

State Council Full Minutes 7 May 2026

Ordinary meeting no. 2 of 2026 of the
Western Australian Local Government
Association State Council
held at the Shire of Pingelly at 10:45am.

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1 OPENING, ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

1.1 OPENING

The meeting commenced at 10:51am.

1.2 ATTENDANCE

| | | |
|--------------------|---|---|
| Members | WALGA Deputy President Avon-Midland Country Zone Central Country Zone Central Metropolitan Zone Central Metropolitan Zone East Metropolitan Zone Gascoyne Country Zone Goldfields Esperance Country Zone Great Eastern Country Zone Great Southern Country Zone Murchison Country Zone North Metropolitan Zone North Metropolitan Zone Peel Country Zone Pilbara Country Zone South East Metropolitan Zone South East Metropolitan Zone South Metropolitan Zone South Metropolitan Zone South Metropolitan Zone South West Country Zone | Chris Antonio (Chair) Phillip Blight Helen Sadler Paul Kelly Cate McCullough Matthew Niikkula Laurene Bonza Stephen Strange Scott Crosby Les Price Lewis Hutton Eman Seif JP Mike Walmsley Audra Smith Patrick Hall Terresa Lynes Daniel Lim (<i>Deputy</i>) Karen Wheatland Chontelle Stone (<i>Deputy</i>) Donelle Buegge |
| Secretariat | Chief Executive Officer Executive Manager Member Services Executive Manager Policy Executive Manger Advocacy Chief Financial Officer Manager Association and Corporate Governance Policy Manager Environment and Waste Policy Manager Community State Council Governance Officer | Nick Sloan Kirsty Martin Nicole Matthews Rachel Horton Rick Murray Kathy Robertson Rebecca Brown Hannah Godsave Habiba Farrag |
| Observers | Shire of Pingelly Shire of Wandering | President Cr Jackie McBurney CEO Mr Andrew Dover President Cr Sheryl Little Cr Peter Latham CEO Dr Alistair Pinto |

1.3 APOLOGIES

| | | |
|--------------------|---|---|
| Members | WALGA President East Metropolitan Zone East Metropolitan Zone East Metropolitan Zone Kimberley Country Zone North Metropolitan Zone North Metropolitan Zone North Metropolitan Zone Northern Country Zone South Metropolitan Zone South Metropolitan Zone | Mark Irwin Paige McNeil Brooke O'Donnell (<i>Deputy</i>) Rod Henderson (<i>Deputy</i>) Chris Mitchell JP Suzanne Migdale Russ Fishwick (<i>Deputy</i>) Bronwyn Smith (<i>Deputy</i>) Elizabeth Sudlow Barry Winmar Robert Schmidt |
| Ex Officio | The Rt. Hon. Lord Mayor – City of Perth Local Government Professionals WA President | Lord Mayor, Bruce Reynolds Mr Anthony Vuleta |
| Secretariat | Executive Manager Infrastructure Manager Governance and Procurement Member Services Executive Administrator | Ian Duncan Felicity Morris Sammy Jones |

2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

WALGA acknowledges the continuing connection of Aboriginal people to Country, culture and community. We embrace the vast Aboriginal cultural diversity throughout Western Australia, including Pingeculling (Pingelly), on the land of the Wailman Noongar People, where WALGA is located and we acknowledge and pay respect to Elders past and present.

WALGA is committed to supporting the efforts of WA Local Governments to foster respectful partnerships and strengthen relationships with local Aboriginal communities.

3 ANNOUNCEMENTS

Nil.

4 MINUTES

4.1 MINUTES OF THE STATE COUNCIL MEETING HELD 4 MARCH 2026

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Phil Blight
Seconded: Audra Smith

That the Minutes of the WALGA State Council meeting held on [4 March 2026](#) be confirmed as a true and correct record of proceedings.

RESOLUTION 017.2/2026

CARRIED

4.1.1 BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE STATE COUNCIL MEETING HELD 4 MARCH 2026

Nil.

4.2 FLYING MINUTE – INQUIRY INTO AUSTRALIA'S AVIATION SECTOR

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Phil Blight
Seconded: Audra Smith

That the [Flying Minute – Inquiry into Australia's Aviation Sector](#) be confirmed as a true and correct record of decision.

RESOLUTION 017.2/2026

CARRIED

4.2.1 BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE FLYING MINUTE - INQUIRY INTO AUSTRALIA'S AVIATION SECTOR

Nil.

4.3 FLYING MINUTE – WESTERN POWER ACCESS ARRANGEMENT 6 FRAMEWORK AND APPROACH

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Phil Blight
Seconded: Audra Smith

That the [Flying Minute – Western Power Access Arrangement 6 Framework and Approach](#) be confirmed as a true and correct record of decision.

RESOLUTION 017.2/2026

CARRIED

4.3.1 BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE FLYING MINUTE – WESTERN POWER ACCESS ARRANGEMENT 6 FRAMEWORK AND APPROACH

Nil.

4.4 FLYING MINUTE – SUBMISSION ON THE MULTICULTURAL ACT FOR WESTERN AUSTRALIA

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Phil Blight
Seconded: Audra Smith

That the [Flying Minute – Submission on the Multicultural Act for Western Australia](#) be confirmed as a true and correct record of decision.

RESOLUTION 017.2/2026

CARRIED

4.4.1 BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE FLYING MINUTE – SUBMISSION ON THE MULTICULTURAL ACT FOR WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Nil.

4.5 FLYING MINUTE – DFES BUSHFIRE PLACE OF LAST RESORT GUIDELINE DISCUSSION PAPER

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Phil Blight
Seconded: Audra Smith

That the [Flying Minute – DFES Bushfire Place of Last Resort Guideline Discussion Paper](#) be confirmed as a true and correct record of decision.

RESOLUTION 017.2/2026

CARRIED

4.5.1 BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE FLYING MINUTE – DFES BUSHFIRE PLACE OF LAST RESORT GUIDELINE DISCUSSION PAPER

Nil.

4.6 FLYING MINUTE – DRAFT RENEWABLE ENERGY PLANNING CODE SUBMISSION

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Phil Blight
Seconded: Audra Smith

That the [Flying Minute – Draft Renewable Energy Planning Code Submission](#) be confirmed as a true and correct record of decision.

RESOLUTION 017.2/2026

CARRIED

4.6.1 BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE FLYING MINUTE – DRAFT RENEWABLE ENERGY PLANNING CODE SUBMISSION

Nil.

5 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Pursuant to our Code of Conduct, State Councillors must declare to the Chair any potential conflict of interest they have in a matter before State Council as soon as they become aware of it.

- Karen Wheatland declared an interest in item 8.5 – Municipal Waste Advisory Council (MWAC) Wind-up.
- Paul Kelly declared an interest in item 8.12 – LGISWA Board Appointments – CONFIDENTIAL.

6 EX OFFICIO REPORTS

6.1 CITY OF PERTH REPORT

Lord Mayor, Bruce Reynolds, was an apology for this meeting.

6.2 LG PROFESSIONALS REPORT

Mr Anthony Vuleta, President, LG Professionals WA, was an apology for this meeting.

7 EMERGING ISSUES

Notification of emerging issues must be provided to the Chair no later than 24 hours prior to the meeting.

Nil.

8 MATTERS FOR DECISION

8.1 PROTECTING COUNCIL MEMBER AND EMPLOYEE PRIVACY ADVOCACY POSITION

By Meghan Dwyer, Governance Specialist

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council endorse the following new Advocacy Position:

Protecting Council Member and Employee Privacy

That WALGA advocates to the State Government to:

- 1. Undertake a review of disclosure requirements for Local Government Council Members and employees under the Local Government Act 1995,***
- 2. Undertake the necessary legislative amendments to strike an appropriate balance between transparency, personal safety, and contemporary community expectations of privacy, including:***
 - a. Amend section 5.95(1) to prescribe that the right to inspect primary and annual returns contained in the register of financial interests under s.5.94(b) does not extend to the full residential address of the relevant person, and is instead limited to the suburb or locality.***
 - b. Amend Form 7 of the Local Government (Constitutional) Regulations 1998 to remove the requirement to disclose a full residential address when making the declaration of office.***

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The South East Metropolitan Zone resolved to request WALGA advocate to amend s.5.95(1) of the *Local Government Act 1995* to specify that the right to inspect Primary and Annual Returns (Returns) contained in the Register of Financial Interests under s.5.94(b) does not extend to the residential address of the relevant person.
- Returns may include residential addresses, which are then made publicly accessible, creating privacy and safety risks.
- Council Members and employees are increasingly reluctant to disclose residential addresses due to safety and security risks, demonstrating that current legislation no longer aligns with contemporary expectations of privacy.
- Recent parliamentary scrutiny of similar requirements for Members of Parliament led to recommendations to remove full residential address disclosures, which the Government supported.
- In addition to Returns, Council Members must also provide a residential address when making their declaration of office.
- It would be appropriate for a review of all public disclosure requirements under the *Local Government Act 1995* to occur to ensure that they remain contemporary, effective, and aligned with modern standards of accountability and personal security.
- The Governance Policy Team endorsed the proposed advocacy position at its meeting on 23 March 2026.

ATTACHMENT

- Jurisdictional Comparison – Address Information in Council Member Returns and Declarations of Office (included below).

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLICATIONS

The proposed advocacy position aligns to the WALGA 2025-2029 Strategic Plan, in particular:

- Influence – Lead advocacy on issues important to Local Government.
- Support – Anticipate, understand and respond to Member needs.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The recommendation is for State Council to endorse a new [Advocacy Position](#).

