



AELERT

**AUSTRALASIAN
ENVIRONMENTAL LAW ENFORCEMENT
AND REGULATORS NETWORK**

**GUIDANCE DOCUMENT
MODERN REGULATOR IMPROVEMENT TOOL**

**Version: 2.0
Last updated: 17 March 2015
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About the MRIT

MRIT is a tool that is intended to allow AELERT members to identify their strengths and areas for improvement against the qualities of a modern regulator as identified in the statement of better regulatory practice.

MRIT is not intended to be a precise tool (it is qualitative rather than quantitative). Rather, it is designed to provide a useful way for regulators to assess where they are on their journey towards being a modern regulator.

Members can use the tool to assess those areas where they can celebrate success, and to identify areas on which they may wish to focus their future development activities.

Members are also encouraged to submit their assessments to AELERT, so that we can identify leading agencies in each of the attributes and link them up with other agencies that wish to develop in that attribute.

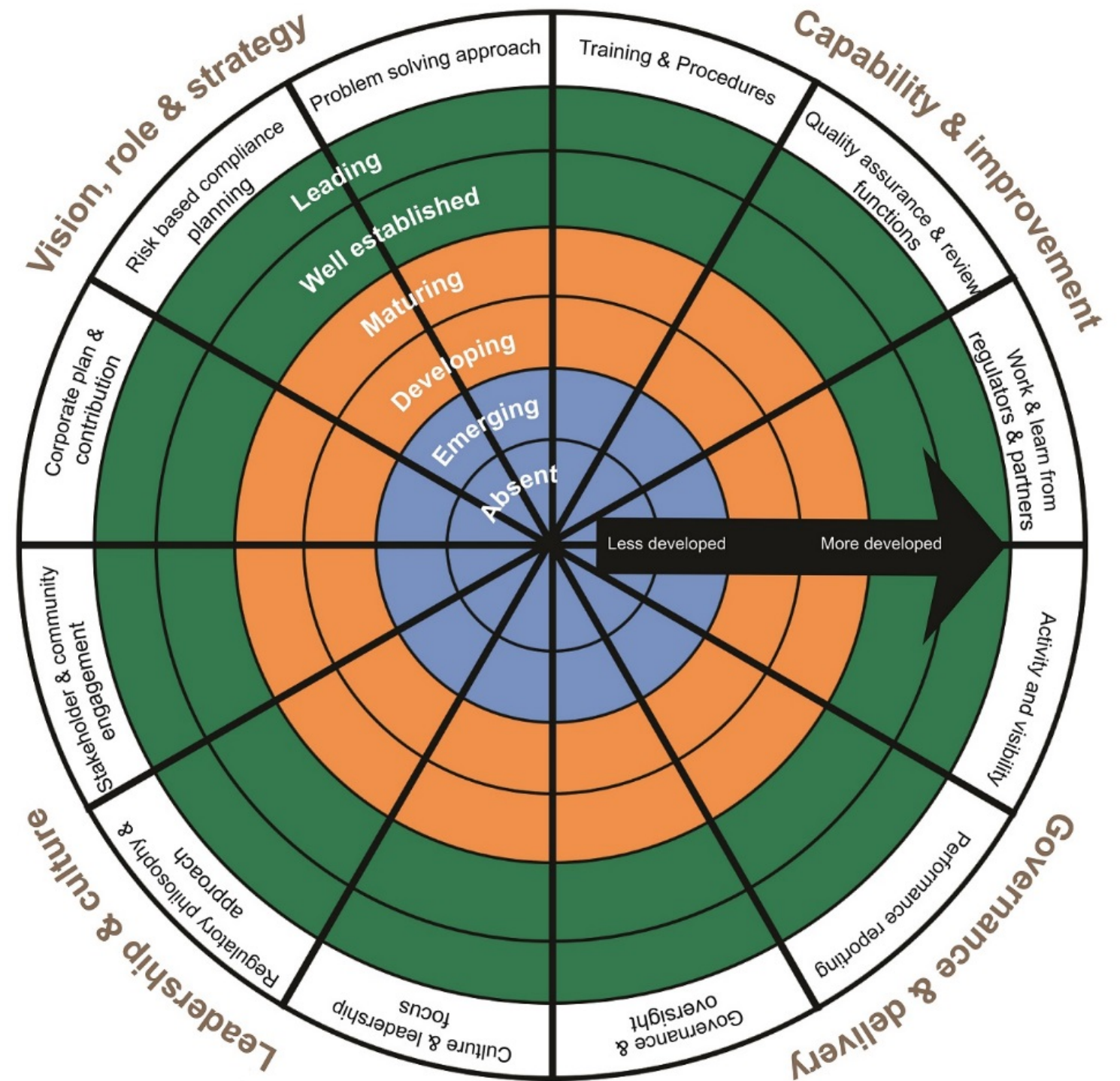
FAQs

Who in my organisation should undertake the assessment?

