



Stakeholder Engagement Council - Terms of Reference

1. Background and context

After further consolidation of Crown cemetery operators in June 2021, Catholic Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust (CMCT) is now one of three major remaining cemetery operators in greater Sydney made up of one private operator, (InvoCare), and two Crown operators, (CMCT and One-Crown).

Given the impending burial shortage faced by One-Crown, CMCT will play a bigger role in providing interment services for greater Sydney. This will mean that we will be taking on the responsibility of providing burial services for a greater and a more diverse population base.

To this end, it is important that we continue to provide burial and cremation products and services which will be sustainable, accessible, affordable, and meet the cultural and religious requirements of our clients.

To date, our success in delivering tailored interment service solutions for the communities we serve, has been based on a continued open dialogue with these communities, where exchange of information and ideas have ultimately informed the design of our products, services and our business processes.

CMCT recognises, that community and consumer representation and close partnerships with faith, cultural and other community groups, will be even more important as we look forward to the challenge of serving a larger community base, and ensure that we deliver tailor made products and services to meet the burial and cremation service requirements of the many communities which we will be serving.

2. Purpose

Our vision, and mission, is to provide sacred, affordable, and accessible burial and cremation options, to all cultural and religious communities that we serve. In addition, our objective is to ensure that the burial and cremation options we provide will be sensitive to the religious and cultural requirements of these communities.

The Board recognises that community, faith and consumer representatives are key partners and are crucial to our ability to deliver on this vision.

The Board has determined to convene a Stakeholder Engagement Council (SEC) made up of members who will represent the cultural, religious, and social diversity of the greater Sydney population we serve. The SEC will meet for exchange of ideas to help CMCT deliver the best possible interment services for the community of Greater Sydney.

3. Objective

The SEC is appointed in an advisory capacity to ensure that the diverse views of all our communities and consumers are considered in terms of development of products, services, and policies.

The decision-making process of SEC will have a macro community perspective with a focus on the best outcome for the wider community.

The objectives of SEC meeting outcomes will be to ensure:

- The preservation of the right of all individuals to a dignified interment
- Interment practices and beliefs of all religious and cultural groups are respected
- That one group is not advantaged over other groups
- The range of products and services meet the cultural and religious interment requirements of the communities we serve
- The quality of products and services meet community expectations
- Affordable and accessible interment practices are available for all, particularly for those of limited means.

4. Functions and Scope

The SEC will be an official channel for CMCT Executive and Board to engage with community representatives. To ensure the SEC achieves its objectives (mentioned above) the scope of the SEC will include:

- Exchange of ideas and information between community representatives and CMCT to promote mutual understanding of key issues.
- Providing SEC members an understanding of policy, legal and operational restrictions which need to be considered in final decision making processes.
- Provide information on new and emerging issues in the community to identify systemic issues and opportunities at a policy level.
- To provide feedback and alternative viewpoints from a community perspective on CMCT initiatives and to help inform CMCT decisions on a range of service, product and policy matters, respecting the cultural and religious requirements of all faiths.
- Providing an opportunity for representatives to provide feedback on proposed solutions and implementation of the CMCT Strategic Plan.
- Facilitate active participation by community representatives in specific areas where there is a need for the community, CMCT and government to work together to deliver successful outcomes.

5. Structure

The SEC is a non-statutory, independent council that provides advice to CMCT.

The advice is non-binding on CMCT executive or CMCT Board.

SEC membership will be drawn from faith, cultural or consumer groups, to represent the religious, cultural, and social diversity of the greater Sydney population which we serve.

6. Membership, Appointments and Terms

The appointment of SEC members will be made through a selection process.

The selection will be made by an Appointments Panel made of the SEC Chair and two members of the CMCT Executive team.

The Chair of SEC will be appointed by CMCT CEO and Head of Client Services & Operations.

The SEC may have up to 10 members including the Chair and two other CMCT representatives.

If considered necessary, CMCT may nominate and appoint additional members with relevant expertise.

Appointments will be for a period of up to three years with staggered terms.