Protecting Council Member and Employee Privacy

That WALGA advocates to the State Government to:

1. *Undertake a review of disclosure requirements for Local Government Council Members and employees under the Local Government Act 1995.*
2. *Undertake the necessary legislative amendments to strike an appropriate balance between transparency, personal safety, and contemporary community expectations of privacy, including:*
 - a. *Amend section 5.95(1) to prescribe that the right to inspect primary and annual returns contained in the register of financial interests under s.5.94(b) does not extend to the full residential address of the relevant person, and is instead limited to the suburb or locality.*
 - b. *Amend Form 7 of the Local Government (Constitutional) Regulations 1998 to remove the requirement to disclose a full residential address when making the declaration of office.*

BACKGROUND

At the 3 December 2025 meeting, State Council adopted new Advocacy Position 2.5.20 Electoral Material - Authorisation Statement Address Requirements in response to significant privacy and safety concerns arising from the obligation to publish a candidate's physical address on electoral materials.

When considering this item at the preceding round of Zone meetings, the South East Metropolitan Zone (SEMZ) resolved to request WALGA advocate to amend s.5.95(1) of the *Local Government Act 1995* (the Act) to specify that the right to inspect Primary and Annual Returns (Returns) contained in the Register of Financial Interests under s.5.94(b) does not extend to the residential address of the relevant person.

State Council resolved to refer the SEMZ comments to the Governance Policy Team.

The Governance Policy Team endorsed the proposed advocacy position at its meeting on 23 March 2026.

COMMENT

Public disclosure regimes must strike an appropriate balance between public transparency and personal safety. The inclusion of personal identifying information in publicly accessible documents has become increasingly problematic. As digital publication and internet search capabilities have expanded, material that once had limited circulation can be copied and distributed with ease. This environment has reinforced the need to carefully consider how much personal information is necessary to make publicly available, and the risks that may arise when doing so.

Local Government Act

The Act establishes a range of public disclosure obligations designed to promote transparency and accountability. However, digital publication, increased data availability, and heightened personal safety concerns have created new risks that were not contemplated when these provisions were first drafted.

Returns require relevant persons to disclose personal financial information. Information disclosed includes the address of each parcel of real property, located in the district or in an adjoining district, in which the person had an interest and the nature of the interest in each parcel of real property (s.5.79). In practice, this often results in the disclosure of a Council Member or employee's residential address.

Returns are required to be included in the register of financial interests. Section 5.94(b) of the Act requires any register of financial interest to be made available to the public, and s.5.96 requires the Local Government to provide copies upon request.

Although s.5.93 of the Act establishes penalties for the improper use of information, information can now be copied and distributed almost instantly. In many cases, the harm may occur well before any investigation or action can be commenced.

In addition to the requirement for Council Members to disclose interests in real property as part of their returns, s.2.29 of the Act, together with Form 7 of the *Local Government (Constitution) Regulations 1998*, requires each Council Member to provide their full residential address when making their statutory declaration of office. Although this declaration is not required to be made publicly available under s. 5.94(b) of the Act, some Local Governments livestream or publish recordings of the proceedings. As a result, full residential address details become publicly accessible.

Emerging risks and issues

Local Governments have observed increasing reluctance from Council Members and employees to provide their residential address. Reasons include:

- being registered as a silent elector under the *Electoral Act 1907*,
- experiences or risks of family or domestic violence,
- concerns that leave of absence approvals may signal when a residence may be unoccupied,
- role-related risks, such as potential targeted harassment by dissatisfied community members.

Disclosure of personal residential addresses can also expose individuals to cybersecurity and identity-theft risks, as this information can be combined with other data to build detailed personal profiles. Publicly accessible addresses may make individuals more vulnerable to targeted scams, social engineering, and unwanted contact, increasing both digital and physical security risks.

Parliamentary disclosure obligations

The disclosure of the residential addresses of Members of Parliament in their Primary and Annual Returns has recently been considered by the [Legislative Assembly Procedures and Privileges Committee in Report No.1: Protecting privacy and other reasons to update the Members of Parliament \(Financial Interests\) Act 1992](#).

The Committee recommended that the Government review the relevant legislation, "with a view to addressing the requirement for the disclosure of full residential addresses and to

consider broader legislative updates necessary to ensure the Act remains contemporary, effective, and aligned with modern standards of accountability and personal security.”

The [Government response](#) supported this recommendation.

Privacy and Responsible Information Sharing

The objectives of the new *Privacy and Responsible Information Sharing Act 2024* (PRIS Act) include promoting responsible and transparent practices in the handling of personal information and balancing the public interests of protecting the privacy of personal information with the free flow of information by agencies.

Most privacy provisions in the PRIS Act come into effect on 1 July 2026.

The following sections of the PRIS Act intersect with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1995*:

- The information privacy principles do not apply to information that is already publicly accessible. This includes information in documents that are either generally available to the public or made available for public inspection under another written law (s.22).
- An individual may request a public entity to remove their personal information from a public register if making the information publicly available would substantially affect any individual's safety or wellbeing. If the public entity is satisfied that the grounds exist, the public entity must comply with the request unless the public entity is satisfied that the public interest in maintaining public access to the information outweighs any individual interest in the information not being made publicly available (s.77).

While this appears to provide a mechanism for individuals to address specific safety and privacy concerns, it would be preferable to ensure that the legislative requirements avoid unnecessary risks to all Council Members and employees.

WALGA will seek to engage with the Information Commissioner and Deputy Privacy Commissioner to clarify the way in which these and other PRIS Act provisions will apply to Council Members.

Review and amendments to the Local Government Act

As Local Government Council Members and employees share the same safety concerns as Members of Parliament it would be appropriate to echo the Procedures and Privilege Committee and advocate for a broad review of all public disclosure requirements under the *Local Government Act 1995* to ensure that they remain contemporary, effective, and aligned with modern standards of accountability and personal security. A review would allow a clearer, risk-aware framework to be established that protects individuals while preserving appropriate transparency.

Within this broader reform, several targeted amendments are necessary. It is proposed that s. 5.95(1) be amended so that the right to inspect information in the register of financial interests under s. 5.94(b) is limited to the suburb or locality of each property, rather than the full residential address of the relevant person. Additionally, the requirement for Council Members to provide their full residential address in the statutory declaration of office should be removed. These amendments are consistent with practices adopted in other Australian jurisdictions and reflect the approach now being reconsidered for Members of Parliament.

Importantly, these changes would not weaken transparency or accountability. Council Members and employees would still be required to disclose their full residential address in Returns, and would continue to declare direct financial, indirect financial, proximity, and impartiality interests when they arise in decision-making processes. This ensures that relevant interests remain publicly recorded when they matter, without unnecessarily exposing personal residential details. By limiting public access to only what is necessary, the legislative framework can better protect individual safety while preserving the integrity of the disclosure regime.

ATTACHMENT: JURISDICTIONAL COMPARISON – ADDRESS INFORMATION IN COUNCIL MEMBER RETURNS AND DECLARATIONS OF OFFICE

| DISCLOSURES IN RETURNS | |
|---|--|
| <p>Victoria <u>Local Government Act 2020</u> <u>Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020</u></p> | <p>CEO must prepare summary of personal interests information disclosed in the last personal interest return.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes the town or suburb, but not the street address or number of the land that is the place of residence <p>Other matters to be included or excluded are prescribed.</p> <p>Includes that a specified person may request in writing information not be included if the CEO consider including the information would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be reasonably likely to place the personal safety of any person at risk, or • unreasonably expose a business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage <p>Summary of personal interest returns available to members of the public.</p> <p>Detailed personal interests returns are only available to certain persons.</p> |
| <p>New South Wales <u>Governance Information (Public Access) Act 2009</u></p> | <p>From the <i>Information Access Guideline 1 - For Local Councils on the disclosure of information</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Returns should be made publicly available on the council's website unless there is an overriding public interest against release or to do so would impose unreasonable additional costs on council. • A consideration against disclosure is where release of the information may expose a person to a risk of harm or of serious harassment or serious intimidation. • In the circumstances where council decides that there is an overriding public interest against disclosure, consideration should then be given to whether it is practicable to release an edited copy of the record (for example redacting the individual's signature or residential address) • If it is practicable to do so, then the information should be deleted from a copy of the record and the remainder of the return made available on the council's website. |

| | |
|---|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where information is deleted from a return, council should keep a record indicating, in general terms, the nature of the information redacted. |
| Queensland Local Government Regulation 2021 | Suburb or locality of the land is required (not full address). |
| South Australia Local Government Act 1999 | Personal addresses are not to be published nor are any addresses where the CEO is satisfied that the inclusion in the Register of the address of a person would place at risk the personal safety of that person, a member of that person's family or any other person. |
| Tasmania | Currently does not require councillors to lodge a personal interests return. The Tasmanian government is implementing a new framework to strengthen the management of local government councillor conflicts of interest, with reforms expected before the 2026 elections. |

| INFORMATION IN COUNCIL MEMBER DECLARATIONS OF OFFICE | |
|--|-----------------------|
| Victoria Local Government Act 2020 Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020 | Address not required. |
| New South Wales Local Government Act 1993 | Address not required. |
| Queensland Local Government Regulation 2021 | Address not required. |
| South Australia Local Government (General) Regulations 2013 | Address not required. |
| Tasmania Local Government (General) Regulations 2025 | Address not required. |

ZONE CONSIDERATION

| | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Avon Midland Country Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| Central Country Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| Central Metropolitan Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| East Metropolitan Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| Gascoyne Country Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| Goldfields Esperance Country Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| Great Eastern Country Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| Great Southern Country Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| Kimberley Country Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| Murchison Country Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| North Metropolitan Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| Northern Country Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| Peel Country Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| Pilbara Country Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| South East Metropolitan Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| South Metropolitan Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |

SOUTH WEST COUNTRY ZONE

That the South West Country Zone supports the WALGA recommendation for State Council Agenda item 8.1, subject to the addition of point 2(c) as below:

- c. Requests that WALGA urgently advocate to the State Government for legislative amendment to section 4.87 of the *Local Government Act 1995* to explicitly prevent candidates from being compelled, in practice, to disclose their residential address on electoral material, including by providing for alternative non-residential physical address options, while preserving electoral transparency and accountability.

