



Northern Country Zone MINUTES

Monday 22 April 2024

Hosted by the City of Greater Geraldton
at Administration Centre 63 Cathedral Avenue Geraldton WA 6530
commencing at 10am



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ATTACHMENTS TO THE AGENDA

Item 3.1:	Link to Regional Tech Hub Presentation
Item 3.2:	Link to City of Greater Geraldton Presentation
Item 6.1:	Northern Country Zone of WALGA Meeting Minutes 26 February 2024
Items 7/8/9:	State Council Meeting Agenda 1 May 2024
Item 10.2:	WALGA State Council Representative's Report April 2024
Item 10.3:	WALGA President's Report May 2024
Item 10.4:	Zone Status Report April 2024
Item 10.5:	DLGSC Report April 2024
Item 11.1.2a	Corro - Email from Lara Dalton MLA – Value Add Investment Grants
Item 11.2:	Bank Statements Feb/Mar 2024

Zone Delegates are requested to provide written notice on amendments to recommendations within the State Council agenda ASAP to the Zone President and Secretariat, to allow Zone Members time to consider the alternative recommendation.

1. OPENING, WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

1.1 Opening

The Meeting was declared open at 10:00am.

1.2 Acknowledgment of Country

The Northern Country Zone of WALGA respectfully acknowledges the Southern Yamatji Peoples, who are the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we meet today and pays its respects to their Elders past and present.

1.3 Welcome

The chair welcomed members and guests.

1.4 Announcements

Nil

2. ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

MEMBERS

NB: One Voting Delegate from each Member Council

Shire of Carnamah

Cr Dwayne Woollorton - Deputy President
Mr Rob Paull - Chief Executive Officer (non-voting)

Shire of Chapman Valley

Cr Kirilee Warr – President (NCZ Deputy President and State Council Rep)
Mr Jamie Criddle - Chief Executive Officer (non-voting)

Shire of Coorow

Cr Guy Sims - President
Ms Mia Maxfield - Chief Executive Officer (non-voting)

City of Greater Geraldton

Mayor Jerry Clune
Mr Ross McKim - Chief Executive Officer (non-voting)

Shire of Irwin	Cr Mark Leonard – President Mr Shane Ivers - Chief Executive Officer (non-voting)
Shire of Mingenew	Cr Gary Cosgrove - President Mr Matt Fanning - Chief Executive Officer (non-voting)
Shire of Morawa	Cr Ken Stokes - Deputy President Mr Scott Wildgoose - Chief Executive Officer (non-voting)
Shire of Northampton	Cr Robert Horstman - Deputy President Mr Andrew Campbell - Chief Executive Officer (non-voting)
Shire of Perenjori	Cr Jude Sutherland - President
Shire of Three Springs	Cr Chris Lane - President Cr Nadine Eva – Deputy President Mr Keith Woodward - Chief Executive Officer (non-voting)
EXECUTIVE	Ms Dianne Daniels - Executive Officer Mr Tony Brown – Executive Director Member Services, WALGA Ms Rachel Horton - Executive Manager Advocacy, WALGA
INVITED GUESTS	
Federal Member For Durack	Honourable Melissa Price MP Ms Carolyn Correll - Diary Manager
Member for Geraldton	Represented by Ms Sarah Hinton - Research Officer
Main Roads WA	Mr Kim Ingle - Acting Regional Director Mid West-Gascoyne Ms Louise Adamson - Network Manager Mid West-Gascoyne
Mid West Development Commission	Ms Susannah Ward – Local Content Advisor
Regional Development Midwest Gascoyne	Mr Mark Holdsworth – Director of Regional Development/Executive Officer
PRESENTERS	
Regional Tech Hub	Ms Sally Brindal - Regional Partnership Officer
APOLOGIES	
Shire of Carnamah	Cr Merle Isbister - President
Shire of Irwin	Cr Isabelle Scott
Shire of Mingenew	Cr Hellene McTaggart
Shire of Morawa	Cr Karen Chappel - President (NCZ President)

