

Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Independent Member – based in Edward
River local government area

INFORMATION KIT

Closing 5pm 6 January 2025

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Overview

Edward River Council (Council) is seeking an experienced and qualified individual to join its Audit, Risk, and Improvement Committee (Committee). The individual must be based in the Edward River local government area.

This important governance role will support Council in achieving high standards of accountability, transparency, and operational improvement.

Expression of Interest

Council invites suitably qualified individuals to provide an Expression of Interest by submitting:

1. a covering letter addressing the selection criteria
2. a current resume (including the names and contact details for two referees who can support your Expression of Interest).

Please submit your expression of interest to Council at council@edwardriver.nsw.gov.au marked to the attention of the Manager Governance, Safety and Risk by 5pm 6 January 2025.

About the Committee

The Committee provides independent assurance, oversight and assistance to Edward River Council by keeping the following Council functions under review:

- a. Compliance
- b. internal and external audit
- c. risk management
- d. fraud control
- e. financial management
- f. governance
- g. implementation of the strategic plan, delivery program and strategies
- h. service reviews
- i. collection of performance measurement data by the council
- j. any other matters prescribed by the regulations.

The Committee also provides information to Council for the purpose of improving the performance of Council's functions.

Committee Membership

The Committee membership comprises:

- four independent members, one of whom is the Chairperson (voting), and
- one councillor member (non-voting).

Appointment of Committee Members

Independent members may be appointed by Council for a term of up to four years.

Members are eligible for extension or re-appointment following a formal review of their performance up to a maximum term of eight years.

All appointments are to be made based upon a demonstrated ability to meet the selection criteria and ARIC skills matrix.

Independent members are appointed by a resolution of Council.

Key Responsibilities

As a committee member, you will:

- Assist in the oversight of Council's audit activities, including financial and performance audits.
- Provide advice on risk management practices, compliance, and internal controls.
- Contribute to strategic discussions to enhance Council's efficiency and effectiveness.
- Review and advise on key initiatives, policies, and procedures to improve Council performance.
- Ensure that Council's operations align with ethical, legal, and regulatory requirements.

Selection Criteria

The following general criteria will be considered in relation to skills and experience when assessing applications:

- Relevant professional qualifications,
- Relevant professional knowledge and expertise,
- Understanding of / experience in local government,
- Understanding of / experience in the role of corporate governance, and
- Current / prior experience on similar committees.

Candidates will be assessed against the independence and essential eligibility criteria (Criteria 1 and 2, respectively, below) provided in the Office of Local Government's Guidelines for Risk Management and Internal Audit for Local Government in NSW (the Guidelines).

The successful candidate must also demonstrate residency and a connection with the Edward River local government area (Criteria 3, below).

1. Independence Criteria

Independent voting members of the ARIC must be independent to ensure they have no real or perceived bias or conflicts of interest that may interfere with their ability to act independently and can provide Council with robust, objective and unbiased advice about how Council is functioning.

Applicants must not:

- currently be a councillor of any NSW council
- be a non-voting representative of the board of the joint organisation
- be a candidate at the last election of the council
- be a person who has held office in the council during its previous term
- be currently employed by the council or joint organisation, or been employed during the last 12 months
- conduct audits of the council on behalf of the Audit Office of NSW
- have a close personal or business relationship with a councillor or a person who has a senior role in the council that may lead to a real or perceived conflict of interest
- currently, or within the last three years, provided any material goods or services (including consultancy, legal, internal audit and advisory services) to the council which directly affect subjects or issues considered by the ARIC
- be (or have a close family member who is) a substantial shareholder, owner, officer or employee of a company that has a material business, contractual relationship, direct financial interest or material indirect financial interest with the council or a related entity which could be considered a real or perceived conflict of interest, or
- currently or have previously acted as an advocate of a material interest on behalf of the council or a related entity which could be considered a real or perceived conflict of interest.

