

## Wheatbelt Natural Resource Management Incorporated

### Electronic Signature Policy

<b>Policy Name:</b>	<b>Electronic Signature Policy</b>
<b>Policy Number:</b>	5.8
<b>Policy Version Number:</b>	V2.00
<b>Policy Category:</b>	Records Management
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Chief Executive Officer
<b>Date Approved by the Board of Management:</b>	8 August 2017
<b>Date of Last Review:</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Period Until Next Review:</b>	36 months from the approved date or as required
<b>Related Legislation:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Associations Incorporation Act 2005 (Western Australia)</li> <li>2. Electronic Transactions Act 1999 (Commonwealth)</li> <li>3. Electronic Transactions Act 2011 (Western Australia)</li> </ol>
<b>Related WNRM Policies or Procedures:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 5.6 Records Management Policy</li> </ol>

#### 1. Definitions

**“Authentication”** Authentication shows authorship and assigns proof of identity to the use of an electronic signature.

**Approved person:** An employee who is approved by an authorising person to authenticate a document by attaching the authorising person’s scanned signature.

**Authorising person:** A Representative who is authorised to produce a scanned signature and approve its use by an employee.

“**Digital signature**” is a cryptographic technique that encrypts a hash or digest of a document with a user’s private key.

“**Digitized signature**” an electronic representation of a handwritten signature.

“**Electronic signature**” a generic term for the various ways that an electronic record can be signed, including a digitized image of a signature or a digital signature.

“**Representative**” means a Board Director, employee, contractor or volunteer of Wheatbelt Natural Resource Management Incorporated.in conducting

“**Wheatbelt NRM**” means Wheatbelt Natural Resource Management Incorporated.

## 2. Overview

This policy identifies the Wheatbelt NRM requirements for the use of electronic signatures in conducting the organisation’s operations and administrative functions.

The use of electronic signatures is permitted under Australian law and provides an opportunity to streamline processes and conduct business more efficiently.

The purpose of this policy is to identify parameters under which electronic signatures are approved for use.

*The following requirements imposed under a law of the Commonwealth can be met in electronic form:*

- (a) A requirement to give information in writing;*
- (b) A requirement to provide a signature;*
- (c) A requirement to produce a document;*
- (d) A requirement to record information;*
- (e) A requirement to retain a document.*

*SOURCE: Electronic Transactions Act 1999, Part 1 – Introduction, 4 Simplified Outline,*

Compliance with the policy and with its supporting standards, practices, procedures and guidelines is mandatory for all employees.

Representative(s) who breach this Policy may be subject to disciplinary action.

## 3. Types of Electronic Signatures

The policy delineates the types of electronic signature functionality acceptable for use in Wheatbelt NRM.

Acceptable and approved functional types are:

**Digital signature:** A digital signature is a cryptographic technique that encrypts a hash or digest of a document with a users private key. This creates a unique and unforgeable identifier that can be checked by the receiver to verify authenticity and integrity and provide non-repudiation of the data to allow the recipient of the data to prove the origin and integrity of the subject data.

**Digitized signature:** an electronic representation of a handwritten signature. The image of a handwritten signature may be created and saved using various methods, such as using a signature pad, scanning a wet signature, or digital photography. The signature may be “captured” in real time (at the time the user applies the signature), or a saved image captured at the point of normal business operations may be imported.

#### 4. Policy Statement

- 4.1 Any representative of Wheatbelt NRM who is required to sign documentation may use an electronic signature.
- 4.2 The preferred method is using a Digital signature which is password protected; however where this method is not supported a Digitised signature is still acceptable
- 4.3 Any Board member or employee with authorisation to sign documents on behalf of the organisation may give permission to an approved person to apply their electronic signature.
- 4.4 A separate approval is required for each circumstance.
- 4.5 Any permission must be in writing and must be retained in the Wheatbelt NRM records management system
- 4.6 The person who is providing approval to use their signature on organisational documents has the same level of responsibility for the accuracy of the contents of the document and the decision making process as a document that is authenticated by a hand written signature
- 4.7 Permission to use the electronic signature of the Chair of Wheatbelt NRM can only be delegated to the CEO.
- 4.8 An electronic signature of any representative is not to be used by any other person without written approval by the signature holder.
- 4.9 Measures should be taken to preserve the relationship of a scanned signature and its associated document over time.

#### 5. Responsible Officers

The Board of Management, as part of its governance authority, is responsible for the approval and publication of this Policy, including the approval of any subsequent changes.

The Audit Committee is responsible for reviewing this Policy prior to Board of Management approval, and ensuring the scheduled review of this Policy.

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for the operational compliance of the organisation to this Policy.

## **6. Approval**

This Policy was approved by the Board of Management on the 8 August 2017

Jim Sullivan  
Chairperson  
Board of Management  
Wheatbelt Natural Resource Management Incorporated