SECRETARIAT COMMENT

State Council adopted the following Advocacy Position in December 2025:

2.5.20 Electoral Material - Authorisation Statement Address Requirements

That WALGA advocate to the State Government to amend section 4.87 of the Local Government Act 1995 to:

- 1. Replace the requirement to include the name and address of the person authorising the electoral material, with a requirement to include the name and locality of the person authorising the material.*
- 2. Remove the requirement for the name and business address of the electoral material printer to appear at the end of the electoral material.*

WALGA will advance both this advocacy position and the proposed new advocacy position through joint advocacy efforts regarding privacy.

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Helen Sadler
Seconded: Karen Wheatland

That State Council endorse the following new Advocacy Position:

Protecting Council Member and Employee Privacy

That WALGA advocates to the State Government to:

- 1. Undertake a review of disclosure requirements for Local Government Council Members and employees under the Local Government Act 1995,***
- 2. Undertake the necessary legislative amendments to strike an appropriate balance between transparency, personal safety, and contemporary community expectations of privacy, including:***
 - a. Amend section 5.95(1) to prescribe that the right to inspect primary and annual returns contained in the register of financial interests under s.5.94(b) does not extend to the full residential address of the relevant person, and is instead limited to the suburb or locality.***
 - b. Amend Form 7 of the Local Government (Constitutional) Regulations 1998 to remove the requirement to disclose a full residential address when making the declaration of office.***

RESOLUTION 018.2/2026

CARRIED

8.2 WATER MANAGEMENT ADVOCACY POSITION

By Rebecca Brown, Policy Manager, Environment and Waste

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council:

1. Endorse the following new Advocacy Position:

Water Management

- 1. *Access to consistent, reliable and adequate water supplies is critical for Local Government operations, community health, amenity, environmental sustainability and economic activity.***
- 2. *WALGA is calling on the State Government to:***
 - a. Modernise water management legislation and regulation, including:***
 - i. undertaking a review of the water licensing and allocation system to ensure equitable access and prioritise high value community use including for public open space***
 - ii. developing a state-wide framework for integrated regional and catchment-scale water planning.***
 - b. Adequately, sustainably and equitably fund critical water infrastructure programs for Local Government, including:***
 - i. drainage and irrigation upgrades***
 - ii. alternative water sources (recycled water, stormwater harvesting, desalination and groundwater replenishment) and disused water asset transfer***
 - iii. small-scale sewerage infrastructure headworks and infill sewerage.***
 - c. Expand the Waterwise Council Program statewide and provide:***
 - i. increased support and resources to assist Local Government in delivering water efficiency measures***
 - ii. incentives for Local Governments to undertake water efficiency initiatives.***
 - d. Improve water data access and capability for Local Governments to ensure evidence-based decision making.***
 - e. Provide effective leadership, guidance, education and enforcement to address the impacts of stormwater runoff.***

2. Retires Advocacy Position 6.14 Planning for Water.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- A new Water Management Advocacy Position and the retirement of position 6.14 Planning for Water is proposed.
- The new Position has been developed following consultation and feedback on WALGA's *Water Management in Western Australia Discussion Paper*.
- 28 Local Governments provided more than 200 comments on the paper, with the main issues being:
 - equitable access to consistent and reliable water;
 - water licensing and allocation;

- integrated regional and catchment-scale water planning;
- water for Public Open Space (POS);
- funding
 - for critical infrastructure - drainage and irrigation, alternative water sources and sewerage infill and headworks.
 - for water efficiency and water sensitive urban design initiatives.
- expanding and improving the Waterwise Council Program;
- access to data and information to inform decision making; and
- addressing the impacts of stormwater runoff.
- The outcomes sought in 6.14 Planning for Water have been realised in the recently released State Planning Policy 2.9.
- The Environment Policy Team endorsed retiring the position and the new position at its meeting on 19 March 2026.

ATTACHMENT

- [Water Management Discussion Paper](#)
- [Water Management Consultation Summary Report](#)

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLICATIONS

This item relates to the following WALGA Strategic Pillars:

- Influence
 - Lead advocacy on issues important to Local Government.
 - Empower the Local Government sector to build communities equipped for the future.
- Support - Anticipate, understand and respond to Member needs.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

It is proposed that the following new [Advocacy Position](#) be **endorsed**:

Water Management

1. *Access to consistent, reliable and adequate water supplies is critical for Local Government operations, community health, amenity, environmental sustainability and economic activity.*
2. *WALGA is calling on the State Government to:*
 - a. *Modernise water management legislation and regulation, including:*
 - i. *Undertaking a review of the water licensing and allocation system to ensure equitable access and prioritise high value community use including for public open space.*
 - ii. *Developing a State-wide framework for integrated regional and catchment-scale water planning.*
 - b. *Adequately, sustainably and equitably fund critical water infrastructure programs for Local Government, including:*
 - i. *Drainage and irrigation upgrades.*
 - ii. *Alternative water sources (recycled water, stormwater harvesting, desalination and groundwater replenishment) and disused water asset transfer.*
 - iii. *Small-scale sewerage infrastructure headworks and infill sewerage.*
 - c. *Expand the Waterwise Council Program statewide and provide:*
 - i. *Increased support and resources to assist Local Government in delivering water efficiency measures.*
 - ii. *Incentives for Local Governments to undertake water efficiency initiatives.*

- d. *Improve water data access and capability for Local Governments to ensure evidence-based decision making.*
- e. *Provide effective leadership, guidance, education and enforcement to address the impacts of stormwater runoff.*

It is proposed that the following Advocacy Position be **retired**:

6.14 Planning for Water

As part of the Water Management Report endorsement process, formal support from the relevant Local Government should be required where:

1. *It is intended that the Local Government will become the infrastructure asset manager; or*
2. *The proposed location of water infrastructure assets will impact Local Government assets or facilities.*

The outcomes sought in Position 6.14 have been realised in the recently released [State Planning Policy 2.9](#).

BACKGROUND

WALGA identified the need to consolidate and expand on current Water related [Advocacy Positions](#) and has undertaken initial consultation, through targeted engagement and consideration of issues raised by the sector previously. To inform the development of a new Advocacy Position, WALGA developed a Discussion Paper to gain feedback from the sector on their current challenges and needs in relation to water management across the state.

WALGA released the Discussion Paper for comment in late November 2025, with an initial deadline of 15 January 2026 for comment, however based on feedback from the sector this deadline was extended to Thursday, 12 March.

28 Local Governments have provided feedback, 14 of those Council/CEO level feedback. The feedback provided by Local Governments was comprehensive, with over 200 individual comments received across the submissions. WALGA acknowledges the significant time and consideration given by Members in providing that level of feedback.

The main themes of the feedback reflect those explored in the Discussion Paper and are consistent across Local Government:

- Legislation which is inequitable and outdated, particularly for licensing and allocation.
- State legislation should align with the National Water Agreement, particularly strategic, long term integrated planning and equitable access to drinking water.
- Aging and insufficient water infrastructure.
- Support and resourcing needed to explore and mainstream alternative water sources.
- Reactive approaches to headworks and sewerage servicing constraining development, particularly in regional and high-growth areas.
- Public Open Space (POS) in relation to planning decisions not accounting for the water needed to sustain these areas.
- Statewide expansion of the Waterwise Council program and improvement in program support and design.
- High interest in improving and supporting water efficiency and water sensitive urban design outcomes.
- Water data gaps and poor data sharing limits sound decision making.
- Water quality as an emerging and under-recognised issue.

WALGA has consolidated the feedback into a Consultation Report which summarises the main themes and issues raised by the sector and how it has been addressed in the draft Advocacy Position.

COMMENT

The new Position has been informed by the information, issues and priorities identified in feedback received from Local Governments on the WALGA Discussion Paper.

A new Advocacy Position is timely given the release of [Made Possible by Water](#) by the State Government on 21 March 2026, a document outlining WA's water future. A comprehensive Advocacy Position on this issue will be essential to assist WALGA's advocacy and influence how the Government delivers the priorities identified. Some of the matters identified in the draft Advocacy Position are reflected in Made Possible by Water, including expansion of the WaterWise Program and delivery of new water sources.

The Environment Policy Team endorsed the new Advocacy Position and the retirement of Position 6.14 at its meeting on 19 March 2026.

ZONE CONSIDERATION

| | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Central Country Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| Central Metropolitan Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| East Metropolitan Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| Gascoyne Country Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| Goldfields Esperance Country Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| Great Eastern Country Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| Great Southern Country Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| Kimberley Country Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| Murchison Country Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| North Metropolitan Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| Northern Country Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| Peel Country Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| Pilbara Country Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| South East Metropolitan Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| South West Country Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |

AVON MIDLAND COUNTRY ZONE

That recommendation 8.2 was endorsed with the addition of 'emergency response' to Point 1 of the Advocacy Position:

- Access to consistent, reliable and adequate water supplies is critical for Local Government operations including for emergency response, community health, amenity, environmental sustainability and economic activity.*

SECRETARIAT COMMENT

The Composite Recommendation has been updated to include the Zones addition.