Shire of Northampton	Cr Elizabeth (Liz) Sudlow – President (State Council Deputy Rep)
Shire of Perenjori	Mr Paul Anderson - Chief Executive Officer
Shire of Three Springs	Mr Keith Woodward - Chief Executive Officer
Member for Moore	Mr Shane Love MLA
Member for Geraldton	Ms Lara Dalton MLA
Member for Agricultural Region	Honourable Colin De Grussa MLC
Member for Agricultural Region	Honourable Darren West MLC
Member for Agricultural Region	Honourable Martin Aldridge MLC
Member for Agricultural Region	Honourable Shelley Payne MLC
Dept of Local Gov, Sport and Cult Ind	Mr Craig Vinci – Acting Regional Manager Mid West Gascoyne
Department of Fire and Emergency Services	Mr Mark Bowen - Superintendent Midwest Gascoyne Region
Mid West Development Commission	Mr Nils Hay - Chief Executive Officer Mr Mike Bowley- Director Regional Development Mr Peter Spalding – Acting Chief Executive Officer
National Emergency Management Agency	Ms Candy Hudson - Recovery Support Officer Pilbara, Gascoyne, Murchison and Mid West WA
Regional Development Midwest Gascoyne	Ms Yvonne Messina - Chair

3. DEPUTATIONS/PRESENTATIONS

3.1 Regional Tech Hub

Attachment: Link to Regional Tech Hub Presentation [Northern Country Zone - 22 April 2024](#)

Ms Sally Brindal Regional Partnerships Officer

Helping Regional Australians Navigate Phone & Internet Options and Technical Issues - Ms Brindal presented an overview of who Regional Tech Hub are, what they do and how they can help.

3.2 City of Greater Geraldton

Attachment: Link to City of Greater Geraldton Presentation [Northern Country Zone - 22 April 2024](#)

Mayor Jerry Clune gave a presentation on projects recently completed, underway and planned and challenges being faced by the City.

4. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillors must declare to the Zone President any potential conflict of interest they have in a matter before the Zone as soon as they become aware of it. Councillors and deputies may be directly or indirectly associated with some recommendations of the Zone and State Council. If you are affected by these recommendations, please excuse yourself from the meeting and do not participate in deliberations.

Nil

5. ADJOURNED BUSINESS

Nil

6. MINUTES

Attachments: Minutes of the Meeting of the Northern Country Zone of WALGA 26 February 2024

6.1 Confirmation of Minutes

Recommendation:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Northern Country Zone of WALGA held (virtually) on Monday 26 February 2024 be confirmed as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

Northern Country Zone Resolution:

Moved: Cr Sutherland

Seconded: Cr Cosgrove

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Northern Country Zone of WALGA held (virtually) on Monday 26 February 2024 be confirmed as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

Carried

6.2 Business Arising from Minutes

Nil

7. STATE COUNCIL AGENDA - MATTERS FOR DECISION

The following items have been taken directly from the WALGA State Council Agenda for 1 May 2024.

The Matter for Decision in the State Council agenda is numbered 7.1.

The WALGA Officer's Recommendation and Executive Summary only have been included. Please refer to the attached PDF version of the State Council Agenda for more detail.

7.1 (SC 7.1) Waste Levy Advocacy Position

Prepared by: Rebecca Brown, Manager Waste and Environment

WALGA Recommendation:

That State Council:

1. Replace the existing WALGA *Waste Levy Policy Statement and Advocacy Position 7.4 Waste Management Funding*:

Local Government considers that:

1. Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Levy funds should be hypothecated to strategic waste management activities in line with the State Waste Strategy and strongly opposes the application of the Levy to non-waste management related activities, such as funding State Government core activities; and
2. The Levy should not be applied to licensed landfills outside the metropolitan area.

2. Endorse a new Waste Levy Advocacy Position as follows:

The Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Levy (the Levy) was established in WA to fund programs relating to the management, reduction, reuse, recycling, monitoring or measurement of waste and administering the fund. The current Levy is applied to waste generated, or landfilled, in the Perth metropolitan area.

Currently, only 25% of the collected funds are retained for strategic waste management activities, 75% are allocated to the ongoing operations of the Department responsible for administration of the Levy.

