

# Native Vegetation Council Service Standards

## Native Vegetation Council [Endorsed August 2021]

The Native Vegetation Council's (NVC) Service Standards define the approved standards for how the NVC governs its responsibilities under the *Native Vegetation Act 1991*, *Native Vegetation Regulations 2017* and *Native Vegetation (Credit for Environmental Benefits) Regulations 2015*.

The Standards set in place our commitment to service timelines when dealing with native vegetation matters and to be transparent in how all aspects of business is undertaken by the NVC and the Native Vegetation Branch.

The Standards will inform the Department and the public about timelines associated with a customer or stakeholder interface and focus on providing an efficient, fair and transparent service centered on customer needs, while monitoring performance measures of the Native Vegetation Council and how the Act is administered.

STANDARD	TARGET
NVC Agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>5 business days</b> – Circulate Agenda and papers to Members prior to meeting</li> </ul>
NVC Minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>5 business days</b> - Complete and circulate to Members (approval of minutes to occur at next meeting)</li> </ul>
Native Vegetation Assessment Panel (NVAP) Agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>5 business days</b> – Circulate to Members prior to meeting</li> </ul>
NVAP Minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>5 business days</b> – Complete and circulate to Members (approval of minutes to occur at next meeting)</li> </ul>
Payment of sitting fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>3-5 business days</b> – of meeting to process NVC or NVAP sitting fees</li> </ul>
Representation of external parties to NVC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>14 business days</b> – prior to NVC meeting, written briefing to be provided by an external party wishing to attend NVC to present. It is at the discretion of the Presiding Member as to agenda items from external parties.</li> </ul>
Initial contact with applicant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>3 business days</b> – contact applicant to acknowledge start of process once application assigned by the Native Vegetation Branch, Department for Environment and Water.</li> </ul>
Handling applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>80% of applications decided upon within 10 weeks</b> - except for applications requiring NVAP decision or where further information from an applicant is being sought</li> </ul>
Applicant contact about an existing application (assigned or unassigned)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>3-5 business days</b> – response to applicant</li> </ul>
Applicant is seeking to make a representation to NVAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>5 business days prior to NVAP</b> – provide applicant with notice of the date, time and venue of the NVAP meeting</li> </ul>
Corresponding with applicant regarding a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>7 business days</b> – Contact applicant about decision after minutes have been finalized</li> </ul>

clearance application where NVC/NVAP made a decision	
Corresponding with applicant regarding a clearance application where a decision under delegation has been made	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>5 business days</b> - Contact applicant about decision after delegate has signed</li> </ul>
Invoices for SEBs for payments into the fund (as a result of clearance)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>7-10 business days</b> – begin processing invoice to send to applicant after receiving the Understanding of Decision or Understanding of Regulation advice signed by the proponent</li> </ul>
Property Interest Reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>8 business days</b> - To respond to property agents on native vegetation interests</li> </ul>
Applications for Accreditation as a Third Party Provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>1 day</b> – acknowledgement of receipt of application</li> <li>• <b>2 months</b> – decision (depending on whether sufficient information has been provided and when NVAP is sitting)</li> </ul>
Applications for SEB Credit (site establishment or assignment of credit)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>1 day</b> – acknowledgement of receipt of application</li> <li>• <b>2 months</b> – decision (depending on whether sufficient information has been provided and when NVAP is sitting)</li> </ul>
Payments for SEB Grants or Biodiversity Credit Exchange	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Payment processed within 4 weeks</b> – as per individual payment schedule with landholder or organization, and processed within 4 weeks of receipt of satisfactory reporting</li> </ul>
Recruitment of new Accredited Consultants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Annual – bi-annual</b> - as demand for Accreditation permits</li> </ul>
Existing Accredited consultants have direct contact on regular basis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Annual – bi-annual</b> training events with other regular updates in between</li> <li>• <b>Readily available</b> - 1:1 advice</li> </ul>
Auditing and quality control of Accredited consultant data reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>1 warning issued</b> – sub-standard data reports (see data reporting criteria in the NVC Guide for Applications to Clear Native Vegetation)</li> <li>• <b>3 warnings issued</b> - Accreditation is revoked</li> </ul>
Correspondence sent direct to NVC email	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Daily</b> – Check NVC email, <b>immediately</b> respond with standard acknowledgement and forward to responsible person</li> <li>• <b>5 business days</b> - standard acknowledgement of receipt of an email outlining the query will be responded to within this timeframe</li> <li>• <b>Within 5 business days</b> – responsible person to respond</li> </ul>
Notifications (clearance for new fences, new vehicle tracks, natural resources management problems or plant and animal control)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>10 business days</b> - Review notification and respond</li> </ul>
Direct enquiry (via online form)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>5 business days</b> – responsible person to respond</li> </ul>
Applications for clearance received under Regulation or the Act	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>5 business days</b> – to assess the application to determine whether Level 4 or section 28 Act assessment</li> <li>• <b>Further 3 business days</b> once determined Level 4 or section 28 - upload to consultation web page <a href="https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/topics/native-vegetation/consultations">https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/topics/native-vegetation/consultations</a> once data report has been deemed satisfactory quality for public consultation</li> </ul>

