

What does your elected director do on the board?

Some members might be surprised to know that a director is not a representative. At the board table, diverse views, skills and experience come together to collectively make decisions. Each director brings a unique perspective that adds to the board's decision making but each decision is owned by the board as a whole.

The role of the board is to provide oversight to the organisation's management. In a nutshell, we balance compliance (legal, financial) with performance. The executive team, led by the CEO, is delegated to execute the strategy within parameters and performance measures set by the board. The board sets the strategy but does not execute it. That is the role of the executive team.

TTNQ is a not-for-profit, public company limited by guarantee. Being a director means you have a legal and fiduciary responsibility first and foremost to the organisation – not to any other interests. TTNQ has eight board meetings a year of about four hours' duration with each requiring at least four to five hours of preparation. Some directors also sit on subcommittees such as Finance and Risk Management. Three of our meetings are held outside Cairns so the board can meet up with people from the regions. Of the nine elected directors, four are zone directors and five are general directors. There are two appointed positions so that special skills or expertise can be brought into the board, for example Cairns Airport CEO Norris Carter was appointed for his expertise in aviation.

A diverse, skilled and engaged board is key to an organisation. There is an excellent avenue to learning more about good directorship through membership or courses run by the Australian Institute of Company Directors. Our board and some of our Local Tourism Organisation partners recently benefitted from a day's workshop with governance facilitator and experienced board director Rowena McNally FAICD. She updated directors on best practice and shared her extensive knowledge and experience with us. (Pic attached). If you're thinking about putting your hand up for the board at the AGM in October, we'll run a briefing session for potential nominees probably in August.

A final point – by all means, talk to directors about industry issues, but the TTNQ team are members' primary point of contact. Email – board@ttnq.org.au.