out the recommended remuneration for members of the board, authority, or committee.

- 6.4.6 Board appointment briefings must specify the existing and proposed number of male and female members on the board or committee and whether the Tasmanian Women's Register has been consulted to identify suitable women candidates. An explanation as to why the register was not consulted must be provided in the briefing.
- 6.4.7 A completed Tasmanian Women's Register appointment certification form must be included with the briefing regardless of the number of women being appointed and/or the number of women on the board. Briefings that do not comply will not be submitted to Cabinet.
- 6.4.8 If there is a statutory obligation for consultation concerning the nomination for appointments, the briefing is to include a clear statement that this obligation has been met.
- 6.4.9 The Minister is required to assure Cabinet that the nominees have no business or personal interest, real or perceived, which might conflict with the interests of the board, authority or committee to which appointment is proposed. Departments must check with candidates that no such conflict of interest exists prior to submitting the list of nominees to the Minister.

Senior and Statutory Office Appointments

- 6.4.10 Cabinet requires advice about any proposed appointment or re-appointment, or consecutive appointments to senior positions. Senior positions are statutory offices, prescribed offices and any office created under section 29 of the *State Service Act 2000* including Magistrates, Judges, Police Commanders, Deputy or Assistant Police Commissioners, and those offices remunerated at SES Level 1 or above.
- 6.4.11 Proposed senior appointments are prepared as a one-page briefing. In the case of a proposed new appointment, the briefing should include the following information:
 - i. Name of the department and position title;

- ii. Name of the successful applicant (appointee), their curriculum vitae or description of their work history;
- iii. Period of appointment, including starting date;
- iv. Remuneration and conditions (e.g., SES Level or in accordance with the relevant Act);
- v. A brief outline of the recruitment process;
- vi. Significant reasons why the applicant was selected;
- vii. Whether appointment by Governor in Council is required; and
- viii. Any publicity or timing of announcement.

6.4.12 It is not necessary or appropriate to attach the appointee's full written application.

Government Business Enterprise and State-owned Company

- 6.4.13 Cabinet requires advice of any proposed appointment or re-appointment of CEO of a GBE or SOC.
- 6.4.14 Proposed CEO appointments are prepared as a one-page briefing.
- 6.4.15 In the case of a proposed appointment the briefing should include the following information:
 - i. Name of the GBE or SOC and the position title;
 - ii. The name of the successful applicant, their curriculum vitae or a description of their work history;
 - iii. Period of appointment, including start date;
 - iv. A brief outline of the selection process and who they will be appointed by;
 - v. Remuneration and conditions (including remuneration and conditions and remuneration table) within the Approved CEO Total Remuneration Band;
 - vi. Whether Crown Law has reviewed the draft instrument/contract;
 - vii. The urgency of the appointment;

- viii. Any consultation undertaken regarding the appointment;
- ix. Publicity, including any support/criticism expected; and
- x. Recommendations.

6.5 Final Bill Briefings

- 6.5.1 All final Bills are returned to Cabinet for approval prior to their introduction into the Parliament.
- 6.5.2 The legislation briefing format should be used when the terms of the final Bill fully comply with the Cabinet Decision that authorised drafting.
- 6.5.3 Bills which include policy amendments not previously approved by Cabinet must be presented as a Cabinet minute (and will be subject to the normal ten-day lodgement requirements).
- 6.5.4 If a Regulatory Impact Statement was prepared in accordance with the Legislation Review Program, this should be included as an attachment to the briefing along with the final Bill.
- 6.5.5 Departments must also attach a Parliamentary Package which includes:
 - i. PLP paper;
 - ii. Clause notes;
 - iii. Second reading speech; and
 - iv. Fact sheet.

6.6 Cabinet Committee Briefings

- 6.6.1 The Committee briefing format should be used when presenting Committee decisions and papers to Cabinet for endorsement.
- 6.6.2 A summary of the committee decisions should be included in the briefing.
- 6.6.3 A full set of Committee papers should be submitted to the Cabinet Office.

6.7 Cabinet Briefings with Communications Strategies

- 6.7.1 Discretion should be used when deciding if a communication strategy is required. Most board appointments, for example, do not require a communications strategy.
- 6.7.2 Information contained in the communications strategy is to be referenced on the Cabinet briefing cover sheet.
- 6.7.3 If a communications strategy is required for a Cabinet briefing, it is to be included as an attachment.
- 6.7.4 Draft text for a media release (if required), should be included with the communications strategy. If a draft release is not available, indicate when it will be and who is responsible for drafting it.