The tool has been developed for organisations to undertake a self-assessment for their own organisation. It can either be undertaken by one person or a group of people that come together to discuss their self-assessments from across the organisation. Using a group approach can provide a more accurate representation of the organisation's maturity levels, promote useful discussion and share learnings from different parts of the organisation.

How do the maturity levels work?

The maturity levels have been structured using a step ladder approach. The tool starts at the centre of the circle (absent) and increases in maturity levels as you move to the outer circle.



Example of how to assess an MRIT attribute

Step 1: Start at the bottom of the table (Absent) and consider whether the maturity descriptor is an accurate representation of your organisation.

Step 2: Think about documents, tools, processes or systems your organisation has in place as evidence to support each descriptor.

Step 3: Tick each descriptor that describes either the maturity your organisation has superseded or the maturity of your current organisation. In some cases you will need to tick a negative descriptor to progress to the next maturity level. In some cases there may be a descriptor that is not applicable for your organisation. If so, you may mark it as NA and progress to the next descriptor up the ladder.

Step 4: Select the highest maturity level applicable to your organisation. You may have ticked descriptors above this level (as is the case in the example). Remember that the tool is a qualitative assessment and therefore depends on your judgement. In this example the maturity level selected is 'Maturing' because there are two descriptors in 'Well established' that have not been satisfied. However, if one of those descriptors had also been met, then you may consider rating your organisation as 'well established' rather than 'maturing', especially if you feel you are on your way to meeting the final descriptor.

Culture and Leadership Focus			
		Assessment	Examples
Culture		Do you have sufficient evidence to support each descriptor?	What documents, tools, processes or systems could you share with AELERT?
<p>This attribute describes the regulator's expectations, experiences, philosophy, and values that hold it together, and is expressed in its self-image, inner workings, interactions with its employees, regulated community and stakeholders. It is based on shared attitudes, beliefs, customs, and written and unwritten rules that have been developed over time and are considered valid.</p>			
Leadership			
<p>This attribute describes the regulator's ability to establish a clear vision, share that vision with others so that they follow willingly, provide the information, knowledge and methods to realise that vision and coordinate and balance the conflicting interests of all members and stakeholders.</p>			
Leading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leaders create an environment in which employee's embrace and believe in the vision, want to achieve it, live the culture and seek to achieve ambitious targets. Leaders behave strategically by analysing data, anticipating change, leveraging resources, driving policy debate, solving complex problems and implementing robust plans. Decisions are made collaboratively and where appropriate are challenged and reviewed. 		
Well established	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The regulator's vision and values are understood and clearly articulated and this is measured through staff surveys or focus groups. Leadership development is valued, prioritised and resourced and regulator invests in developing leadership capabilities. A mechanism or process exists to ensure decision making and decisions are open and transparent. A mechanism or process exists to allow staff to provide feedback on performance and discuss career progression. 	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>	<p>EPA Strategic Plan and Corporate Plan</p> <p>Performance and Development Review Process</p>
Maturing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee understanding of vision and strategy is measured by surveys and focus groups. Vision and values are articulated in one/some but not all elements of planning Leaders communicate their vision to the whole organisation through the speeches, newsletters and other media. 	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>	High Performance Staff Survey
Developing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The need to establish and articulate a clear vision and values has been identified but not yet implemented. Values and behaviours are discussed by some but not all staff in the organisation. 	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>	EPA 'Ways of Working'
Emerging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vision and values are undocumented and applied inconsistency across the organisation. 	<p>✓</p>	
Absent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organisational culture and values are not discussed or actively demonstrated Leaders are unable to clearly articulate the organisation's vision. 	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>	

Example of how to assess attribute maturity using a team approach

Step 1: Each assessor completes their self-assessment using the approach on the previous page for each attribute.

Step 2: The group meets to discuss their results. Where there is difference each assessor has the opportunity to explain what evidence was used to reach their assessment.

Step 3: The group reaches consensus on the final assessment for each attribute.

Attribute	Assessor 1	Assessor 2	Assessor 3	Final assessment
Culture and leadership focus	Maturing	Maturing	Maturing	Maturing
Regulatory Philosophy and approach	Maturing	Maturing	Well established	Maturing
Stakeholder and community engagement	Developing	Maturing	Maturing	Maturing
Corporate Plan and contribution	Well Established	Well Established	Well Established	Well Established
Risk based compliance planning function	Maturing	Well Established	Maturing	Maturing
Problem solving approach	Developing	Maturing	Developing	Developing
Training and procedures	Maturing	Well Established	Maturing	Maturing
Quality assurance and review function	Developing	Emerging	Developing	Developing
Learning with others	Maturing	Maturing	Well Established	Maturing
Activity and visibility	Maturing	Developing	Developing	Developing
Performance reporting	Developing	Developing	Maturing	Developing
Governance and oversight	Maturing	Developing	Developing	Developing