Local Government considers that:

1. The Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Levy funds must be fully hypothecated to strategic waste management activities in line with the State Waste Strategy and not be used for non-waste management related activities, such as funding State Government core activities.
2. Strategic waste management activities funded by the State Government should:
 - a. Provide adequate funding and support for Regional Councils, non-metropolitan and metropolitan Local Governments;
 - b. Reflect the targets and priorities within the Waste Strategy;
 - c. Fully fund and acknowledge the life cycle costs of infrastructure and services; and
 - d. Facilitate the development, implementation and ongoing operation of Product Stewardship Schemes.
3. The Levy should not be applied to waste generated in the non-metropolitan area as it is not feasible, or appropriate, to implement the Levy in areas with a limited rate base, access to markets for recycled materials, economic growth and resources to manage such a change.
4. The Levy should not be applied to waste received at premises undertaking licensed activities whose primary purpose is resource recovery.
5. The Levy must be supported by a clear, evidence-based rationale to demonstrate the suitability of how charges are set, how and where funds are allocated, and the extent to which it is delivering on its objectives.

Executive Summary:

- The Waste Levy and Strategic Waste Funding Policy Statement was first endorsed in 2008 and was amended in 2018.
- The Statement outlines the Local Government position on levies charged on the weight or volume of waste received at licensed premises and the application of those funds to waste management activities.
- In 2023, the WA Government published the findings of a Review of the Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery (WARR) Levy. The consultation summary report and supporting consultant report can be accessed on the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) [website](#).
- Key outcomes of the Levy Review included a five-year schedule of increases and a commitment to investigate extending the levy boundary to regional areas.
- The new Waste Levy Advocacy Position uses contemporary language emphasises:
 - Full hypothecation of the Levy;
 - The key areas of expenditure for the Levy;
 - Opposition to the expansion of the Levy's geographic application;
 - Opposition to the application of the Levy to resource recovery activities; and
 - The need for a clear evidence-based rationale for setting and expending the Levy.

- The Municipal Waste Advisory Council (MWAC) endorsed the new Advocacy Position in February 2024.

Northern Country Zone Resolution:

Moved: Cr Horstman

Seconded: Cr Sims

That the Northern Country Zone of WALGA supports the WALGA Officers' recommendation for Item 7.1 in the 1 May 2024 State Council Agenda.

Carried

8. STATE COUNCIL AGENDA – POLICY TEAM AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

Please refer to Item 8.0 of the 1 May 2024 State Council Agenda for details of the following Policy Team and Committee Reports.

8.1 (SC 8.0) Policy Team and Committee Reports

- 8.1a Item 8.1 SC Agenda - Environment Policy Team Report
- 8.1b Item 8.2 SC Agenda - Governance Policy Team Report
- 8.1c Item 8.3 SC Agenda - Infrastructure Policy Team Report
- 8.1d Item 8.4 SC Agenda - People and Place Policy Team Report
- 8.1e Item 8.5 SC Agenda - Municipal Waste Advisory Council (MWAC) Report

Northern Country Zone Resolution:

Moved: Cr Lane

Seconded: Cr Leonard

That the Northern Country Zone of WALGA supports all Policy Team and Committee Reports listed above, as detailed in the 1 May 2024 State Council Agenda.

Carried

9. STATE COUNCIL AGENDA – MATTERS FOR NOTING

Please refer to Items 9.0 and 10.0 of the 1 May 2024 State Council Agenda for details of the following Matters for Noting/Information and Organisation Reports.

9.1 (SC 9.0) Matters For Noting / Information

- 9.1a Item 9.1 SC Agenda - WALGA 2023 Emergency Management Survey
- 9.1b Item 9.2 SC Agenda - Tree Retention Model Local Planning Policy
- 9.1c Item 9.3 SC Agenda - LEMA Improvement Plan Implementation
- 9.1d Item 9.4 SC Agenda - Planning and Building Performance Monitoring Project
- 9.1e Item 9.5 SC Agenda - 2024 WALGA Aboriginal Engagement Forum

9.2 (SC 10.0) Organisation Reports For Noting

- 9.2a Item 10.1 SC Agenda - Key Activity Reports
 - Item 10.1.1 - Advocacy Portfolio
 - Item 10.1.2 - Infrastructure Portfolio
 - Item 10.1.3 - Member Services Portfolio
 - Item 10.1.4 - Policy Portfolio
- 9.2b Item 10.2 SC Agenda - President's Report
- 9.2c Item 10.3 SC Agenda - CEO's Report

- 9.2d Item 10.4 SC Agenda - Ex Officio Reports
Item 10.4.1 - City of Perth Report
Item 10.4.2 - LG Professionals Report

Northern Country Zone Resolution:

Moved: Cr Sutherland

Seconded: Cr Horstman

That the Northern Country Zone Notes Items 9.0 Matters for Noting/Information and 10.0 Organisation Reports, listed above, as detailed in the 1 May 2024 State Council Agenda.