6.8 Timing for lodgement for Briefings

- 6.8.1 Once signed by the Sponsoring Minister(s), Cabinet briefings must be lodged through the eCabinet system at least five calendar days prior to the intended Cabinet meeting.

This deadline allows for Cabinet Office to:

- i. Process the Cabinet submission;
 - ii. Obtain written advisories from DPAC, DTF and Leader of the House (where required); and
 - iii. Provide time for members of Cabinet to be briefed and to become familiar with the issues on the Cabinet agenda.
- 6.8.2 Departments must request approval to submit Cabinet briefings under five calendar days. See section 7 – [Late lodgement of Cabinet submissions for more information](#).

7 Late lodgement of Cabinet submissions

7.1 Timeliness of Cabinet submissions

- 7.1.1 To ensure that appropriate consultation (comments and advisories) can occur, and Ministers are afforded sufficient time to consider and deliberate on matters coming before Cabinet, strict adherence to lodgement deadlines is required.
- 7.1.2 Appropriate approval is required in instances where matters require a late submission to Cabinet.
- 7.1.3 Cabinet Office should be advised as soon as it becomes apparent that Cabinet may need to consider an issue Under the Line, and that an application for late lodgement is forthcoming. Early notification to Cabinet Office is vital to ensure the submission is included on the Cabinet agenda.

7.2 Request for late submission

- 7.2.1 Requests for late submission, either under ten working days for a Cabinet minute, or under five calendar days for a Cabinet briefing, must be sought using the Request for Late Lodgement form. The form is available for download from the [DPAC website](#).
- 7.2.2 The [Request for Late Lodgement form](#) must be submitted by the responsible department to the Cabinet Secretary and the Premier or their delegate for approval before the submission can progress.
- 7.2.3 The request for late lodgement must include:
 - i. Title and purpose of the Cabinet matter;
 - ii. Reason for late lodgement;
 - iii. Any consultation that has occurred (both formal and informal) given that late lodgement could impact the ability to circulate the submission for formal comment;

- iv. Impacts on the outcome of the proposal if the matter is not considered at the earliest date; and
 - v. A contact officer.
- 7.2.4 Once the late lodgement form has been approved by the Cabinet Secretary and the Premier or their delegate, the form and the Cabinet submission must be lodged by the relevant ministerial office through the eCabinet system to Cabinet Office so it can be processed for the Cabinet meeting.
- 7.2.5 Ministerial offices will not have the capability to select the meeting date for a late submission in eCabinet where the due date has passed and should therefore leave the date of the meeting blank for Cabinet Office to select the date once the meeting date for lodgement has been confirmed.
- 7.2.6 Wherever possible, early engagement with DPAC and DTF about a late submission is recommended to ensure appropriate advice can be provided to Cabinet members to support government decision-making.

8 Consultation

- 8.1.1 Consultation is an essential element of the Cabinet process.
- 8.1.2 Early and genuine consultation is required to ensure high quality advice to Cabinet. Genuine consultation should aim to identify and resolve potential conflicts before the matter reaches Cabinet.
- 8.1.3 It is important that adequate time is allowed for departments to examine and respond to issues identified during the consultation process.
- 8.1.4 Consultation for a Cabinet submission should occur at the drafting stage, during formal circulation and when actioning a Cabinet Decision.

8.2 Prior Consultation on Draft Cabinet Submissions

- 8.2.1 Prior consultation is an essential element in the preparation of a Cabinet submission. Agencies initiating a Cabinet submission must ensure that they consider the interests of other agencies and relevant external stakeholders. In particular, all government agencies that have an interest in, or will be affected by, the matter must be consulted before a submission is lodged with Cabinet Office.
- 8.2.2 Annexe 6.7 of the Cabinet minute template requires that Cabinet be provided with the details of consultation undertaken. This annexe should include the nature of the comments received and action undertaken to resolve (or not) the matters raised during consultation.