SOUTH METROPOLITAN ZONE

That the South Metropolitan Zone supports the WALGA recommendation for State Council Agenda item 8.2 as contained in the State Council Agenda and as provided above, with the following additions:

- In point 2(b):
 - Adequately, sustainably and equitably fund and protect critical water infrastructure programs for Local Government*
- A new point 2(b)(iv):

- *iv: Reuse water programs across the State*

SECRETARIAT COMMENT

The importance of protection for critical water infrastructure has been incorporated into point 2(b) and the word reuse in point 2(b)(ii) in the Composite Recommendation.

COMPOSITE RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Karen Wheatland
Seconded: Phil Blight

That State Council:

1. Endorse the following new Advocacy Position:

Water Management

- 1. *Access to consistent, reliable and adequate water supplies is critical for Local Government operations, emergency response, community health, amenity, environmental sustainability and economic activity.***
- 2. *WALGA is calling on the State Government to:***
 - a. *Modernise water management legislation and regulation, including:***
 - i. undertaking a review of the water licensing and allocation system to ensure equitable access and prioritise high value community use including for public open space***
 - ii. developing a state-wide framework for integrated regional and catchment-scale water planning.***
 - b. *Protect and adequately, sustainably and equitably fund critical water infrastructure programs for Local Government, including:***
 - i. drainage and irrigation upgrades***
 - ii. alternative water sources (recycled and reused water, stormwater harvesting, desalination and groundwater replenishment) and disused water asset transfer***
 - iii. small-scale sewerage infrastructure headworks and infill sewerage.***
 - c. *Expand the Waterwise Council Program statewide and provide:***
 - i. increased support and resources to assist Local Government in delivering water efficiency measures***
 - ii. incentives for Local Governments to undertake water efficiency initiatives.***
 - d. *Improve water data access and capability for Local Governments to ensure evidence-based decision making.***
 - e. *Provide effective leadership, guidance, education and enforcement to address the impacts of stormwater runoff.***

2. Retires Advocacy Position *6.14 Planning for Water.*

RESOLUTION 019.2/2026

CARRIED

8.3 OFF ROADS VEHICLES ADVOCACY POSITION

By Rebecca Hicks, Policy Advisor Community

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council retire Advocacy Position 3.12 Off Road Vehicles.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- It is proposed that Advocacy Position 3.12 Off Road Vehicles (ORV) be retired.
- The *Control of Vehicles (Off-road Vehicles) Act 1978* (the ORV Act) provides the legislative framework for the use of off-road vehicles within permitted areas in WA.
- Nine Local Governments own and maintain Off Road Vehicle (ORV) areas.
- Advocacy Position 3.12 Off Road Vehicles was adopted by State Council in 2018 in response to concerns from Members about the use of permitted ORV areas.
- Amendments to the ORV Act in 2025 address the core objectives of the ORV Advocacy Position, particularly as it relates to registration and enforcement.
- The retirement of the ORV Advocacy Position was endorsed by the People and Place Policy Team at its meeting on 19 March 2026.

ATTACHMENT

- [Control of Vehicles \(Off-road Areas\) Amendment Act 2025](#)

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLICATIONS

Retiring this Advocacy Position aligns with the following WALGA Strategic Pillars:

- Influence
 - Lead advocacy on issues important to Local Government.
 - Empower the Local Government sector to build communities equipped for the future.
- Support
 - Anticipate, understand and respond to Member needs.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

It is proposed that Advocacy Position [3.12 Off Road Vehicles](#) be **retired**.

Legislation relating to off road vehicles should be reviewed to align registration and licensing of off-road vehicles with other vehicle types are users. In addition, educational resources should be developed in consultation with users, regulators, and vendors relating to safety, regulatory compliance and other associated matters.

BACKGROUND

The *Control of Vehicles (Off-road Vehicles) Act 1978* (the ORV Act) prohibits the use of Off Road Vehicles (ORVs) in areas outside of permitted areas and makes provisions for the use of ORVs in permitted areas. The Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety (LGIRS) is responsible for administering the legislation and providing [information and support](#) to users and Local Governments. The legislation defines ORVs as including, but not limited to, trail bikes, quad bikes, beach buggies and road licensed vehicles such as four-wheel drives when used in off-road locations.

The use of ORVs outside of permitted areas can have impacts on Local Governments and communities including community safety in public spaces, road safety and environmental impacts. These issues fall under the scope of other legislation.

Nine Local Governments currently maintain and operate permitted areas: the Cities of Greater Geraldton, Karratha, Kwinana and Swan and the Shires of Carnarvon, Dandaragan, Gingin, Port Hedland and York.

WALGA's Advocacy Position was adopted by State Council in 2018, in response to Member concerns regarding the use of permitted ORV areas.

The ORV Act was amended in 2025 to align penalties and enforcement expectations with other WA transport legislation. The *Amendment Act* includes provisions to introduce online and label registrations and increase penalties for existing offences. The majority of the ORV Amendment Act commenced with immediate effect in August 2025. Sections of the legislation relating to registration labels are dependent on system design changes to the online registration platform. The legislation regulations and commencement date are expected by the end of 2026.

In 2024, the [State Government announced \\$4.8 million](#) in grant funding for Local Governments to develop new and upgrade existing ORV areas. This funding recognises the key role Local Government plays in the upkeep and management of ORV areas.

COMMENT

The ORV Amendment Act addresses the core objectives of the WALGA ORV advocacy position, particularly as it relates to registration and enforcement. As the intended outcomes of the advocacy position have been achieved, it is proposed that Advocacy Position 3.12 Off Road Vehicles be retired. WALGA will work with LGIRS to provide advice and support on the commencement of the Act regulations for Members managing permitted areas.

WALGA has engaged with Members that currently manage ORV permitted areas. Six Local Governments have responded and provided their support for the retirement of the advocacy position.

WALGA will continue to monitor emerging issues associated with ORVs, with a particular focus on usage outside of permitted areas.

The proposed retirement of the ORV advocacy position was endorsed by the People and Place Policy Team at its meeting on 19 March 2026.

ZONE CONSIDERATION

| | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Avon Midland Country Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| Central Country Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| Central Metropolitan Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| East Metropolitan Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| Gascoyne Country Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| Goldfields Esperance Country Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| Great Eastern Country Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| Great Southern Country Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| Kimberley Country Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| Murchison Country Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| North Metropolitan Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| Northern Country Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| Peel Country Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| Pilbara Country Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| South East Metropolitan Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| South Metropolitan Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| South West Country Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Mike Walmsley
Seconded: Laurene Bonza

That State Council retire Advocacy Position 3.12 Off Road Vehicles.

RESOLUTION 020.2/2026

CARRIED

8.4 HOMELESSNESS ADVOCACY POSITION

By Hannah Godsave, Manager Community Policy

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council replace Advocacy Position 3.11 Homelessness with the following:

WALGA calls on the Western Australian and Australian Governments to provide leadership, support and funding to prevent and respond to homelessness, in particular:

- 1. Ensuring specialist homelessness services are responsive to need, place-based and people-centred.***
- 2. Investing in social and affordable housing and wraparound services.***

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- It is proposed that the 2019 Advocacy Position 3.11 Homelessness be updated.
- While responding to homelessness is a State and Australian Government responsibility, the impacts of homelessness intersect with multiple areas of Local Government service delivery and requires them to manage community expectations.
- Western Australian Local Governments are reporting increased numbers of people experiencing homelessness, including Local Governments that have historically experienced minimal impact.
- WALGA undertook a survey of Members in early 2026 to better understand the impact on the sector and inform a review of the current Advocacy Position.
- The updated Position reflects the sector's view that the Australian and Western Australian Government should provide leadership, support and funding to prevent and respond to homelessness, in particular specialist services, social and affordable housing and wraparound services.
- The People and Place Policy Team endorsed the revised position at its meeting on 19 March 2026.

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLICATIONS

This item relates to the following WALGA Strategic Pillars:

- Influence
 - Lead advocacy on issues important to Local Government.
 - Empower the Local Government sector to build communities equipped for the future.
- Support
 - Anticipate, understand and respond to Member needs.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

It is proposed that the **existing** Advocacy Position [3.11 Homelessness](#):

WALGA recognises that Local Government through its planning, health, community development and regulatory powers can facilitate positive local and regional responses to end homelessness, however does not see that it has a lead role. Rather, Local Government's role is one of a stakeholder that requires early engagement in the understanding of collaborative approaches that improve the quality of life for people experiencing homelessness in all of its manifestations.

be **replaced** with a new Advocacy Position as follows:

WALGA calls on the Western Australian and Australian Governments to provide leadership, support and funding to prevent and respond to homelessness, in particular:

- 1. Ensuring specialist homelessness services are responsive to need, place-based and people-centred.*
- 2. Investing in social and affordable housing and wraparound services.*

BACKGROUND

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) defines homelessness as when a person does not have suitable accommodation alternatives and their current living arrangement:

- is in a dwelling that is inadequate;
- has no tenure, or tenure is short and not extendable; or
- does not allow them to have control of, and access to space for social relations.

The ABS Census of Population and Housing provides the authoritative data source on people experiencing homelessness. The 2021 Census reported 9,729 people experiencing homelessness in WA. The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare provides more contemporary data based on interactions with specialist homelessness services. In 2024-25, almost 289,000 (1 in 115) people engaged with specialist homelessness services in WA, of which 47% were accessing homelessness support for the first time.

While responding to homelessness is a State and Australian Government responsibility, the impacts of homelessness intersect with multiple areas of Local Government service delivery, including the maintenance of public spaces, planning and zoning for appropriate services and revenue-related functions such as rates and grants administration. Local Governments must also manage community expectations about how they will respond to homelessness.

