

# ADDENDUM

## TO CABINET HANDBOOK

### NATIONAL CABINET

The Addendum sets out the secure and confidential handling requirements for documents associated with National Cabinet.

#### 11.1 BACKGROUND

11.1.1 The National Cabinet was established by the Council of Australian Governments 48th Meeting to deal with the national response to the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) to ensure a coordinated response across the country to the many issues that relate to the management of COVID-19.

11.1.2 The National Cabinet comprises the Prime Minister of Australia, and all the Premiers and Chief Ministers of states and territories.

11.1.3 Each state and territory that is represented on the National Cabinet is completely sovereign and autonomous. However, states and territories have agreed to work together and be unified and to be as consistent and coordinated as possible in our national response.

11.1.4 The National Cabinet meets as required and generally at least once a week.

11.1.5 The National Coordinating Mechanism (NCM) and the Australian Health Protection Principals Committee (AHPPC) are subcommittees of the National Cabinet.

11.1.6 The NCM comprises senior officials of Australian, states and territories governments. The NCM will coordinate the whole-of-government responses to issues outside the direct health management of COVID-19. Topic-specific NCMs are also convened as necessary.

11.1.7 The principal advising body to the National Cabinet is the AHPPC, which comprises senior medical officers of states and territories. The medical advice of the AHPPC is the basis for the protocols, the guidelines and the decisions made by the Prime Minister, Premiers and Chief Ministers, together with their respective Cabinets.

## 11.2 TASMANIAN MEMBERSHIP

11.2.1 The Premier is Tasmania's representative on the National Cabinet. The Premier may delegate another Minister to represent Tasmania on the National Cabinet as needed.

11.2.2 In representing Tasmania on the National Cabinet, the Premier (or delegate Minister) will be supported by the Secretary, Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPAC).

11.2.3 The Secretary, DPAC may delegate the Deputy Secretary, Policy and Intergovernmental Relations (DSPIR) or another Deputy Secretary within DPAC to support the Premier for the National Cabinet, as needed.

11.2.4 The DSPIR is Tasmania's representative on NCMs. The DSPIR can delegate this responsibility to another appropriate Senior Executive Service officer, as needed. Senior officials from other agencies will be invited to participate in NCMs as required.

11.2.5 The Director of Public Health is Tasmania's representative on AHPPC. The Director of Public Health can delegate their responsibility to another member of Public Health, as needed.

## 11.3 CONFIDENTIALITY AND SECURITY

11.3.1 The National Cabinet is constituted as a Cabinet Office Policy Committee, as provided for in the ['Australian Government Cabinet Handbook \(13th Edition\)'](#). The principles and procedures for the security and handling of Cabinet documents, as set out in that Cabinet Handbook and the Australian Government's [Protective Security Policy Framework](#) apply.

11.3.2 To this end all proceedings and documentation associated with the National Cabinet are to be treated as 'CABINET-IN-CONFIDENCE' as if they were proceedings and documentation of the Cabinet of the Government of Tasmania. The restrictions on confidentiality and the handling, storage and security of documents described in the Tasmanian Cabinet Handbook apply to papers associated with the proceedings of the National Cabinet.

## 11.4 NATIONAL CABINET PAPERS


11.4.1 To facilitate access to National Cabinet papers, the Australian Government has created two protected Citrix accounts for each state and territory that can be used to access the papers. Essentially this provides an online Outlook email account for two nominated users for each state and territory that will allow them to print or securely share the documents circulated for the National Cabinet.

11.4.2 To be allowed to access the system nominated users have to complete a National Cabinet Systems and Document Handling Agreement.

11.4.3 The nominated Tasmanian contacts for the National Cabinet papers are the DSPIR and the Director of Intergovernmental Relations in DPAC.

11.4.4 Within DPAC, National Cabinet papers may be shared electronically within the existing IT system used for the distribution of Cabinet documents.

11.4.5 National Cabinet papers are allowed to be shared physically or electronically by secure means, approved by either the Secretary or the DSPIR, with relevant Heads of Agencies to provide advice on matters being considered by the National Cabinet.



11.4.6 Heads of Agencies are allowed to share National Cabinet papers or selected information from those papers further within their agencies on a strict need-to-know basis for the purpose of providing advice to the Premier, Ministers and DPAC support officers. The sharing of papers or information is to be consistent with the existing provisions in the Cabinet Handbook concerning the storage and distribution of hard copy and electronic documents, including drafts or working documents.

11.4.7 DPAC's Cabinet and Executive Council Office can share National Cabinet papers and related documents, such as advice, with relevant Ministers consistent with the existing provisions in the Cabinet Handbook.

11.4.8 DPAC will maintain a complete database of National Cabinet papers within the existing IT system used for the storage of Cabinet documents. National Cabinet papers shared with agencies are treated as 'for information' copies of Cabinet documents and are to be destroyed after their use in accordance with Cabinet and Executive Council Office instructions and Disposal Authorisation 2158 for short-term value records.

11.4.9 Documents generated for National Cabinet purposes are Commonwealth records, however, the papers received by Tasmania as part of the National Cabinet process also fall within the State's Cabinet processes and are to be considered and treated as any other document for our Cabinet.

## **11.5 NATIONAL CABINET DECISIONS**

11.5.1 The Premier, or delegate Minister, is authorised to take decisions on behalf of the Government of Tasmania in relation to matters considered by the National Cabinet, and amend this Addendum, as required.

11.5.2 Decisions made by the National Cabinet at a meeting are recorded by the Australian Government and Tasmania will be provided with that information through the National Cabinet process.