- 8.2.3 Consultation during the drafting phase will uncover and resolve, as far as possible, any problems or policy conflicts arising from the proposal. Ineffective consultation frequently leads to delays in Cabinet's consideration of the proposal, with Ministers likely to be directed by Cabinet to undertake appropriate consultation prior to further consideration by Cabinet.
- 8.2.4 Departments, in consultation with their sponsoring Minister, determine the range of prior consultation to be undertaken in the preparation of a Cabinet submission. However, DPAC, DTF, and OPC and the Leader of the House (for legislation related matters) must be engaged for assessment and drafting of advice from a whole-of-government perspective.
- 8.2.5 Consultation should be as wide as practicable and include other Ministers and departments which may have an interest in the matter. Local government, industry and community bodies may also need to be consulted.
- 8.2.6 Providing copies of, or access to, final or draft Cabinet documents to sources external to government is prohibited. However, sometimes it may be necessary to consult with external stakeholders in relation to matters which are the subject of proposed or current Cabinet consideration to ensure that Cabinet is presented with all relevant information required for it to make an informed decision.
- 8.2.7 Where consultation is undertaken outside of the government, care must be exercised to ensure that confidential information is adequately protected. This would mean that the concepts or issues are discussed with external parties, but the bodies are not provided with Cabinet documents.

8.2.8 Cabinet briefings do not require expansive consultation other than with the mandatory departments, unless determined necessary by the sponsoring Minister. However, for board appointments, there are some particular matters that may need to be considered, as outlined section 8.6 of this handbook, such as the Women on Boards Strategy.

8.3 Circulating a submission for formal Advisories and Comments

- 8.3.1 Formal advisories and comments are sought once a Cabinet submission has been drafted, signed by the portfolio Minister and submitted to the Cabinet Office.
- 8.3.2 Cabinet Office is responsible for requesting formal advisories and comments and will circulate the Cabinet submission through the eCabinet system to the relevant departments.
- 8.3.3 Department AEC's can access and fulfil requests for formal advisories and comments through the eCabinet system.
- 8.3.4 This consultation gives departments oversight on Cabinet submissions that are relevant to their Minister's/Ministers portfolio(s), and allows departments the opportunity to provide specialised advice on the content of a Cabinet submission.

8.4 Cabinet Comments

- 8.4.1 Once a Cabinet submission is drafted and approved by the portfolio Minister, it will be circulated by Cabinet Office through the eCabinet system to relevant departments for formal comment.
- 8.4.2 DPAC and DTF will prepare Cabinet advisories in consultation with departments as required.
- 8.4.3 Comments will be collated by Cabinet Office and provided to Cabinet as part of the final submission.

8.5 Cabinet Advisories

- 8.5.1 Once a Cabinet submission is drafted and approved by the portfolio Minister and lodged with Cabinet Office, it will be circulated by Cabinet Office through the eCabinet system to DPAC and DTF for formal advisories.
- 8.5.2 Advisories provide advice from the whole-of-government perspective and may support the recommendations or provide additional analysis and alternative recommendations.
- 8.5.3 DPAC and DTF may consult with departments when drafting their advice on a Cabinet submission.
- 8.5.4 All advisories are made available to each member of Cabinet with the original Cabinet submission.
- 8.5.5 Where a submission that is classified as 'OFFICIAL: Sensitive//TAS CABINET//EXCLUSIVE FOR' is circulated to a ministerial office or agency, the submission is subject to limited distribution and must be accessed by the designated Minister or addressee only.

8.6 Consultation specific to Board Appointments, including the Women on Boards Strategy

- 8.6.1 Consultation is required for briefings on appointments to government boards, authorities and committees (board appointments) if:
 - i. The body is established by legislation and there is a requirement to consult with specified bodies concerning nominations for appointment; or
 - ii. There is a gender imbalance in the proposed membership of the board, authority, or committee.
- 8.6.2 Nominees for appointment should be consulted to ensure that they have no business or personal interest, real or perceived, which might conflict with the interest of the board, authority, or committee.

- 8.6.3 The Tasmanian Government is committed to gender equity in the membership of government boards and committees. The Gender Equity Guidelines and the certification form template are on the [DPAC website](#).
- 8.6.4 Departments must consult with the Tasmanian Women's Register at an early stage of the process of seeking nominations for appointment. DPAC maintains the register to assist departments identify suitably skilled and/or qualified women candidates for appointment.
- 8.6.5 All board appointments must include a completed [Tasmanian Women's Register appointment certification form](#).
- 8.6.6 Cabinet Office will not accept a Cabinet briefing for board appointments unless the briefing includes a completed and signed certification form, or the Premier has approved an exemption for the specific appointment.
- 8.6.7 When a vacancy is to be filled by the nomination of a non-government organisation, the responsible department must ensure that the organisation is informed of government's commitment to gender equity and should request appropriate consideration is given to the representation of women when nominating for appointment. Organisations may be referred to DPAC for assistance in locating suitable candidates.