<b>Public consultation period</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>28 calendar days</b> – within which NVAP will accept a submission from the public, in the required form, on a native vegetation clearance application</li> </ul>
<b>Invite submissions from key stakeholders</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Within 2 business days</b> of making the application available on the website - notify key stakeholders (including Landscape ex-NRM Boards) of the consultation period beginning</li> </ul>
<b>Submissions to clearance application consultation (via NVC email)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>1 business day</b> - acknowledge and provide information about FAQ and next steps -<a href="https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/topics/native-vegetation/consultation-hub/frequently-asked-questions#write-submission">https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/topics/native-vegetation/consultation-hub/frequently-asked-questions#write-submission</a></li> <li>• <b>1 business day</b> - to forward to responsible Assessment Officer for consideration in NVAP assessment process</li> </ul>
<b>Outcome of decision</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>2 weeks</b> – once decision made provide people who submitted comments on the application with notification of the outcome</li> </ul>
<b>Outcome of decision</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>2 weeks</b> – once decision made update the website with the outcome <a href="https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/topics/native-vegetation/consultations/consultation-outcomes">https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/topics/native-vegetation/consultations/consultation-outcomes</a></li> </ul>
<b>External representation to the NVC</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>As per request</b> – a member of the public or stakeholder can request to make a representation to the NVC on a matter dealt with under the Act</li> </ul>
<b>Dealing with complaints about process</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>As occurs</b> – record in DEW Complaints Register. To be recorded, a complaint must be deemed as reasonable and complainants are expected to interact with staff in an acceptable manner to have their complaint resolved</li> </ul>
<b>Intra- or inter-agency advice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>90%</b> - predetermined deadlines are met regarding providing comments or advice</li> </ul>
<b>Maintain regular contact with key stakeholders</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conservation groups</li> <li>• Industry bodies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Quarterly</b> contact</li> </ul>
<b>Prescribed process for consultation under section 25 of the Act Guidelines – NVC policy development (non-legislated) to adhere to same consultation standard</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>2 months</b> - public consultation, native vegetation webpage updates, engagement and communication with peak bodies under the Act</li> </ul>
<b>Heritage Agreement owner request to vary a condition of a Heritage Agreement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>5-7 business days</b> – acknowledgement of request from applicant/agent</li> <li>• <b>4-16 weeks</b> – depending upon complexity of request, access to relevant file (archived storage), whether further information is being sought from an applicant, or where external agency involvement extends duration outside of NVB control</li> </ul>
<b>Handling Heritage Agreement applications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>70% of applications processed within 6-9 months</b> - except where further information from an applicant is being sought or where external agency involvement extends processing time beyond NVB control</li> <li>• <b>9-18 months</b> – exceptional circumstances – where external pressures on applicant delay progress of application</li> </ul>
<b>Administrative requests e.g. for Plan of division / easement / other administrative consent requirements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>5-7 business days</b> – acknowledgement of request from applicant/agent</li> <li>• <b>2-4 weeks</b> - varies depending on file location (archive), completeness of consent documents by applicant/agent, availability of delegates for consent</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>4-6 weeks</b> – where delegation is not possible and minutes / briefing to Executive Director and Minister are required</li> </ul>
<b>Referral received under PDI Act</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>30 business days</b> – provide direction to relevant authority (as per schedule 9 of the PDI (General) Regulations 2017)</li> </ul>
<b>Seeking further information after receiving a referral under the PDI Act</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>10 business days</b> – after receiving referral there is 10 days within which to request further information from an applicant via the SA planning portal (as per s122(3)(a) of the Act and s41 of the regulations)</li> </ul>
<b>NVC response to referral under PDI Act</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Available for inspection as soon as is reasonably practicable</b> – NVC prescribed body response accessible and published on the SA planning portal after it is received by the relevant authority (as per s122(12) of the PDI Act).</li> </ul>
<b>Public registers - Heritage Agreement Register (23B), Clearance Register (s40A), Credit Register (s25E)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Available upon request</b> - registers must be available for public inspection Heritage Agreement Register <a href="https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/topics/native-vegetation/protecting-enhancing/heritage-agreements">https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/topics/native-vegetation/protecting-enhancing/heritage-agreements</a> Clearance Register <a href="https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/topics/native-vegetation/clearing/clearance-application-register">https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/topics/native-vegetation/clearing/clearance-application-register</a> Credit Register <a href="https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/topics/native-vegetation/offsetting/turn-your-native-vegetation-into-income/native-vegetation-credit-register">https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/topics/native-vegetation/offsetting/turn-your-native-vegetation-into-income/native-vegetation-credit-register</a></li> </ul>
<b>Clearance application reports and any assessment report prepared by the Department under s28 of the Act (as per s28(7))</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Available upon request</b> – for public inspection at the principal office of the NVC during office hours (and available in any other manner as determined by the Minister)</li> </ul>
<b>Monitor the level of satisfaction of our customers to drive NVB business improvement framework</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Record other feedback received by letter, email or phone</b> – positive or negative</li> </ul>

*Disclaimer:* In order to process a native vegetation query or application within the specified timeframes, the NVB expects that information or engagement requested as part of managing a query or application will be provided in a timely and cooperative manner by the customer.