2. Essential Criteria

Independent members of the ARIC must demonstrate the following:

- an ability to read and understand financial statements
- a capacity to understand the ethical requirements of government (including potential conflicts of interest)
- functional knowledge in areas such as risk management, performance management, human resources management, internal and external auditing, financial reporting, accounting, management control frameworks, internal financial controls, governance (including planning, reporting and oversight), or business operations
- a capacity to form independent judgements and willingness to constructively challenge/question management practices and information
- a professional, ethical approach to the exercise of their duties
- the capacity to devote the necessary time and effort to the responsibilities of an independent member of an ARIC
- the preparedness to undertake any training on the operation of audit, risk and improvement committees recommended by the chairperson based on their assessment of the skills, knowledge, and experience of the independent member
- be a good communicator and build effective relationships with the council and other committee members, and
- have the personal courage to raise and deal with tough issues, express opinions frankly and respectfully, ask questions that go to the fundamental core of the issue and pursue independent lines of inquiry.

3. Based in the Edward River local government area

The locally based independent member must be able to demonstrate:

- ongoing (for duration of appointment) residency within the Edward River local government area
- an appreciation of the social, economic, and environmental priorities within the Edward River local government area and an understanding of how these factors impact council services, risk management, and operational improvement
- an ability to reflect community perspectives and insights to support Council's goals for accountability and improvement, and
- a proactive approach to understanding emerging issues and opportunities within the local government area and a commitment to contributing positively to Council's governance and continuous improvement goals.

4. Desirable criteria

Ideally, independent members of the ARIC should also meet the following criteria, but these are not essential:

- extensive senior level experience in governance and management of complex organisations, and
- possession of a relevant professional qualification or membership (e.g., Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA), CPA Australia (CPA) and Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand (CA)).

Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee Terms of Reference

The Committee operates in accordance with the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee Terms of Reference, which have been developed to align with the *Local Government Regulation 2021* and the Guidelines.

The Terms of Reference are available here:

www.edwardriver.nsw.gov.au/files/assets/public/v/1/intranet/aric/ecm_37983_v8_audit-risk-and-improvement-committee-terms-of-reference.pdf

Meetings

The Committee meets at least four times per year (quarterly), with each meeting typically lasting two to three hours.

Meetings take place at the Council 'Estates' Building, located at 180 Cressy Street, Deniliquin.

An additional meeting is scheduled to review the annual audited financial reports and, if needed, other time-sensitive reports.

Preparing for meetings involves reviewing and critically analysing the Committee business paper pack, as well as discussing it with other Committee members and relevant Council staff.

Remuneration

The ARIC Terms of Reference provide independent members with a remuneration of \$1,000 per meeting, plus GST, for 2024-25.

Where members are required to attend meetings or training in person, reasonable travel costs will be reimbursed based on Australian Tax Office rates, however given the meetings are able to be held virtually, it is expected that this would be an exception.

Induction and Training

Members must attend an induction, provided by the Chair of the ARIC and the Chief Executive Officer of Council, before their first committee meeting.

Members who are new to a local government Audit, Risk, and Improvement Committee must also complete specific training for the Audit, Risk, and Improvement Committee, funded by the Council.

Obligations and Constraints

Committee members must:

- Comply with Council's Code of Conduct.
- Complete an annual return of interests.
- Maintain confidentiality regarding all discussions and information obtained during meetings or in connection with their membership of ARIC.
- Adhere to Council's policies and procedures, including the Media and Social Media Policies.
- Declare all conflicts of interest, ensure they are recorded in the Meeting Minutes, and, if necessary, take appropriate action when a conflict is declared.

Selection process

The evaluation of applicants will be undertaken by a panel comprised of the Chair of the ARIC, the Chief Executive Officer of Council, and the Councillor Member of the ARIC.

The panel will be required to provide a declaration of no conflict of interest, or disclose if there are any, to ensure that the selection process is fair.

Pre-engagement screening

As part of the recruitment process, you must participate in pre-engagement screening, which may include:

- A National Criminal Background check
- Bankruptcy and insolvency checks
- Reference checks
- Qualification confirmation.

We will treat as confidential all information you provide in connection with your expression of interest submission.



Enquiries

For further information, please contact the Manager of Governance, Safety and Risk on 03 5898 3000 or by emailing council@edwardriver.nsw.gov.au.