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## **Australian Government**

**Department of Climate Change, Energy,  
the Environment and Water**  
Australian Antarctic Division

## **Australian Antarctic Division Place Names Committee Terms of Reference**

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### **Purpose**

The Australian Antarctic Division (AAD) Place Names Committee is established to consider and recommend to the AAD's Head of Division new or revised names for geographical features in the Australian Antarctic Territory (AAT) and the Territory of Heard Island and McDonald Islands (HIMI) and provide associated advice on these matters, in advancement of Australia's national Antarctic interests.

### **Role and Function**

The Committee will undertake the following activities:

- Consider proposals for new names, or proposals for changes in names, with accompanying narratives, for geographical features in the AAT and at HIMI in accordance with the Australian Antarctic Place Names Policy.
- Consider proposals for new names, or proposals for changes in names for undersea geographical features in waters south of 60 degrees South and at HIMI, to then be referred for consideration to the Australian Hydrographic Office.
- Consider geographic and historic details of approved names for publications, such as maps, charts, databases and scientific reports.
- Recommend new and/or revised names, with accompanying narratives, for approval by the AAD's Head of Division, via endorsement from the Division Management Committee (DMC).

### **Membership**

The AAD Place Names Committee will consist of:

- Chair, from the Policy and Strategy Branch
- A mapping and place names expert from the Australian Antarctic Data Centre (AADC)
- The AAD Librarian
- An officer of Geoscience Australia with relevant expertise to support the work of the Committee
- Up to 3 other members from across the AAD to be appointed by the Chair of the Committee.

Membership will be for a term of 3 years, with the option of extending for one additional term.

- If a member vacates their position before the end of their term, where their position is specified, the new incumbent will replace that member. Where a member has been appointed by the Chair, the Chair will appoint someone in their place.

## Responsibilities

The Chair is responsible for:

- Convening meetings of the Committee
- Ensuring that materials for consideration are circulated at least one week in advance of meetings, in collaboration with the Secretariat
- Ensuring that the recommendations of the Committee are forwarded to the AAD Head of Division for approval, via the DMC.

Members, including the Chair, are responsible for:

- Declaring any actual or perceived conflicts of interest
- Reviewing new or revised name proposals and supporting information ahead of proposed meetings of the Committee, allowing adequate time to ask questions and/or seek clarifications before proposals are considered
- Attending and actively participating in meetings
- Applying good analytical skills, objectivity and judgment; and expressing opinions frankly and respectfully
- Helping to communicate and promote the Committee's purpose and outcomes to the AAD more broadly.

The Secretariat is responsible for:

- Receiving all proposals submitted, and support any actions required by the AADC or AAD Librarian
- Scheduling meetings
- Circulating meeting papers to the Committee at least one week in advance of meetings
- Preparing minutes and tracking actions
- Preparing submissions seeking the approval of the AAD Head of Division for approval, via the DMC
- Updating the Australian Antarctic Gazetteer with the approved entries, on approval of new or revised names by the Head of Division
- Forwarding approved place names and associated information to the SCAR Composite Gazetteer of Antarctica for inclusion.

AADC staff are responsible for:

- Advising on technical aspects of a proposed name, such as its location and how accurately this is known, its status in the Australian Antarctic Gazetteer and other gazetteers, its compliance with relevant naming conventions and guidelines, and its suitability for the feature being named
- Supplying reference maps for meetings
- Consulting, as necessary, in regard to place names of geographical features in the AAT with the equivalent committees of other Parties to the Antarctic Treaty
- Consult, as necessary, with other Australian nomenclature boards or organisations
- Enacting new place names including adding to the SCAR Composite Gazetteer of Antarctica and advising other relevant authorities.

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The AAD Librarian is responsible for:

- Historical research, including on a person where a feature is proposed to be named after that person
- Consulting with the People and Culture Branch and other branches as appropriate, on proposals to name features after ex-AAD staff or expeditioners to ensure relevant due diligence checks (e.g. deployment/background/police) are conducted.

### Secretariat

The AAD Place Names Officer will provide Secretariat support for the Committee. The Secretariat of the Committee does not have a vote in Committee proceedings.

### Meetings

The AAD Place Names Committee will ordinarily meet once a year, with additional meetings scheduled as required.

### Conduct of Business

The Committee's deliberations are confidential, and all meeting papers and minutes are classified as Official: Sensitive. These documents will be maintained in the AAD's Records Management System by the Secretariat in consultation with the AADC, and shall only be accessible to the current Committee Members, the Secretariat, and the AAD Branch Heads and Head of Division.

Documents may be distributed to other Australian Government personnel with the agreement of the Chair.

The Committee will make decisions as follows:

- Four members shall constitute a quorum.
- Decisions will be made by majority.
- In the event of an equal number of Members supporting or opposing a proposal, the Chair will have a casting vote.
- In situations when a Member has submitted a place name proposal, that Member will not be counted in a vote on that proposal.
- The Chair may co-opt any person who may contribute to the Committee's deliberations to attend any meeting. A co-optee will not have a vote.

### Reporting

- Following each meeting, the Chair will provide the Committee's recommendations to the DMC for endorsement, and then to the AAD's Head of Division for approval.
- If approved, the Secretariat will action all publication and Gazetteer updates in accordance with its responsibilities.
- Decisions will also be communicated on the AAP website for broader visibility with the Australian public.

### Review

- The AAD Place Names Committee, led by the Chair, will undertake an evaluation process to review its performance and Terms of Reference every three years.
- Such reviews may include external oversight as appropriate.
- The Secretariat is responsible for scheduling these formal reviews.

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<b>Document control</b>		
<b>Date</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Action</b>
<i>23 March 2026</i>	<i>Draft</i>	<i>Provided to P&amp;S and Science branch heads for approval for submission to DMC.</i>
<i>8 April 2026</i>	<i>Final draft for DMC</i>	<i>Submitted to DMC for approval</i>
<i>21 April 2026</i>	<i>Approved by DMC</i>	<i>Minor changes made to reflect DMC deliberations</i>