WALGA's current advocacy position was adopted by State Council in 2019 in the lead up to the release of [All Paths Lead to a Home: Western Australia's 10-Year Strategy on Homelessness 2020-2030](#) (the Strategy) released by the State Government. The Strategy sets out a vision for a whole of community response, led by the Department of Communities, working towards ending homelessness in Western Australia. The Strategy identifies a predominantly supportive role for the Local Government sector in addressing homelessness, while also acknowledging that some Local Governments directly provide homelessness and accommodation services. Suggested sector contributions in the Strategy include facilitating local partnerships, identifying rough sleepers, sharing local area knowledge to inform State Government resourcing decisions, and connecting people to specialist services. This supportive role for the Local Government sector is reflected in the current Advocacy Position.

At the National level, the [National Agreement on Social Housing and Homelessness](#) provides a five-year funding and accountability framework between the Australian and State/Territory Governments to support social housing and homelessness services until June 2029. The bilateral schedule for Western Australia sets out a \$165.9 million homelessness funding contribution from both parties.

COMMENT

Local Governments have been reporting increased numbers of people experiencing homelessness, including Local Governments that have historically experienced minimal impact. Local Governments have shared that they are facing growing pressure to meet both their defined obligations and community expectations for comprehensive responses, including specialist homelessness services triage, investment in housing and support service provision.

To better understand the issues being raised by Members, WALGA conducted a sector survey on homelessness in early 2026. 68 responses (49%) were received, 26 metropolitan and 42 regional, with representation from all WALGA Zones. Key findings from the survey include:

- 74% of respondents report an increase in the significance of homelessness in their Local Government area in the last two years.
- 60% of respondents report an increase in enquires from community members regarding homelessness in the last two years.
 - Key issues raised in community enquiries are rough sleeping and persons living in vehicles.
- 23% of respondents consider there is no role beyond defined responsibilities for Local Government in response to homelessness.
- 61% of respondents consider preventative measures to reduce homelessness and facilitating connections to specialist service providers as an appropriate role for Local Government in response to homelessness.
- 83% of respondents rank State and Federal Government funding as the highest or second highest priority enabler to respond to homelessness.
- 51% of respondents report that current specialist homelessness services are not adequate within their Local Government area.
- Respondents rank affordable housing as the top priority for support/services to address homelessness, followed by wraparound services and specialist support services.

Informed by survey responses and acknowledging the support role of Local Government identified in the State Strategy, the updated position calls on the Australian and Western Australian Government to provide the necessary leadership, support and funding to prevent and respond to homelessness, in particular specialist services, social and affordable housing and wraparound services.

The People and Place Policy Team endorsed the revised position at its meeting on 19 March 2026 meeting.

ZONE CONSIDERATION

| | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Avon Midland Country Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| Central Country Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| East Metropolitan Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| Goldfields Esperance Country Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| Great Eastern Country Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| Great Southern Country Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| Kimberley Country Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| Murchison Country Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| Northern Country Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| Peel Country Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| Pilbara Country Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |
| South East Metropolitan Zone | WALGA recommendation supported |

CENTRAL METROPOLITAN ZONE

That the Central Metropolitan Zone supports the WALGA recommendation for State Council Agenda item 8.4 as contained in the State Council Agenda with the addition to point 2 as follows:

2. *Investing in crisis accommodation, social and affordable housing and wraparound services.*

SECRETARIAT COMMENT

Crisis accommodation is a key response to homelessness and is of particular significance to Local Governments that may otherwise need to respond to people rough sleeping in public areas.

Under the [National Agreement on Social Housing and Homelessness](#) (NASHH), crisis accommodation is classified as a specialist homelessness service. The Advocacy Position has been intentionally framed using the overarching term specialist homelessness services to maintain a flexible application to sector needs while aligning with the language of the NASHH. This approach reflects that the intended audience is the Western Australian and Australian Governments and supports consistency with established policy frameworks.

WALGA acknowledges that three Zones have raised the inclusion of the term crisis accommodation. This has been incorporated into point 2 of the Composite Recommendation.

GASCOYNE COUNTRY ZONE

That the Gascoyne Country Zone supports the recommendation for State Council Agenda item 8.4 as contained in the State Council Agenda and as provided above subject to the addition of point 3 below:

3. *Recognising that Local Governments, particularly in regional, rural and remote areas, are not in a position to absorb or assume additional funding responsibilities for homelessness prevention, response or management, and that sustainable funding must be led by the Western Australian and Australian Governments.*

SECRETARIAT COMMENT

WALGA recognises the Zone's request to clearly articulate concerns around the sector's capacity to absorb costs outside of defined responsibilities. WALGA notes that this concern is not limited to regional, rural and remote Local Governments and shared across the sector. The opening statement of the Advocacy Position is intended to articulate the sector's view that the Western Australian and Australian Governments are responsible for providing funding to prevent and respond to homelessness.

NORTH METROPOLITAN ZONE

That the North Metropolitan Zone supports the WALGA recommendation for State Council Agenda item 8.4 as contained in the State Council Agenda and as provided above, with the following changes:

WALGA calls on the Western Australian and Australian Governments to provide leadership, support and funding to prevent and respond to homelessness, in particular:

1. *Ensuring specialist homelessness services are responsive to need, place-based and people-centred.*
2. *Investing in social and affordable housing and wraparound services.*
3. *Addressing the root causes of the housing crisis.*

WALGA encourages Local Government Members to ensure their responses to homelessness are guided by principles of consistency and fairness.

SECRETARIAT COMMENT

In relation to point 3 of the Zone's recommended Advocacy Position, WALGA acknowledges the link between the housing crisis and the number of people experiencing homelessness. Critically, the need for more social and affordable housing, which is the responsibility of the Western Australian and Australian Governments. WALGA considers broader reference to housing dilutes the key ask.

WALGA Advocacy Positions are targeted at the Western Australian and Australian Governments on behalf of Members, not at Local Governments. The addition of *WALGA encourages Local Government Members to ensure their responses to homelessness are guided by principles of consistency and fairness* is therefore not supported.

WALGA continues to represent the Local Government sector at key cross-sector forums on homelessness, creating connections, partnerships and sharing information with Members. WALGA notes that the North Metropolitan Zone members have collaborated on the Regional Homelessness Plan and that the document is shared on the [Shelter WA Local Government Homelessness Hub](#) to support other Local Governments.

SOUTH METROPOLITAN ZONE

That the South Metropolitan Zone supports the WALGA recommendation for State Council Agenda item 8.4, amended to read as follows:

WALGA calls on the Western Australian and Australian Governments to provide leadership, support and funding to prevent and respond to homelessness, in particular:

- 1. Ensuring specialist homelessness services are responsive to local need, place based and person-centred, with coordinated liaison and partnership models between support services and all levels of government across the different corridors.*
- 2. Investing in social and affordable housing and wraparound services, including identification of suitable unused and underutilised land.*
- 3. Increasing funding for mental health services for those experiencing homelessness and at risk of homelessness.*
- 4. Increasing the availability of crisis accommodation with a focus on transition to long term housing.*
- 5. Providing longer fee for service for outreach service providers.*

SECRETARIAT COMMENT

WALGA recognises that members of the South Metropolitan Zone undertake significant work to respond to homelessness within the region, including direct advocacy to the Western Australian Government. The Zone's suggested amendments reflect the complex and intersecting facets of homelessness prevention and responses, and the issues Zone Members are facing in the region.

The draft Advocacy Position has been intentionally framed using the overarching term specialist homelessness services to maintain flexible application to sector needs and tailored local responses, while aligning to the language of the NASHH. The Advocacy Position also focuses on the need for Western Australian and Australian Government leadership, with specific, tangible asks directed at those levels of government.

WALGA supports defining need as 'local'. This has been included in point 1 of the Composite Recommendation. Explicit reference to crisis accommodation has been added to the second point, as detailed in the response to the Central Metropolitan Zone above.

In response to the other elements of the Zone's proposed position:

- *With coordinated liaison and partnership models between support services and all levels of government across the different corridors.*
 - WALGA considers including reference to partnership models implies a defined role for Local Government. WALGA recommends the position retains focus on the overarching principles of specialist homelessness services such as local need and person centred rather than service delivery models.
- *Including identification of suitable unused and underutilised land.*
 - WALGA recommends that the position retain a general statement on increasing the supply of social and affordable housing without expanding on implementation detail. There are many ways and contributing factors to increasing supply, of which identifying and activating underutilised land is just one. Other considerations include addressing broader market constraints on housing supply including workforce, construction costs and location appropriateness. The proposed Advocacy Position will enable advocacy across all of these issues.
- *Increasing funding for mental health services for those experiencing homelessness and at risk of homelessness.*
 - WALGA recommends retaining the reference to specialist homelessness services and wraparound support to recognise the full spectrum of assistance and ensure no single form of support is prioritised over others.
- *Providing longer fee for service for outreach service providers*
 - Reference to sustainable, long-term funding has been included in the Composite Recommendation.