9 Format Requirements for Cabinet Minutes and Briefings

- 9.1.1 The format of the Cabinet minute and briefing templates must not be changed in any way.
- 9.1.2 Section headings in the templates are considered the essential areas on which Cabinet wishes to focus. The abbreviation N/A may be used if the item is not applicable.
- 9.1.3 The font used for minutes and briefings should be Arial, font size 12 pt.
- 9.1.4 The page number must be shown at the top of each page of the submission, beginning with page 2 on the first page following the front cover sheet.
- 9.1.5 Attachment pages should be numbered separately in a way that does not cause confusion with the page numbering of the body of the minute (e.g., pages A1, A2, A3 etc).
- 9.1.6 Each paragraph should be numbered, using a hierarchical system, as applied in this handbook (e.g., Purpose 1.1, 1.2). Sub-paragraphs may be tagged separately (e.g., 1.1.1, 1.1.2).
- 9.1.7 Tables and schedules should be numbered Table 1, Table 2, etc, throughout a submission. Each table and schedule must have a title describing its contents.
- 9.1.8 Acronyms should be spelt out in full the first time they appear, e.g., World Heritage Area (WHA).

10 Cabinet Decisions

- 10.1.1 Cabinet decisions are recorded by the Cabinet Secretary during each Cabinet meeting. A copy of each decision is signed by the Cabinet Secretary and the Premier.
- 10.1.2 Cabinet Office will assign a copy of the signed decision through the eCabinet system to the relevant portfolio Minister(s), initiating department, and other ministers/departments responsible for implementing, or that are affected by, the decision.
- 10.1.3 The Minister and the relevant portfolio agency are responsible for informing and liaising with other agencies to implement the decision. Decisions relating to legislation are also distributed to the Chief Parliamentary Counsel through the eCabinet system.
- 10.1.4 All decisions will be provided electronically to the Secretary, Department of Treasury and Finance and the Deputy Secretary, Policy and Delivery Division, Department of Premier and Cabinet.
- 10.1.5 'For information only' copies of decisions (sent to departments affected by a decision but have no responsibility to action) are classified as short-term value records for the purposes of the *Archives Act 1983* and may be securely destroyed at the discretion of the receiving department. See section 2.5 for information about secure disposal of Cabinet documents.
- 10.1.6 Cabinet decisions must not be printed or copied, and must be kept in a secure system and not with general departmental files. Where it is necessary to provide information relating to the decision to department officers, appropriate approvals must be given by departments Heads of Agency (or as delegated otherwise).

- 10.1.7 When a Cabinet decision is accessed by an AEC to download it, a watermark will be applied to the digital document detailing the individual's first and last name, email address, date and time. The watermark containing the details of the AEC will be present on any digitally saved or printed copies originating from this access. See section 2.4 for information about [security of Cabinet documents](#).
- 10.1.8 Where a submission is classified as 'OFFICIAL: Sensitive//TAS CABINET//EXCLUSIVE FOR', the decision is subject to limited distribution and must be accessed by the designated Minister or addressee only.

11 Cabinet Committees

11.1.1 Cabinet may establish committees for a range of purposes, with such membership and terms of reference as are considered necessary. Committees might be set up to:

- i. Deal with specific or especially sensitive issues;
- ii. Progress controversial developments where discussion in full Cabinet would be premature (e.g., projects);
- iii. Consider matters expected to arise requiring urgent decisions (e.g., industrial relations matters);
- iv. Deal with ongoing major issues or processes involving detailed decisions (e.g., the Budget); and
- v. Routine matters requiring the attention of Ministers (e.g., legislative program).

11.1.2 There are two forms of Cabinet committee:

- i. Standing committees which deal with long-term and cross-portfolio issues requiring detailed consideration and development prior to Cabinet approval of proposals. Some standing committees might deal with cyclic government decision-making processes (for example, Budget Committee) or meet on an ad-hoc basis to handle specific emerging issues.
- ii. Special purpose committees are established to make recommendations to Cabinet on particular issues or projects, usually within a limited timeframe.

11.2 Establishment of committees

- 11.2.1 Committees are established by Cabinet through a Cabinet Decision which defines the membership and terms of reference. In some cases, supporting arrangements, such as an IDC or departmental working group, support department, reporting arrangements and timeframes for the Committee's work are also set by Cabinet.
- 11.2.2 Unless otherwise specified, it is the responsibility of the Minister nominated to chair the committee to implement the Decision and convene meetings, with support from their portfolio department.