Carried

10. REPORTS

10.1 Zone President's Report

Refer to the WALGA President's Report.

10.2 WALGA State Council Representative's Report

The WALGA State Council Representative's Report is attached.

Northern Country Zone Resolution:

Moved: Cr Lane

Seconded: Cr Leonard

That the Northern Country Zone of WALGA notes the WALGA State Council Representative's Report for April 2024.

Carried

10.3 WALGA President's Report

The WALGA President's Report is attached.

Northern Country Zone Resolution:

Moved: Cr Sims

Seconded: Cr Cosgrove

That the Northern Country Zone of WALGA notes the WALGA President's Report for May 2024.

Carried

10.4 Zone Status Report

A Status Report outlining the actions taken on the Zone's resolutions is attached.

Northern Country Zone Resolution:

Moved: Cr Cosgrove

Seconded: Cr Leonard

The Northern Country Zone of WALGA notes the April 2024 Status Report outlining actions taken on the Zone's resolutions.

Carried

10.5 Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries Update

An update from the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries is attached.

Northern Country Zone Resolution:

Moved: Cr Horstman

Seconded: Cr Lane

The Northern Country Zone of WALGA notes the April 2024 Update from the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries.

Carried

11. ZONE MATTERS FOR NOTING/DECISION

11.1 Correspondence

11.1.1 Correspondence Out

Nil

11.1.2 Correspondence In

11.1.2 (a) 04/04/2024 Lara Dalton MLA

Attachment – Email re Value Add Investment Grants (emailed to members 10/04/2024)

Information regarding two new funding streams supporting agrifood and beverage businesses to process and manufacture their produce in WA.

Northern Country Zone Resolution:

Moved: Cr Clune

Seconded: Cr Leonard

That the Northern Country Zone of WALGA receives Correspondence In at Items 11.1.2 (a).

Carried

11.2 Detailed Income and Expenditure Statement and Bank Reconciliation at 28 March 2024

Prepared by: Dianne Daniels, Executive Officer

Attachments: Bank Statements Feb 2024, Mar 2024

Recommendation:

That the Northern Country Zone of WALGA receives the Detailed Income Statement and Bank Reconciliation for the period ending 28 March 2024

Comments:

The Detailed Income Statement shown below represents the cash position of NCZ at 28 March 2024, as reconciled to the Bank Statement.

NORTHERN COUNTRY ZONE OF WALGA

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT

For the period ending

28-Mar-24

	<i>Date</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Amount</i>	<i>Description</i>
Statement Balance B/F	01-07-23		7,945.49	
Deposits			18,000.00	2023-24 Membership Subscriptions x 10
			1.07	Interest received
TOTAL RECEIPTS			18,001.07	
TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE			25,946.56	
Payments Made	14-07-23		-2,990.25	Internet Tsf - Dianne Daniels - Inv 232401 - EO Services 02/05/2023 - 05/07/2023; Travel; Stationery
	15-08-23		-275.00	Internet Tsf - North Midlands Accounting Service - Inv 2024-000123 - Audit Report 2022-23
	18-10-23		-340.00	Internet BPay - Shire of Chapman Valley - Inv 9444 - Catering for 28 August meeting
	18-10-23		-2,670.98	Internet Tsf - Dianne Daniels - Inv 232402 - EO Services 06/07/2023 - 08/09/2023; Travel
	29-11-23		-3,074.14	Internet Tsf - Dianne Daniels - Inv 232403 - EO Services 09/09/2023 - 29/11/2023; Travel; Microsoft Exchange
	27-02-24		-2,660.38	Internet Tsf - Dianne Daniels - Inv 232404 - EO Services 30/11/2023 - 27/02/2024; Stationery
TOTAL PAYMENTS MADE			-12,010.75	
Closing Cash Balance	28-03-24		13,935.81	

NORTHERN COUNTRY ZONE OF WALGA

BANK RECONCILIATION SUMMARY

For the period ending

28-Mar-24

Statement Balance B/F	01-07-23	7,945.49
Deposits and Credits		18,001.07
Cheques and Payments		-12,010.75
Total Cleared Transactions	28-03-24	13,935.81
Add back o/s		0.00
Reconciled Balance		13,935.81
Bank Statement	28-03-24	13,935.81
Difference I&E to Bank Statement		0.00

Northern Country Zone Resolution:

Moved: Cr Cosgrove

Seconded: Cr Sims

That the Northern Country Zone of WALGA receives the Detailed Income Statement and Bank Reconciliation for the period ending 28 March 2024.