SOUTH WEST COUNTRY ZONE

That the South West Country Zone supports the WALGA recommendation for State Council Agenda item 8.4 as contained in the State Council Agenda subject to the addition of point 3 below:

3. *Improving the collection, analysis and timely sharing of homelessness data to ensure it is robust, contemporary and sufficiently granular to support local and regional decision-making, including enabling Local Governments to understand local needs, existing service delivery and gaps in service provision.*

SECRETARIAT COMMENT

WALGA recognises the importance of current and accurate data, particularly in regions without 'by-name lists' or specialist homelessness services to signal local need. The following additional point has been included as a new point 3 in the Composite Recommendation:

Strengthening homelessness data collection and sharing arrangements to provide current, granular and locally relevant information to inform funding and improve service provision

COMPOSITE RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Helen Sadler
Seconded: Karen Wheatland

That State Council replace Advocacy Position 3.11 Homelessness with the following:

WALGA calls on the Western Australian and Australian Governments to provide leadership, support and sustainable, long-term funding to prevent and respond to homelessness, in particular by:

- 1. Ensuring specialist homelessness services are responsive to local need, place-based and people-centred.*
- 2. Investing in crisis accommodation, social and affordable housing and wraparound services.*
- 3. Strengthening homelessness data collection and sharing arrangements to provide current, granular and locally relevant information to inform funding and improve service provision.*

AMENDMENT

Moved: Lewis Hutton
Seconded: Scott Crosby

To add a fourth point as follows:

- 4. Addressing the root causes of the housing crisis.*

LOST

THE ORIGINAL MOTION WAS PUT

That State Council replace Advocacy Position 3.11 Homelessness with the following:

WALGA calls on the Western Australian and Australian Governments to provide leadership, support and sustainable, long-term funding to prevent and respond to homelessness, in particular by:

- 1. Ensuring specialist homelessness services are responsive to local need, place-based and people-centred.*
- 2. Investing in crisis accommodation, social and affordable housing and wraparound services.*
- 3. Strengthening homelessness data collection and sharing arrangements to provide current, granular and locally relevant information to inform funding and improve service provision.*

RESOLUTION 021.2/2026

CARRIED

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION BY STATE COUNCILLORS (UNDER SEPARATE COVER)

Karen Wheatland declared an interest in this item and left the meeting at 11:25am.

Patrick Hall left the meeting, and returned at 11:26am.

8.5 MUNICIPAL WASTE ADVISORY COUNCIL (MWAC) WIND-UP

By Rebecca Brown, Policy Manager, Environment and Waste

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Les Price
Seconded: Paul Kelly

That State Council:

- 1. Wind-up the Partnership Agreement which establishes the Municipal Waste Advisory Council, effective 30 June 2026.**
- 2. Note the replacement of the Municipal Waste Advisory Council with a Waste Management Strategic Advisory Committee.**

RESOLUTION 022.2/2026

CARRIED

Karen Wheatland returned to the meeting at 11:31am.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- It is proposed to wind-up the Municipal Waste Advisory Council (MWAC), which requires an absolute majority decision of State Council.
- MWAC was established in 1994 as a standing committee of the Association to represent the Association in waste management matters and ensure Regional Councils were represented in waste matters.
- The reduction in number, and changes to membership, of Regional Councils and the subsequent implications for the operation and funding of MWAC has required consideration of the most appropriate future structure.
- Following consultation with stakeholders, it is recommended to end the Partnership Agreement which establishes MWAC.
- MWAC will be replaced by a Waste Management Strategic Advisory Committee, with the Environment Policy Team providing Elected Member insights and advice to State Council. This would align the WALGA waste policy function with other policy areas of the Association.
- The Agreement would formally be wound up 30 June, with the new structure being established from 1 July 2026.

ATTACHMENT

- WALGA Waste Structure for State Council 2026

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLICATIONS

Influence Lead policy development for the Local Government sector.
Support Anticipate, understand and respond to Member needs.
Expertise Foster relationships between our subject matter experts and stakeholders.

Explore Diversify WALGA's revenue streams.
Encourage experimentation and agility to enable quick adaptation to change

BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS

The new approach includes a contribution from Regional Councils / Subsidiaries but less than the current income. This change will reduce income to WALGA from the 2026-27 financial year onwards by approximately \$140,000.

BACKGROUND

The Municipal Waste Advisory Council (MWAC) was established in December 1994 as a standing committee of the Association with delegated authority to represent the Association on matters relating to waste management and ensure that Regional Councils were included in decision making. MWAC was established at a time when most Local Governments in the metropolitan area were members of Regional Councils and WALGA as a structure was not yet in place (WALGA was constituted in 2001). Consequently, MWAC existed as almost a separate entity within WALGA's governance structure. MWAC is governed by a Partnership Agreement with WALGA which sets out the roles, responsibilities and funding of the Council.

MWAC's operation and exercising of its delegated power has evolved over time to more closely align with the operation of other delegated Committees and Policy Teams, although it is noted that these changes are not reflected in the WALGA Constitution, Corporate Governance Charter or the Partnership Agreement.

The reduction in number, and changes to membership of Regional Councils, and the subsequent implications for the representation, operation and funding of MWAC necessitated consideration of the most appropriate future structure that provides for representation and sector input in an increasingly complex waste policy environment from a wider range of members and types of organisation (e.g. Regional Subsidiaries), as well as Regional Councils. Consideration of a future structure has also provided the opportunity to align arrangements and formalise the changes in delegations for waste policy with other policy areas of the Association.

COMMENT

With changes to the number, and membership, of Regional Councils, the costs of MWAC membership have been increasingly borne by Mindarie Regional Council which has the largest population within its member Local Governments. Further reduction in number, or composition, of Regional Councils would exacerbate the issue and impact the viability of MWAC.

To address this, and align with other policy areas within WALGA, it is proposed that MWAC be wound-up and replaced with a Waste Management Strategic Advisory Committee. This Committee would be a dedicated forum through which metropolitan and non-metropolitan Local Governments and Regional Council/Subsidiaries will be able to provide input into WALGA's waste policy work, including the development of submissions and advocacy positions. The Regional Council/Subsidiaries would contribute through the Associate Membership structure, which provides a financial contribution to the policy area.

Elected Member insights and advice to State Council on waste policy would be provided by the Environment Policy Team, which would be renamed to reflect its remit of environment, planning and waste. State Council would continue to be the decision-making body. Waste would continue to be a core part of WALGA's policy and advocacy work, with current levels of resourcing unchanged.

WALGA has consulted with Regional Councils and MWAC on the development of this approach and individually, and through MWAC, support has been expressed for the proposal.

The wind-up of the Partnership Agreement which establishes MWAC requires an Absolute Majority decision of State Council.

Hannah Godsave and Rebecca Brown left the meeting at 11:32 and did not return.

8.6 ELECTORAL REFORMS ADVOCACY POSITION CONSULTATION

By Felicity Morris, Manager Governance and Strategy

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Stephen Strange
Seconded: Laurene Bonza

That WALGA:

1. Affirm point 1 of Advocacy Position 2.5.16 *Elections*, confirming that the Local Government sector supports four year terms with elections every two years and half of the Council positions spilled at each election.
2. Affirm Advocacy Position 2.5.15 *Participation in Local Government Elections*, confirming that the Local Government sector supports voluntary participation in Local Government elections.

AMENDMENT

Moved: Paul Kelly
Seconded: Phil Blight

To add a third point with the following:

3. Should the State Government announce either compulsory voting or four-year spills, then WALGA immediately commence a public campaign advocating for our Advocacy Position.

LOST

THE ORIGINAL MOTION WAS PUT

That WALGA:

1. Affirm point 1 of Advocacy Position 2.5.16 *Elections*, confirming that the Local Government sector supports four year terms with elections every two years and half of the Council positions spilled at each election.
2. Affirm Advocacy Position 2.5.15 *Participation in Local Government Elections*, confirming that the Local Government sector supports voluntary participation in Local Government elections.

RESOLUTION 023.2/2026

CARRIED

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- WALGA undertook sector-wide consultation to inform advocacy on potential Local Government electoral reforms, specifically four-yearly full spill elections and compulsory voting.
- The consultation received a strong and representative response, with 104 submissions.
- There is clear and consistent sector support for retaining the current electoral framework, with:
 - 81% supporting two-yearly half spill elections; and
 - 77% supporting voluntary voting at Local Government elections.

- Responses emphasised that half spill elections support continuity, retention of institutional knowledge, stable governance, and mentorship of new Council Members.
- Voluntary voting was widely viewed as better reflecting genuine community engagement, while compulsory voting raised concerns about disengaged participation, increased politicisation, and significant cost and compliance burdens.
- Responses consistently called for transparency in WAEC cost modelling, State funding, and avoidance of cost shifting to Local Governments.
- Overall, the findings reaffirm WALGA's existing electoral advocacy positions and provide a strong mandate to maintain and strengthen those positions in engagement with the State Government on any proposed reforms.

ATTACHMENT

- Sector consultation results (see Attachment 1 below).

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This report recommends the retention of the following advocacy positions.

2.5.15 Participation in Local Government Elections

The Local Government sector supports voluntary participation in Local Government elections.

2.5.16 Elections Position Statement (Point 1)

The Local Government sector supports:

1. *Councillors serve four-year terms with elections every two years and half of the Council positions spilled at each election.*
2. *First-Past-The-Post (FPTP) voting system for Local Government elections. If Optional Preferential Voting (OPV) remains as the primary method of voting, the sector supports the removal of the 'proportional' part of the voting method for general elections.*
3. *First-Past-The-Post (FPTP) voting system for internal Council elections.*
4. *Councils holding elections by means of in-person, postal and/or electronic voting.*
5. *Current legislative provisions of Mayor/President of Class 1 and Class 2 Local Governments being directly elected by the community and Class 3 and Class 4 Local Governments determining whether its Mayor or President is elected by the Council or by the community.*

BACKGROUND

In late 2024 WALGA conducted a review of its Elections Advocacy Positions to ensure they reflected the sector's contemporary view. The results of sector consultation informed a report to the [State Council meeting in December 2024](#). At that time there was 98% support for half spills every two years and 74% support for voluntary voting. However, compulsory voting was supported by a majority (64%) of metropolitan respondents and a majority (61%) of Class 1 and 2 respondents.