11.3 Operation of committees

- 11.3.1 Secretariat support for a committee is normally provided by the portfolio department of the Minister chairing. As part of the role of chair, the Minister would convene the meetings and set the agenda for each meeting.
- 11.3.2 The support department's role includes:
- i. Making arrangements (time, venue etc) for meetings and notifying Ministers;
 - ii. Liaising with the Minister's office and other departments about the meeting agenda and preparation of supporting materials;
 - iii. Collating and distributing papers for each meeting;
 - iv. Recording actions and decisions (as with Cabinet, the keeping of detailed minutes is not required or recommended); and
 - v. Coordinating action arising from decisions, as directed by the Minister.

- 11.3.3 Depending upon the arrangements specified in the establishing Cabinet Decision, an IDC chaired by the support department would normally be set up to assist in coordinating preparation for and follow-up from Committee meetings. Portfolio departments of all Ministers on the committee should be represented on the IDC.
- 11.3.4 Detailed meeting procedures are a matter for each Committee to determine, within the broad parameters of this handbook.

11.4 Committee papers

- 11.4.1 Although there is no one format specified for Committee papers, they should:
- i. Clearly identify the issue(s) to be resolved;
 - ii. Provide any background information needed to enable the Committee to make an informed decision;
 - iii. Present and argue the major options available; and
 - iv. Provide clear recommendations that can translate into stand-alone decisions.
- 11.4.2 An example template is provided on the DPAC website, which committees may choose to adopt.
- 11.4.3 Meeting papers should be finalised and distributed to Ministers by the supporting department at least five working days prior to the meeting date. A complete set of the meeting papers must be provided to the Cabinet Office via email or hard copy.

11.5 Cabinet committee decisions

- 11.5.1 The record of each Committee meeting must clearly identify all decisions taken. Each of these decisions should be clearly articulated, numbered and dated.

- 11.5.2 All decisions of committees are referred to Cabinet for endorsement. This should be undertaken in the form of a Cabinet briefing seeking endorsement for the set of decisions from a particular committee meeting or set of meetings, following approval of those decisions by the committee itself.
- 11.5.3 Cabinet may provide a limited delegation of authority to a committee to act in specific circumstances or in cases where a decision is required in a short timeframe. In such cases, the Committee should still report back to Cabinet as soon as practicable on the action taken.

11.6 Storage and disposal of committee papers

- 11.6.1 Committee papers should be accorded the same security procedures as used for Cabinet documents (See Section 2.5 for information about disposal of Cabinet documents).
- 11.6.2 Committee documents should be clearly identified as such.
- 11.6.3 The supporting department of a committee must provide a copy of all committee business papers to the Cabinet Office for the purpose of archiving. This would normally occur when decisions are forwarded to Cabinet for endorsement.

12 Other matters which come to Cabinet

12.1 Executive Council Explanatory Note

- 12.1.1 An Executive Council Explanatory Note is used to advise Cabinet of the purpose and substance of matters which require Executive Council approval but have not already been considered by Cabinet.
- 12.1.2 Explanatory Notes must be considered by Cabinet prior to consideration of the matter by the Executive Council. Explanatory Notes are usually considered at the Cabinet meeting held on the Monday prior to a scheduled Executive Council meeting.
- 12.1.3 An Explanatory Note is not required when Cabinet has already considered or agreed to a matter as a result of a Cabinet Submission.
- 12.1.4 An Explanatory Note must be signed by the relevant Minister before it is submitted to Cabinet Office.
- 12.1.5 Explanatory Notes should be submitted to Cabinet Office via email or hard copy by the close of business the Thursday prior to a Cabinet meeting.

12.2 Tasmanian Government Submissions to Inquiries and Reviews

- 12.2.1 DPAC's Policy and Delivery division coordinates a whole-of-government process for managing Tasmanian Government submissions to inquiries, reviews and other significant consultation processes.
- 12.2.2 Invitations to participate in these processes are received from various sources, including:
 - i. Parliamentary committees (both State and Federal);
 - ii. Royal Commissions and Commissions of Inquiry;
 - iii. Australian Government agencies; and
 - iv. non-government organisations.

- 12.2.3 Advice is provided to Cabinet on a weekly basis on the merits of preparing Tasmanian Government submissions to these inquiries and reviews. Submissions are only prepared if they offer strategic value to the Tasmanian Government or if they help to reduce significant risks to Tasmania.
- 12.2.4 The Tasmanian Government Submissions to Inquiries and Reviews Policy sets out the policy, procedures and approval process for Tasmanian Government submissions to inquiries and reviews, and provides departments with a framework for assessing whether or not a submission should be made. The Policy is available on the [DPAC website](#).