Carried

11.3 Adoption of Policy and Advocacy Prioritisation Framework

Prepared by: Kathy Robertson, Manager Association and Corporate Governance

Recommendation:

That the Northern Country Zone of WALGA adopt the Policy and Advocacy Prioritisation Framework to determine the priority of a particular policy or advocacy issue and guide future decision making.

Background:

State Council uses a Policy and Advocacy Prioritisation Framework to guide discussion and decision-making on policy and advocacy issues. The Framework was developed in 2020 on the request of State Council to assist State Councillors in determining the priority of a particular issue relative to existing (and competing) policy and advocacy priorities.

The Framework (included below) utilises 11 criteria to sharpen thinking (e.g. the impact on the Local Government sector, the number of Member Local Governments affected, the level of support amongst the public or other stakeholders, etc.), and encourage decision-makers to consider the wider context and impacts of the issue before settling on a pathway forward.

The Great Southern Country Zone also adopted the Prioritisation Framework not long after it was developed in 2020.

Comment:

It is proposed that all Zones consider adopting the Policy and Advocacy Prioritisation Framework as included below.

If the Zone were to adopt the Prioritisation Framework, Zone Delegates could use it to guide their decision-making when determining whether or not to request action or advocacy from WALGA on a particular issue (that is, sector-wide issues). Issues that are not sufficiently prioritised (that is, regional issues) could instead be dealt with at the Zone level (e.g. through direct advocacy efforts on behalf of the Zone).

The Prioritisation Framework could also be used by Zone Delegates when drafting Agenda items and motions on policy or advocacy issues, using the criteria as prompts for what kind of information to include.

The Prioritisation Framework does not remove the need for judgements to be made and is intended to *guide*, not replace, decision-making.

How to use the Framework:

- If the majority of the factors are towards the left column, the issue is a high priority.
- If the majority of the factors are towards the middle, the issue requires action, but is not a high priority.
- If the majority of the factors are towards the right column, the issue is a low priority.

Following prioritisation, an appropriate and proportionate policy and advocacy approach can be determined.

Impact on Local Government Sector Impact on Local Government sector without intervention	High	Medium	Low
Reach Number of member Local Governments affected	Sector-wide	Significant (multiple regions, Zones, or bands)	Few
Influence Capacity to influence decision makers	High	Medium	Low
Principles Alignment to core principles such as autonomy, funding, general competence	Strong	Partial	Peripheral

Clarity Policy change needed is clear and well-defined	Clear	Partial	Unclear
Decision-maker support Level of support among decision-makers (political and administrative)	High	Medium	Low
Public support Level of support among the public or other stakeholders	High	Medium	Low
Positive consequences for WALGA Prospect of positive consequences for WALGA. E.g. enhanced standing among members or leverage for other issues.	High	Medium	Low
Negative consequences for WALGA Prospect of negative consequences for WALGA for not undertaking the advocacy effort. E.g. diminished standing among members or other stakeholders.	High	Medium	Low
Partnerships Potential for partnerships with other stakeholders	Yes (3+)	Possibly (1-2)	No (0)

Northern Country Zone Resolution:
Moved: Cr Leonard **Seconded:** Cr Sutherland

That the Northern Country Zone of WALGA adopt the Policy and Advocacy Prioritisation Framework to determine the priority of a particular policy or advocacy issue and guide future decision making.

Carried

11.4 City of Greater Geraldton’s Proposed Submission to the Inquiry into LG Sustainability – for Noting

Prepared by: Dianne Daniels, Executive Officer

Recommendation:

That the Northern Country Zone of WALGA notes that a Flying Agenda ~~with a 24-hour turnaround~~, seeking support for the City of Greater Geraldton’s submission to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport’s Inquiry into local government sustainability, will likely be emailed to members Wednesday 1 May 2024, with responses required by ~~noon Thursday 2 May~~ COB Wednesday 8 May 2024 (subject to the submissions’ endorsement by CGG Council at their meeting 30 April 2024)

Background:

the City of Greater Geraldton is preparing a submission to the House of Representative’s Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport’s Inquiry into local government sustainability, with CGG officers preparing a report for the City’s next council meeting on 30 April 2024. The closing date for submissions to the Inquiry ~~is~~ has been extended from 3 May 2024 to 31 May 2024.