State Council requested that the WALGA secretariat undertake further investigation of the implications of compulsory and voluntary participation in Local Government elections. This investigation was ongoing when Hon Hannah Beazley MLA, Minister for Local Government raised the prospect of further Local Government election reform in June 2025. Public comments have focussed on four yearly full spill elections and compulsory voting. However, no formal proposals have yet been provided for consultation.

On 30 January 2026, State Council endorsed an Electoral Reform Discussion Paper for the purposes of sector consultation. Local Governments were requested to provide Council-endorsed feedback to inform WALGA's advocacy on Local Government electoral reforms expected to be proposed by the State Government, specifically:

- full spill elections every 4 years; and
- compulsory voting at Local Government elections

COMMENT

WALGA proactively commenced sector consultation to ensure that WALGA's positions reflect the sector's current views and enable timely, well-informed and effective engagement with the anticipated State Government reform proposals.

The consultation received a strong sector response, with a total of 107 submissions providing broad representation across all classes and regions. Of these submissions, 107 endorsed a position on election frequency, while 102 addressed compulsory or voluntary voting.

The findings clearly indicate strong sector support for maintaining two-yearly, half spill elections (81%) and voluntary voting (77%). The high response rate and unambiguous results provide a solid foundation for WALGA's advocacy in relation to any proposed reforms.

Response statistics are provided in Attachment 1.

Election frequency

A clear majority (81%) of responses supported the retention of half spill elections held every two years. While support was higher in responses from regional Local Governments (85%), there was also majority support among metropolitan Local Governments (68%). Similarly, support for the current model cuts across all classes of Local Governments.

Respondents consistently emphasised that half spill elections support the retention of institutional knowledge, ensure continuity of decision-making, and reduce the risk of governance instability. In addition, they allow newly elected Council Members to be mentored by more experienced members. This theme was particularly strong among regional and Class 4 Local Governments.

Many regional Local Governments expressed concern that full spill elections would exacerbate existing challenges in attracting sufficient capable candidates. Some responses warned that the higher number of simultaneous vacancies may result in an increase in uncontested elections.

Responses expressed concern that moving to less frequent elections may not result in cost savings, as full spill elections would be more complex, and potentially more expensive to administer. Key issues included a lack of transparent cost modelling from the Western Australian Electoral Commission (WAEC), increased administrative burden, and a higher risk of extraordinary elections. Similarly, responses cited a lack of evidence for claims that less frequent elections would reduce voter fatigue and improve engagement.

Transitional arrangements if four yearly full spills are introduced

If, despite clear opposition from the sector, four-yearly full spill elections were progressed by the State Government, provisional arrangements would be necessary to ensure an orderly transition. Sector feedback emphasises that retrospectively shortening Council Members' terms would be unfair and risk undermining public confidence, as members were

elected with a four-year mandate. Many also note that candidates committed significant personal, financial, and professional resources based on this expectation. On this basis, a full spill could occur no earlier than 2029. In addition, responses identify the need for improved mechanisms to efficiently manage extraordinary vacancies arising in the four years between ordinary elections. Responses also highlighted the need for additional training and support for Council Members. Finally, administrative and financial support for Local Governments, informed by transparent cost modelling, would also be required.

Compulsory or voluntary voting

The retention of voluntary voting at Local Government elections was supported by a majority (77%) of responses. Again, support was higher in responses from regional Local Governments (81%) but a majority (68%) of responses from metropolitan Local Governments also supported retention of voluntary voting. A majority of responses from each class also support voluntary voting. .

Responses emphasised that voluntary voting aligns with the distinct, community-based nature of Local Government, where participation is driven by genuine local interest rather than obligation. Many Local Governments argued that compulsory voting may encourage disengaged or uninformed participation. In rural and regional contexts, low turnout was characterised as reflective of community satisfaction rather than disengagement.

Strong concern was also expressed about the administrative, enforcement and cost burdens associated with compulsory voting, particularly for smaller Local Governments with limited resources. Responses consistently called for greater transparency in WAEC cost modelling, State funding, and avoiding cost shifting to Local Governments. Cost concerns are especially pronounced for Class 4 Local Governments, where election expenses already represent a significant budget impact. Larger Local Governments also expressed concerns about cost transparency, the capacity and efficiency of the WAEC, and complexities associated with postal voting and owner/occupier electoral rolls.

Across both metropolitan and regional Local Governments, respondents cautioned that compulsory voting could increase politicisation of local elections, encourage party-aligned campaigning and shift focus away from local issues. Many Local Governments indicated support for improved voter education, accessibility, and alternative voting methods rather than compulsory voting.

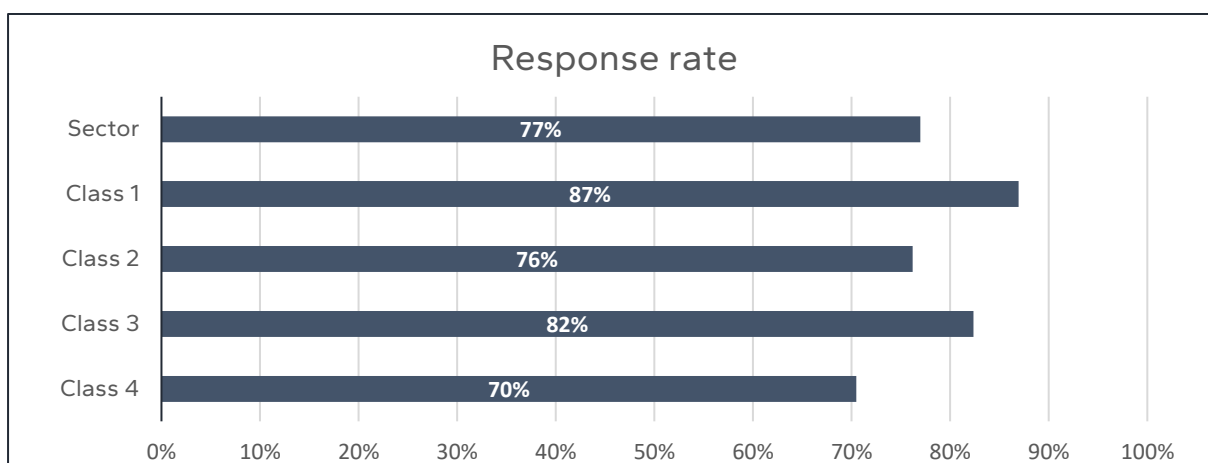
Conclusion

The consultation confirms strong and consistent sector support for retaining two-yearly half spill elections and voluntary voting. The results reaffirm WALGA's existing electoral advocacy positions and provide a clear mandate to maintain and strengthen those positions in engagement with the State Government on any proposed reforms.

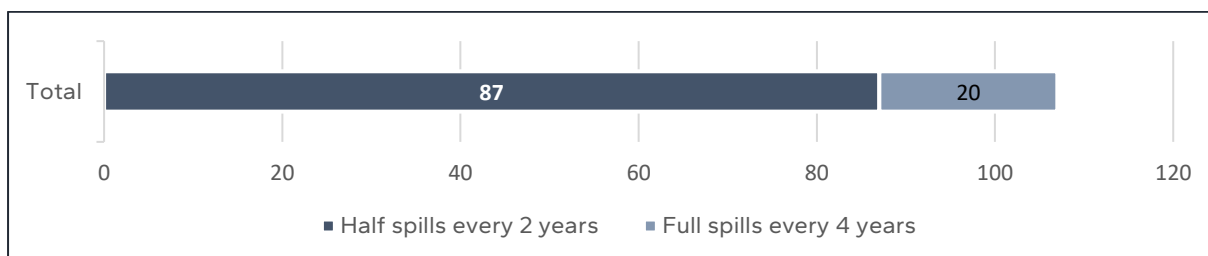
ATTACHMENT 1: SECTOR CONSULTATION RESULTS

1. Response rates

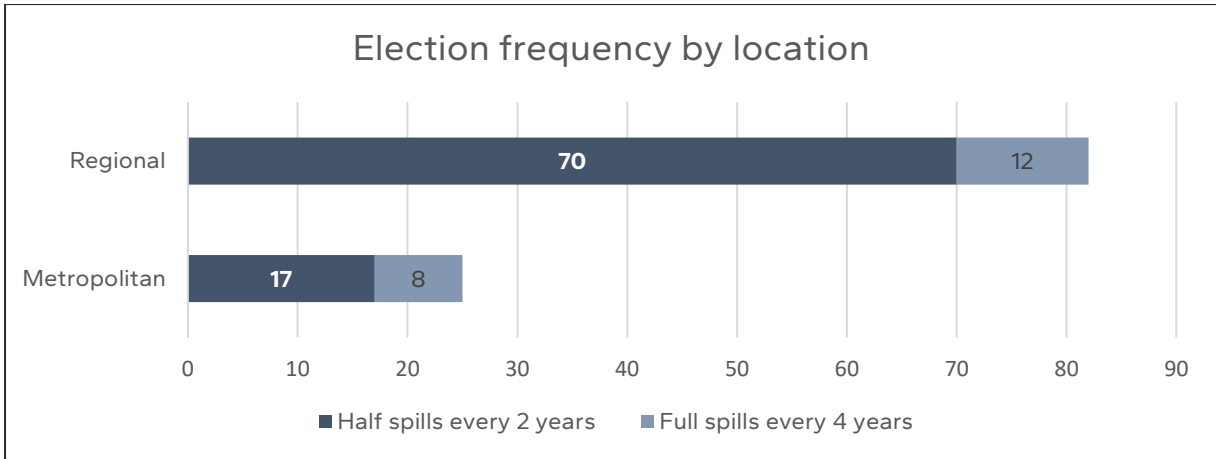
| | Number of responses | Number of Local Governments | Response rate (%) |
|----------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| Class 1 | 20 | 23 | 87% |
| Class 2 | 16 | 21 | 76% |
| Class 3 | 28 | 34 | 82% |
| Class 4 | 43 | 61 | 70% |
| Sector | 107 | 139 | 77% |



