

**Chair and Board Report**

June 2025

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# Introduction

This report provides an update on activities carried out by the Chair and Board since the last Agency Board meeting held on 29 April 2025. These activities have been undertaken to align with our strategic priorities.

# Chair’s Commitments

| **Meeting Date** | **Topic** | **Participants** | **Location** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 06 May | Scottish Water and SEPA Chair and Chief Executive meeting | SEPA – Chief Executive  Scottish Water – Chief Executive and Chair | Waverley Court, Edinburgh |
| 08 May | William Grant & Sons Ltd, site visit | Members of the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT), Clerk to the Board and Board members | Girvan |
| 09 May | Chair appraisal discussion | Scottish Government - Director of Environment & Forestry | MS Teams |
| 14 May | Scotland’s Approach to River Basin Management Planning and Natural Capital | External Webinar | Zoom |
| 16 May | Introduction to the Head of Health & Safety | SEPA – Head of Health & Safety | MS Teams |
| 16 May | Audit, Risk & Assurance Committee (ARAC) workshop preparation | Chair of ARAC | MS Teams |
| 20 May | ARAC meeting and workshop | ARAC members and participants | Angus Smith Building |
| 23 May | Board Effectiveness planning session | Communications Coach – Nicky Perfect | MS Teams |
| 23 May | Data Strategy | Chief Officer Governance, Performance & Engagement (GPE) and Head of Data & Analysis | MS Teams |
| 29 May | The Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures Webinar | Green Finance Institute | Zoom |
| 03 June | Continuing Professional Development session | Capitals Coalition | Zoom |
| 04 June | Regulation Update | SEPA – Chief Executive, Chief Officer GPE, Chief Officer People, Workspaces & Development (PWD) and Board members | MS Teams |
| 06 June | Senior Leadership Walk | Fresh Air Leadership | Forth & Clyde Canal |
| 09 June | Board Effectiveness planning session | Caroline Donaldson | MS Teams |
| 09 June | OBCR update | Christopher Hodges | MS Teams |
| 10 June | People & Resources Committee (PRC) meeting | PRC members and participants | MS Teams |
| **Planned Meetings following report submission of 13 June 2025** | | | |
| 16 & 17 June | Board Dynamics | Tavistock Institute | London |
| 24 June | Review of Committees Terms of Reference | SEPA – Chief Officer GPE, Clerk to the Board and PRC Chair | Angus Smith Building |
| 24 June | Chief Executive annual appraisal | SEPA – Chief Executive | Angus Smith Building |

Regular meetings which were also undertaken since the Board meeting on 29 April 2025:

* Weekly check-ins with the Clerk to the Board
* Monthly meeting with the Deputy Chair to the Agency Board
* Ad-hoc check-ins with Board Members
* Fortnightly check-ins with the Chief Executive.

# Board Engagement

Board Activities and Updates

The initial piece of work for the Board Effectiveness project commenced at the beginning of May 2025. The Chair carried out a detailed planning session with the interim Coach, Nicky Perfect, followed by a series of 1-hour calls. The next stage involving Board members meeting individually with qualified Senior Executive Coach, Caroline Donaldson, is ongoing. The coaching sessions build on the work from March 2024 around high performing boards. The intention is to use these conversations to develop a meaningful board effectiveness questionnaire that links into the Values work and board appraisals. The output of the questionnaire is expected to be presented at the Agency Board Development Day in October 2025.

The Chair carried out bi-annual 1-1 meetings with each Board member throughout the month of May, both in person and remotely. This provided the opportunity for transparent conversations about performance and objectives.

The Chair, alongside Board and CLT members, undertook a site visit to William Grant & Sons Ltd distillery in Girvan to showcase our regulatory role with the industry. The trade body for Scotch Whisky distillers, the Scotch Whisky Association (SWA), also participated in the site visit.

The Audit, Risk & Assurance Committee (ARAC) meeting and annual workshop took place on 20 May 2025 in person at the Angus Smith Building. The workshop focused on Board and CLT expectations, with Health & Safety as a case study with SEPA’s new Head of Health & Safety participating, distinguishing between strategic and operational work, exploring Board Values and principles of public life. An update will be provided by the Chair of ARAC during the Board Meeting on 24 June 2025 as a separate agenda item.

Further Board Information Sessions have been held focusing on Digital Strategy on 6 May, and Data Strategy on 29 May. Additional resources from these sessions have been shared with Board members.

The People and Resources Committee (PRC) took place on MS Teams on 10 June. An update will be provided by the Chair of PRC during the Board Meeting on 24 June 2025 as a separate agenda item.

Board Champions Update

The following Board Champions meetings have taken place since the April Board meeting:

| **Meeting Date** | **Meeting** | **Location** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 02 May | Transformation (final meeting – future reporting will be via the PRC) | MS Teams |
| 10 June | Water Resilience | MS Teams |
| **Planned Meetings following report submission of 13 June 2025** | | |
| 19 June | Procurement | MS Teams |
| 24 June | Flood Services | MS Teams |

Board Governance

The Terms of Reference for both the ARAC and PRC are being finalised in discussion with the Chair, Clerk to the Board Chief Officer GPE and the respective committee Chairs to ensure all interdependencies have been considered and embedded as appropriate.

The Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero and Energy has provided approval to commence with recruitment for new members of the Board. Initial engagement calls are being scheduled with the Chair.

**Lisa Tennant**

**Chair**

**June 2025**