Comment:

The timing to table the item at a Northern Country Zone meeting requesting our support, prior to the submission closing date, does not work.

Therefore, timely warning of a proposed Flying Agenda ~~with a 24-hour turnaround~~ was thought a practical solution, to give as many NCZ members as possible the chance to diarise the timeline and to read and vote on the submission when the time comes.

Northern Country Zone Resolution:

Moved: Cr Clune

Seconded: Cr Lane

That the Northern Country Zone of WALGA notes that a Flying Agenda, seeking support for the City of Greater Geraldton's submission to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport's Inquiry into local government sustainability, will likely be emailed to members Wednesday 1 May 2024, with responses required by COB Wednesday 8 May 2024 (subject to the submissions' endorsement by CGG Council at their meeting 30 April 2024).

Carried

11.5 Importance of WALGA becoming a Registered Employer Organisation – For Noting

Prepared by: Tony Brown, Executive Director, Member Services

Recommendation:

That the Northern Country Zone of WALGA notes the information on the importance of WALGA becoming a Registered Employer Organisation.

Background:

Currently, WALGA is a registered industrial agent under the [Industrial Relations Act 1979 \(WA\) \(IR Act\)](#) which allows us to:

- appear as an agent for a WA Local Government or Regional Council (**Local Government**) in the Western Australian Industrial Relations Commission (**WAIRC**), Industrial Magistrate's Court or Industrial Appeal Court (**State Courts**); and
- provide advice or other services to Local Governments in relation to 'industrial matters' as defined in s.7 of the IR Act.

Since the mandate for Local Governments¹ to operate in the State industrial relations (**IR**) system from 1 January 2023, unions² have commenced various Local Government State awards³ (**LG State Awards**) variation claims in the WAIRC to amend industry employment conditions including to:

- increase minimum wages for outside workers;
- introduce Fair Work standards in the State system (increase casual loading from 20 to 25%; insert casual conversion; and insert flexible working arrangements) and other conditions (insert employment equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons; insert cultural and ceremonial leave; and amend severance pay for regional redundancies); and
- increase industry allowance for compensation for disabilities on construction and maintenance work.

In addition the WASU, LGRCEU and other unions (such as the **Construction, Forestry, and Maritime Employees Union (CFMEU)**) as 'employee organisations' can make industrial agreements with Local Government employers under the IR Act.

A [recent decision of the WAIRC](#) has outlined although WALGA may intervene in award matters we are unable to represent named LG State Award employers and the broader Local Government sector in our own right.

¹ with the exception of the Shires of Christmas Island and Cocos (Keeling) Islands

² The Western Australian Municipal, Administrative, Clerical and Services Union of Employees (**WASU**) and the Local Government, Racing and Cemeteries Employees Union (WA) (**LGRCEU**)

³ The [Local Government Officers' \(Western Australia\) Award 2021](#) and the [Municipal Employees \(Western Australia\) Award 2021](#). These awards have not been updated significantly since prior to the introduction of the *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth). They were old 1999 Federal awards which were registered without amendment as interim awards in 2011 in the State system. They then became State awards in 2021. No significant amendments have been made to these awards over 23 years.

Despite WALGA's advocacy since December 2022, the State Government has not agreed a pathway for WALGA to be provided with standing as an employer organisation under the IR Act.

For WALGA to represent Local Governments' views and have the same standing as the unions under the IR Act it has become vital for WALGA to seek to amend its constitution to apply to become an employer organisation.

If WALGA was to become an employer organisation it would provide more opportunity for WALGA to modernise the LG State Awards and intervene in industrial matters concerning the Local Government sector. In addition, the WAIRC is more likely to notify WALGA of award applications or variations and industrial agreement changes reducing the risk of unions being able to change the terms and conditions of the sector, with limited to no input from Local Governments or WALGA.

Comment:

WALGA will be looking to amend its constitution to enable WALGA to become a registered employer organisation at the 2024 AGM in October 2024.

An agenda item will be prepared for the June/July round of Zone/State Council meetings detailing the proposed amendments.

