

Benchmark Development and Review Process

BACKGROUND:

The Progress Board has previously endorsed two processes for reviewing and developing benchmarks:

- Processes to Develop, Review and Revise Benchmarks (last amended in August 2004).
- Truncated Benchmark Development Process (May 2005).

The Benchmarking Committee decided at its 6 December 2006 meeting to establish a new process that is better suited to the post 5 year review benchmarking tasks. This process is adapted from the Truncated Benchmark Development Process and replaces both of the existing processes.

This process applies to all categories of benchmarks that are reviewed or developed, including:

- post 5 year review tasks listed in the revised *Tasmania Together* document;
- benchmarks included in the revised *Tasmania Together* document that have a target and/or baseline to be established; and
- substantiated requests from any sector of the community to develop, review or revise existing benchmarks.

Process to Review Benchmarks:

1. The Benchmarking Committee identifies either:
 - a. a benchmark or group of benchmarks to be reviewed; or
 - b. an issue requiring a new benchmark(s).
2. The Benchmarking Committee works with Australian Bureau of Statistics, relevant State Government agencies and other relevant key stakeholders, as required, to:
 - a. undertake research, prepare discussion papers, where appropriate, and identify possible indicators; and
 - b. develop a draft benchmark(s), including indicators, baselines and targets. The following guidelines apply:
 - Standards must be written as action statements.

- Indicators must be established according to the “Criteria for Indicators” (Appendix 1).
 - Targets must be challenging but achievable, with intervals between target time periods of five years. Targets should take into account both pre-existing targets and any recent information relating to the indicator. Targets should be framed in terms of absolute levels/percentages however, where available, comparative measures should be taken into account in the setting of, and reporting against, targets.
3. The Benchmarking Committee recommends the draft benchmark(s) to the Board. The Benchmarking Committee shall provide a report on the development of the benchmark.
 4. The Board will then circulate the draft to key stakeholders, where appropriate, and place the draft for public comment on the *Tasmania Together* website.
 5. The Board will either accept, amend or reject the Benchmarking Committee’s recommendations, input from key stakeholders and any public comment and will make public its decision through newsletter and website updates.
 6. The Board will make recommendations to the Tasmanian Parliament on the inclusion of new benchmarks or the alteration, deletion of existing benchmarks.
 7. The Parliament will accept or reject the Board’s recommendations.
 8. The Board will amend the *Tasmania Together* document if required.
 9. The Premier will table the amended *Tasmania Together* document in Parliament.

Appendix 1 – Criteria for Indicators

1 **Relevant and Valid**

The indicator should be relevant in that it reflects data gathered during the community consultation phase of *Tasmania Together*. The most relevant/comprehensive indicator should be chosen in order to use the least number of indicators. It should be valid in terms of being trustworthy and based on understandable rationales. In addition to being logical and scientifically defensible, the indicator should be able to have reasonable conclusions drawn from it.

2 **Intelligible, Acceptable and Easily Interpreted**

Indicators should be sufficiently simple to be interpreted by intended users. They should also be intuitive in the sense that it should be obvious exactly what the indicator is measuring. The indicator should aim to be informative and stimulate interest within the community.

3 **Sensitive to Change**

Indicators should respond quickly to changes in the phenomena they are measuring and thereby give early signals about trends in the data. This will help in predicting future trends at an early stage.

4 **Measurable**

Indicators need to be supported by reliable, readily available and timely data so they can be consistently measured over time.

5 **Outcome Measures**

The following types of measures could be used:

(a) outcome measures (eg. literacy/numeracy rates for year 10 students)

(b) output measures (eg. number of year 10 students taught)

(c) input measures (eg. number of high school teachers)

Indicators should use outcome measures wherever possible.

6 **State Level**

As access to high quality sub-state data in Tasmania is limited, the *Tasmania Together* indicators should be expressed at a State level wherever possible.

7 **Quantitative Data**

Qualitative or attitudinal data is problematic in terms of yearly comparisons and is often costly to collect. Wherever possible *Tasmania Together* benchmarks should be based on quantitative data sources.

8 **National Comparability**

Where relevant, data should be kept consistent with national methods of data collection in order to allow for meaningful comparisons between Tasmanian and Australian data.

Appendix 2 – Glossary

Benchmarking:	Benchmarking is an active process that sets standards for a particular activity or goal, identifies targets or interim steps required to meet the standards, and selects specific indicators or measures of progress along the way.
Benchmark:	A benchmark is the term used to collectively identify an indicator with its standard and targets. The function of each benchmark is to assist in accomplishing one specific goal of Tasmania <i>Together</i> .
Goal:	A goal defines what you want to achieve; it is the objective of a particular activity or set of activities.
Issue:	An issue helps define the objectives of a goal. In the context of Tasmania <i>Together</i> an issue must relate to data derived from the community consultations. Due to the need for 'high level' goals, some goals represent a number of issues raised by the community.
Standard:	A standard is a measurable statement that supports a goal. <i>Example – To reduce the crime rate in Tasmania</i>
Indicator:	An indicator is a measurement that demonstrates progress or not towards a defined goal and standard. An indicator defines how you know whether or not something is going in the direction you want it to go. <i>Example – Overall reported crimes per 1000 Tasmanians</i>
Target:	A target defines the specific results necessary to reach a particular goal within a specified timeframe. Targets are interim results necessary to reach an end result. <i>Example – 2010 - 148, 2015 - 140</i>