

**Chief Minister's Department  
Terms of Reference for Expert Reference Panel  
Water Purification Facility**

**Background:**

The proposed *Water2WATER* project involves purification of water released from the Lower Molonglo Water Quality Control Centre to at least the standard of our existing drinking water. It is proposed that the purified water would be pumped to the Cotter River catchment, pass through a wetland, mix with the waters in the Cotter River and be stored within Cotter reservoir. Water from the Cotter reservoir including the added purified water would be pumped to Mount Stromlo Water Treatment Plant for treatment and distribution.

The ACT Government has commissioned ACTEW to undertake and report on a community consultation process seeking community views on the proposal.

**Purpose:**

The Chief Minister is establishing an independent Panel of Experts to report on and provide advice on the suitability of the proposed water production facility from health perspectives.

**Panel of Experts Scope of works:**

The initial work by the panel will be to produce an information paper on the health issues related to the proposed project, to facilitate community understanding and inform public discussion.

The Panel will review, analyse and report on;

- The capability of the combination of proposed treatment systems to remove all contaminants to the levels specified in the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines;
- Any residual health risks that may exist from using the purified water for drinking and ways of removing any such risks; and
- Community views of the proposal.

The Panel will also be required to:

- Identify any additional work necessary to complete the assessment and improve the feasibility of the project;
- Provide expert opinion on key issues and progress in addressing those issues;
- Advise on procedures to manage risks arising from any potential non-compliance with water purification procedures;
- Examine the scope of the proposal in the context of other state and international purified drinking water initiatives; and
- Report on the outcomes from the community consultation program.

**Panel Expertise:**

The Panel is to consist of experts of international standing in the following fields:

- Toxicology;
- Microbiology and water-related epidemiology;
- Public Health; and
- Community Information.

**Timeframe/workload:**

It is anticipated that the Panel will complete the investigation and report within three months. ACTEW will provide administration support to the Panel, and a Government representative will participate in Expert Panel meetings as an observer to bring issues requiring action back to the Working Group.