This item is for the Zones awareness of the need for WALGA to become an employer organisation and to note that constitutional amendments will be required.

For any questions about the constitutional amendment process, please contact Tony Brown, Executive Director Member Services, tbrown@walga.asn.au or (08) 9213 2051.

Northern Country Zone Resolution:

Moved: Cr Clune

Seconded: Cr Stokes

That the Northern Country Zone of WALGA notes the information on the importance of WALGA becoming a Registered Employer Organisation.

Carried

12. GENERAL BUSINESS

As per Item 35 of the Zone Standing Orders, a Delegate may under General Business introduce a motion relating to any item of interest to Local Government, but not otherwise.

12.1 Call to Guests to Address the Meeting

The chair called on Guests to address the meeting.

The Hon. Melissa Price MP, Ms Louise Adamson, Ms Susannah Ward and Mr Mark Holdsworth took the opportunity to update members on matters of relevance to them.

12.2 Regional Issues

Background:

As per the resolution at Item 9.1 of the February 2018 meeting, Regional Issues are open for discussion.

The chair called for matters of Regional interest.

Nil

12.3 Regional Tourism Initiatives

Background:

As per the resolution at Item 10.1 of the April 2019 minutes, Regional Tourism Initiatives are open for discussion.

The chair called for matters regarding Regional Tourism Initiatives.

Attendees were reminded that it is the Shore Leave Festival this weekend and were encouraged to attend.

12.4 Other General Business

The chair called for Other General Business.

12.4.1 Shire of Mingenew – WALGA Advocacy on Management of Bushfire Brigades

The Shire of Mingenew had indicated their intent to bring the following questions to this meeting and so Mr Tony Brown had prepared the responses shown below and spoke to them during the meeting:

1. Request a status update on WALGA's advocacy activities, outcomes and progress towards the statement '8.10 Management of Bush Fire Brigades'. Our most immediate area of concern is that detailed in 3(c) and (d) but the statement in its entirety is pertinent.

- WALGA's State Budget Submission 2024-25 includes two key measures targeted towards better support for Local Government management of Bush Fire Brigades:
 - a. Increase Local Government Grant Scheme (LGGS) funding to meet the current and future needs of Local Government volunteer Bush Fire Brigades and State Emergency Service, including \$2.8 million in the annual LGGS operating grant budget from 2024-25 for Bush Fire Brigades \$5 million in 2024-25 to fund an audit of assets for Local Government Bush Fire Brigades and State Emergency Services to inform the preparation of a Comprehensive Asset Management Plan and a strategic redesign of the LGGS to meet the future needs of WA emergency services and \$45.5 million in 2024-25, to clear the backlog of unsuccessful 2023-24 Capital Grants requests for Bush Fire Brigades
 - b. Expand the Community Emergency Services Manager to all Local Governments to bolster local emergency management capability across prevention, preparedness, response and recovery
- WALGA CEO Nick Sloan hosted an EM Roundtable for update and feedback related to the current high threat period on 20 February 2024 with a six CEOs (Mundaring Narrogin Yalgoo Dardanup Northam Kalamunda) LGIS and DFES, represented by Murray Carter, ED Rural Fire Division. Issues related to BFB training requirements procedures and WHS were raised directly with DFES by CEOs at this meeting.
- WALGA's is maintaining communication with State Government and preparing to support LG consultation and a Submission on the Consolidated Emergency Services Legislation. An update was also provided by the FES Commissioner to State Council at the 6 March State Council Strategic Forum. WALGA's advocacy in relation to this Consolidated Emergency Services Legislation and the development of a sector submission, will provide a good opportunity to further advocate and progress opportunities aligned to 8.10 Management of Bushfire Brigades.
- Results from the 2023 WALGA Emergency Management Survey provide further information to support WALGA's advocacy in relation to 8.10 Management of Bushfire Brigades.

2. Given the State Council resolution was made in September 2022, what are the estimated timeframes for future advocacy activities. i.e. realistically what progress/ outcomes can we expect by the next bushfire season. I am sure our CEO can explain our situation in Mingenew regarding minimum standards for volunteers to provide context to discussion.

- WALGA will continue to advocate on 8.10 Management of Bush Fire Brigades through the range of committees and forums that we participate in.
- The mostly likely timeframe for any change is through the Consolidated Emergency Services Legislation.

