



## Steering Group meeting: 9 August 2023

<b>When</b>	Wednesday 9 August 2023, 0930-1130
<b>Where</b>	Virtual
<b>Who</b>	Steve Batstone, Shay Brazier, John Campbell, Mark Herring, Terry Paddy, Matt Smith, Evie Trolove Secretariat: Craig Evans
<b>Apologies</b>	Fiona Wiseman

### Session notes

#### Item 1: Welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

The Steering Group (SG) confirmed the agenda and noted apologies.

#### Item 2: Procedural matters

The SG discussed five procedural matters.

1. Commerce Act requirements regarding anti-competitive conduct
2. Policies and Procedures
3. Banking
4. Annual subscriptions and requests to reduce/waive the amount
5. Monthly meeting schedule.

#### Commerce Act requirements

The SG noted their obligations under the Commerce Act relating to anti-competitive conduct and the protocols being used for the SG and other FlexForum meetings to prevent anti-competitive conduct, specifically to maximise transparency by preparing meeting agendas and keeping a written record of discussions/decisions.

The SG requested a standard statement be included in all subsequent meeting materials reminding participants of their obligations under the Commerce Act.

The SG noted processes will be needed to support transparency of FF activities and discussions.

The SG requested a communications management plan which describes how/when/who gets information. A preference was expressed for content to be available to Members (and publicly) by default.

## Policies and Procedures

The SG approved:

1. the Annual subscription policy, with some minor amendments
2. the Process for identifying and managing conflicts of interest of Steering Group members policy

The SG discussed the thresholds for the amounts for annual subscriptions:

- the threshold for the \$1500 a year category (\$5 million annual turnover) could exclude small firms high costs of goods sold
- other thresholds, eg, employees or profit, have similar practical challenges
- the policy gave the SG flexibility to use its discretion to reduce or waive the subscription for individual firms
- the policy can be amended if systemic issue causing unmanageable unintended consequences.

The SG noted the Annual subscription policy does not and was not intended to describe a policy or procedure for applying for or approving Membership policy. Until a policy is developed, the arrangements set out in the constitution apply (refer section 4).

The SG discussed whether the subscription levels would ensure sufficient funds are available to support operation of the FF.

- amounts reflect willingness/ability to pay
- the SG can ask Members to contribute additional funds.

The SG agreed amendments to the clauses setting out how the process for Members and prospective Members to request a reduction or waiver to the annual subscription to confirm that the SG has complete discretion to agree/not agree to a reduction/waiver, and to clarify the matters the SG will consider in making decisions.

## Banking

The SG approved:

- setting up a bank account
- two signatories for the account initially

The SG requested a discussion of financial matters soon to consider arrangements for accounting services, insurances and other financial policies.

The SG requested a discussion of risk and liability for the FF and the SG in the coming months to support consideration of insurances.

## Annual subscriptions

The SG discussed the process for requesting payment of annual subscriptions and for parties to request a reduction/waiver of the annual subscription.

- parties requesting the annual subscription be reduced/waived should describe any in-kind support being offered, and how this is additional to what they would contribute anyway as a Member
- Members will have differing interests in flexibility, eg, commercially interested versus research

- consider monitoring of what has been offered versus what has been received through the year

The SG noted everyone who has committed to joining the FF and to paying the relevant subscription amount would be asked in writing (ie, invoiced) that they pay the subscription for 2023-24 once a bank account is established.

The SG requested the four parties which have requested a reduced/waived annual subscriptions be requested to make a request according to the annual subscription policy.

### Monthly meeting schedule

The SG agreed to hold SG meetings on the first Thursday of each month from 0930 to 1130.

The SG discussed options for meetings of the wider membership.

- bi-monthly, perhaps 3 x 1-hour sessions on specific topics.

### 3 Steering Group – what is our job and how do we do it

The SG discussed its role.

- noted the SG exists to perform procedural functions and should not try to take on too much
- agreed to arrange a face-to-face catchup to discuss SG operating processes and practices which support the objective and purpose of the FF
- agreed to ask people how they thought the FF could work (ie, roles and responsibilities) at the upcoming Workplan workshop, including presenting options for various scenarios, eg, how a workstream is established, how a project is started, how a FF submission is developed/agreed
- noted the [RAPID framework](#) (or similar) is useful for decision-making with lots of interested parties.

### 4 Budget and resources

The SG discussed budget and resources.

- MBIE has advised circumstances mean it cannot currently provide direct co-funding
- MBIE continues to see the vital importance of the FF initiative, ie, it is doing work that is vital to transition, and will continue to support the FF
- other government-related funding options are available.

The SG discussed options, noting that based on committed funds, and an updated indicative resource plan, the FF can operate at current levels of about 6 months.

The SG requested a plan be developed which recognises the circumstances and enables the FF to achieve its objective and purpose, noting the Chair is exploring other government-related funding sources and will approach others about participating.

The circumstances and next steps should be communicated to Members as soon as possible.

The SG noted the discussion of financial matters would include contractual arrangements with the chair and other contractors supporting FF operation.

### 5 Workplan Workshop – approach and structure

The SG agreed that arrangements for the Workplan Workshop scheduled for 24 August would be finalised based on the proposed structure and approach.

## 6 Engagement update

The SG noted the engagement updated.

## 7 Workplan update

The SG agreed to publish the FF Insights: Agile regulatory change is needed to enable flexibility and accelerate electrification (working title)

- ask Members to give any final comments

The SG noted a process is needed for finalising and publishing FF materials like the FF Insights.

Finish 1141.