Example of how to display your MRIT results

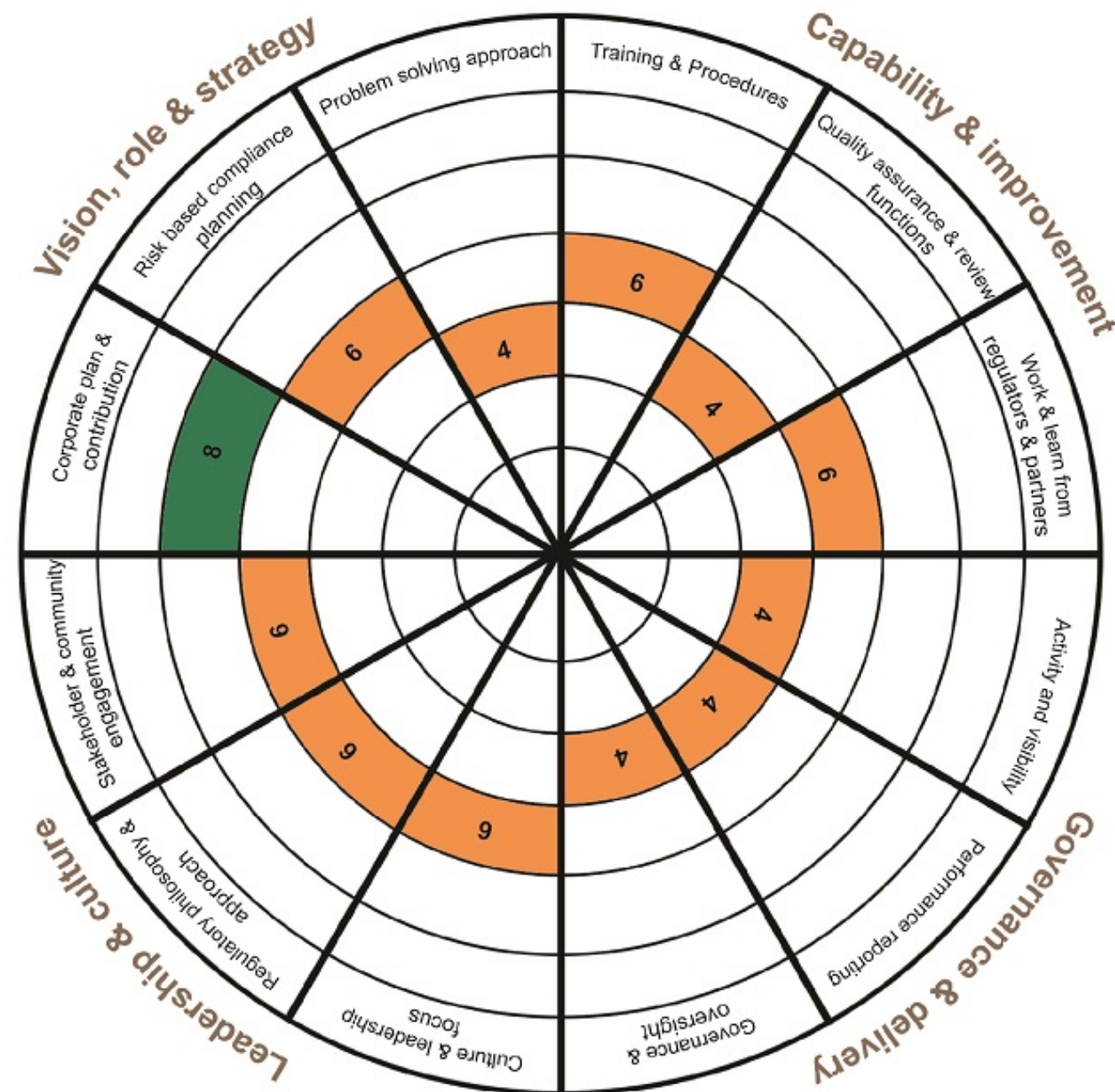
The MRIT dial can provide a simple and visual representation of your organisation's strengths and areas for improvement. The dial shown on the right shows that the organisation is well established for the attribute of 'Corporate Plan & Contribution' and may consider contacting AELERT to further improve in areas that are currently developing or maturing.

An optional step is to add a numerical score to your final assessment. The score for each maturity level is applied as follows:

Maturity Level	Score
Leading	10
Well established	8
Maturing	6
Developing	4
Emerging	2
Absent	0

The scoring system is optional but may be used by the AELERT Sectorariat to communicate average or median results from participating members that submit their results (see next page) .

You may also like to use the scoring system to compare your own results over time.



Example of completed MRIT for AELERT members

AELERT members were invited to test MRIT prior to the 2014 AELERT Forum in December. The results provided on the right show the median scores for the participating agencies for each attribute. Publishing the median results allows members to compare their own results with the wider AELERT membership without creating league tables.

Looking to the future, those members who:

- identify themselves as being strong in certain areas and
- are prepared to share with other AELERT members their knowledge and experiences in those areas

may (but do not have to) submit the completed self-assessment to AELERT. AELERT will review the submissions and will facilitate knowledge sharing between strong performers in a certain area and those who wish to develop their capability in that area.

AELERT will also use the results to guide where the AELERT Cluster effort should be prioritised for continuous improvement in regulatory practice.