3. What is the process for updating the Zone on status of WALGA advocacy positions?

- This is via the State Council Agenda, and WALGA Key activity reports. Updates are also provided through WALGA's emergency management newsletter. Email em@walga.asn.au to subscribe.

Mr Brown also noted that WALGA will keep the Zone updated on this matter via the Zone Status Report.

For reference, WALGA's advocacy Position 8.10 Management of Bush Fire Brigades is as follows.

8.10 Management of Bush Fire Brigades

1. Bush Fire Brigade volunteers play a critical role in helping to protect their local communities. Local knowledge and skills are integral to bushfire management in Western Australia.

2. Future management and funding of volunteer Bush Fire Brigades must:

- a) Recognise the changing risk environment, including work health and safety requirements, and the increasing intensity and frequency of bushfires;*
- b) Take account of the differing circumstances of Bush Fire Brigade units and regional variations in bush firefighting approaches; and*
- c) Be adequately and equitably resourced through the Emergency Services Levy.*

3. The State Government, through the Consolidated Emergency Services Act and/or other mechanism's must:

- a) Establish a clear framework to enable transfer of Bush Fire Brigades to the State Government if a Local Government decides to do;*
 - b) Consult on the process, timeline, and implications for transfer of responsibility for Bush Fire Brigades in accordance with 3(a) through the establishment of a working group comprising representatives of Local Government, Bush Fire Brigades, the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (DLGSC) and the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES);*
 - c) Provide for mandatory and minimum training requirements and recognition of competency and prior learning for Bush Fire Brigade volunteers, supported by locally delivered fit-for-purpose and universally accessible training program, designed in consultation with Bush Fire Brigade representatives, Local Government and LGIS, and managed by DFES; and*
 - d) Develop a co-designed suite of relevant management guidelines and materials to assist in the management of Bush Fire Brigades.*
- 4. As a matter of priority within the emergency services Acts review, the State Government to consider the most appropriate operational model for management of Bush Fire Brigades, which may include the establishment of an independent Rural Fire Service, as recommended in the 2016 Ferguson Report*

12.4.2 Shire of Northampton – Process for Introducing a Motion

Cr Horstman and CEO Andrew Campbell queried the requirement that all motions including urgent matters, be officially endorsed by the mover's council – ie where does the requirement come from?

Mr Tony Brown spoke to the query, noting that at State Council level, State Councillors can raise emerging issues or matters of Special Urgent Business and for these items to be considered, State Council needs to vote on approving the matter to be heard. At Zone level, there are no rules from WALGA preventing a Zone Delegate from putting forward an item in their own right but they are encouraged to obtain a motion from their Local Government before submitting an item – this is considered best practice. There is nothing stopping Zones from having their own rules and procedures regarding this process and if the Northern Country Zone requires a Council resolution, then this is permitted.

The Executive Officer clarified that neither the NCZ Constitution or Standing Orders refer to a process for introducing motions, except the Standing Orders allow Special Urgent Business to be introduced from the floor, with the approval of an absolute majority of Delegates and Delegates can introduce a motion relating to an item of interest to Local Government under General Business. There is no reference to a requirement to have official Council endorsement but there is a long-standing precedent to obtain it, to ensure that motions put forward by Delegates are representative of their Councils.

If Delegates wish to clarify the process by introducing a clause to the Standing Orders, then the Executive Officer needs to give at least 30 days' notice of any proposed alteration. The Chair asked Delegates if they wished to introduce a motion to this effect, but there were no takers and it was left open, so that motions relating to this can be introduced at a later date.

12.4.3 Requirement by Western Power to Replace Private Poles

This issue was raised by Cr Woollorton. It would appear that Western Power are deeming all private poles need to be replaced due to defects – none seem to escape the defects notice. Cr Warr suggested we ask a Western Power representative to attend our next meeting to address this.

13. DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

Recommendation:

That the next ordinary meeting of the Northern Country Zone of WALGA be held on Monday 24 June 2024, commencing at 10 am, at the Shire of Irwin.

Northern Country Zone Resolution:

Moved: Cr Leonard

Seconded: Cr Woollorton

That the next ordinary meeting of the Northern Country Zone of WALGA be held on Monday 24 June 2024, commencing at 10:00 am, at the Shire of Irwin.

Carried

14. MEETING CLOSURE

Meeting declared closed at 12:10pm.