The Appointments Panel may extend the appointment of any SEC member by up to two years.

There is no limit to number of times a member's term may be extended.

The selection criteria of SEC members will be skills and experience based and may include:

- Membership (past or present) of boards, organisations or committees
- Community involvement
- Knowledge of or active participation in community or faith group activities
- Aptitude for strategic and macro level decision making

SEC members will be expected to uphold the values of honesty and integrity and commit to the highest standards of governance and probity.

7. Meetings

The SEC will meet quarterly. Additional meetings may be held as required.

The venue for the meetings will be at CMCT head office (currently located at Sydney Olympic Park). With the approval of the Chair, the meeting venue may be changed by SEC as required.

A quorum for the SEC meetings will be formed if 50% or more of members are present.

The function of the SEC is not affected if the numbers fall below 50% for a period of less than six months, or if there is a vacancy in the position of Chair.

In the absence of the appointed Chair in a meeting, CMCT will appoint a Chair for the meeting.

CMCT will provide secretariat support for the SEC meetings for recording of actions and recommendations of the meetings.

Notice of each meeting, confirming the venue, time and date together with an agenda and supporting documents, will be forwarded to each SEC member no later than five working days before the date of the meeting.

The Chair or SEC may invite industry or other subject matter experts to attend all, or part of meetings based on the subject matter under consideration.

The SEC will collaborate with the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) and will report back to the CMCT Board on progress through CAC meeting minutes, which may include detailed reports with recommendations for Board consideration – See Appendix 1 for CAC explanation and SEC reporting structure.

8. Duties and Responsibility of SEC members

There are a number of duties and responsibilities which need to be fulfilled by SEC members to ensure the smooth and efficient operation of the SEC which include:

- prepare for meetings and be well informed on issues before the Council and seek additional information if required
- Contribute to meetings and work collaboratively to develop recommended options and solutions
- Provide community related information relevant to SEC meetings in a timely manner
- Where possible provide reasonable notice for proposed matters for discussion
- Ensure that the interest of the wider community is at the forefront of all discussions and decisions
- Declare all conflicts of interest
- Ensuring all discussions at SEC meetings are kept confidential unless approved for public knowledge by the CMCT Board
- Act as ambassadors for CMCT

9. Conduct and Disclosure of Interests

Each member will ensure that they will not make decisions or take actions which will place his or her interest ahead of CMCT and the purpose and objectives of the SEC.

Each member of the SEC will be required to disclose their interest and declare their conflict of

interest before the topic relating to the conflict of interest is discussed and may not be entitled to vote on that topic. The Chair will have the final ruling on whether or not a member is entitled to vote.

10. Remuneration

SEC members serve on a volunteer basis and as such are not remunerated as members of the SEC. However, all members will be reimbursed for reasonable travel related expenses to attend meetings.

Despite the fact that SEC member are not financially remunerated, there are a number of non-financial benefits associated with becoming an SEC member including:

- Influence and guide the decisions which will shape CMCT's decisions in the development of products, services and policies for provision of interment services for the population of Greater Sydney
- Engage in strategic dialogue and in robust discussions that will help shape the organisation in the future and assist the organisation in responding to changes of trends and community expectations
- Complement to the effectiveness of the CMCT Board as it works to fulfil its Mission and Vision
- Work with peers and experience valuable networking opportunities
- Sharpen leadership skills and gain valuable experience with the goal to fill board positions that become available

11. Resignation or Termination

A member can resign from SEC via written notice to the Chair. Given the volunteer nature of the membership there is no minimum notice period.

The Chair may also terminate the appointment of an SEC member in accordance with their appointment conditions which will contain confidentiality provisions.

The SEC can make the decision to replace a vacant position resulting from a resignation or termination.

12. Review

The SEC Terms of Reference may be amended, modified, or varied after consultation with SEC members and upon approval by CMCT Board.

Appendix 1

The Community Advisory Committee is a statutory requirement under Section 103 of the *Cemeteries and Crematoria Act NSW 2013*, and is a subcommittee of the CMCT Board.

SEC Reporting structure