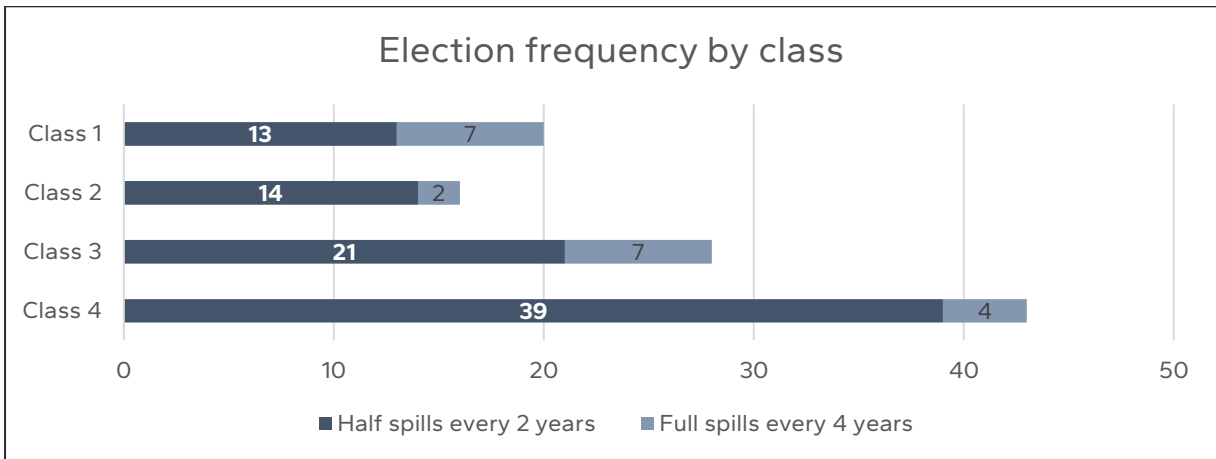
2. Election frequency



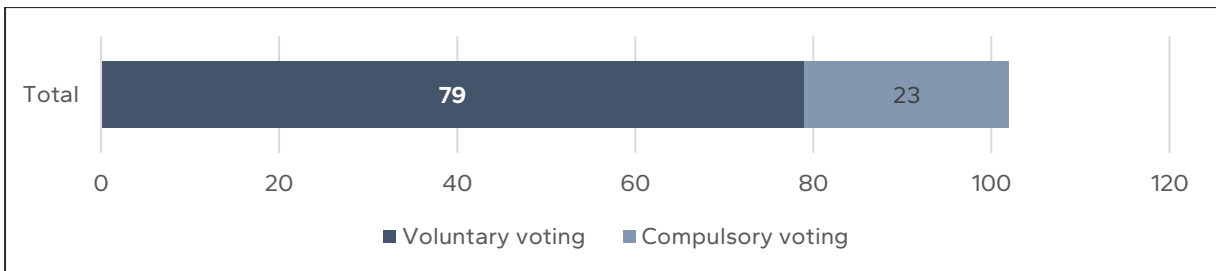
| Location | Half spills every 2 years | Full spills every 4 years |
|--------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Regional | 70 (85%) | 12 (15%) |
| Metropolitan | 17 (67%) | 8 (33%) |
| Total | 87 (81%) | 20 (19%) |



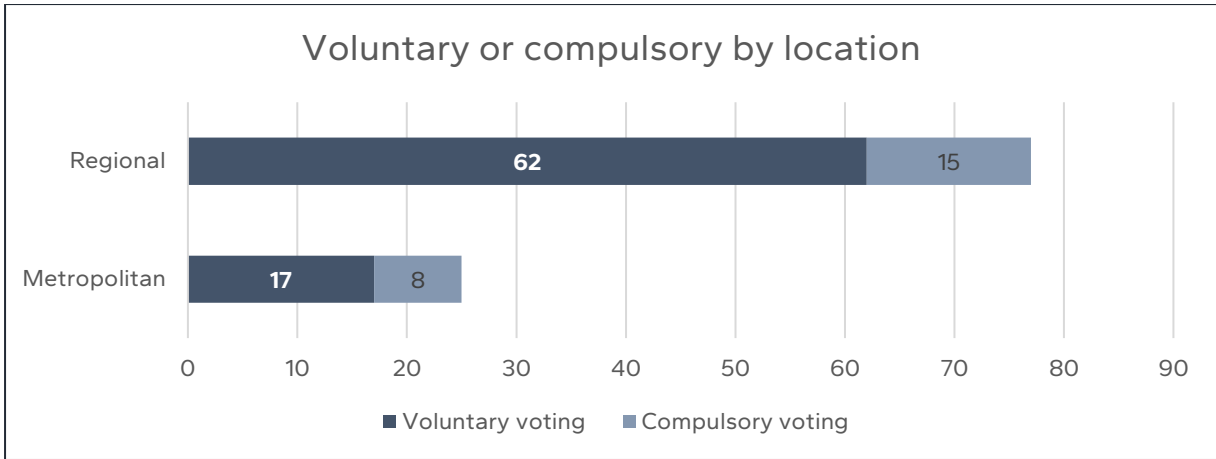
| Class | Half spills every 2 years | Full spills every 4 years |
|--------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Class 1 | 13 (65%) | 7 (35%) |
| Class 2 | 14 (88%) | 2 (12%) |
| Class 3 | 21 (75%) | 7 (25%) |
| Class 4 | 39 (91%) | 4 (9%) |
| Total | 87 (81%) | 20 (19%) |



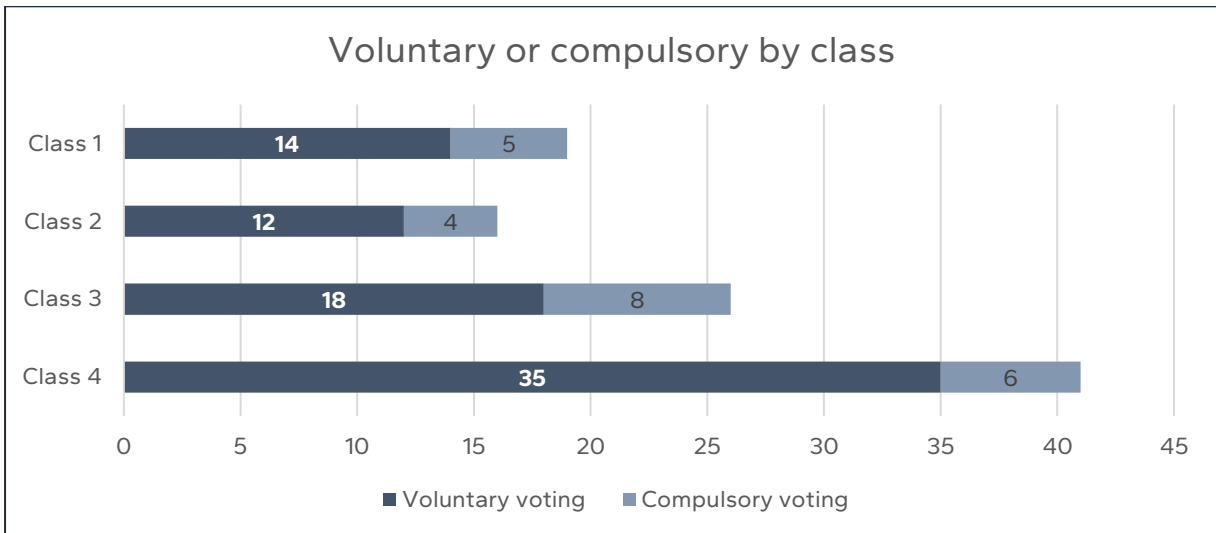
3. Voluntary or compulsory voting



| Location | Voluntary voting | Compulsory voting |
|--------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Regional | 62 (81%) | 15 (19%) |
| Metropolitan | 17 (68%) | 8 (32%) |
| Total | 79 (77%)* | 23 (20%)* |



| Class | Voluntary voting | Compulsory voting |
|--------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Class 1 | 14 (74%) | 5 (26%) |
| Class 2 | 12 (75%) | 4 (25%) |
| Class 3 | 18 (69%) | 8 (31%) |
| Class 4 | 35 (85%) | 6 (15%) |
| Total | 79 (77%) | 23 (20%)* |



*One Local Government specified their support for compulsory voting was conditional on the introduction of four-yearly elections.

8.7 SUBMISSION FOR 2026 STATE WAGE CASE

By Kirsty Martin, Executive Director Member Services

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Daniel Lim
Seconded: Chontelle Stone

That State Council endorses the WALGA 2026 State Wage Case submission (Submission) to the Western Australian Industrial Relations Commission (WAIRC) and authorises WALGA to exercise discretion to amend the Submission in response to changing economic circumstances and/or lodge further submissions in response to any direction of the WAIRC.

RESOLUTION 024.2/2026

CARRIED

ATTACHMENT

- WALGA submission for the 2026 State Wage Case

BACKGROUND

Annually the Western Australian Industrial Relations Commission (WAIRC) in Court Session issues a decision setting the WA minimum wage. This follows the Annual Wage Review 2025-26 of the Fair Work Commission.

WALGA has an opportunity to file a submission with the WAIRC containing Local Government specific information and economic data for the WAIRC to consider when making its decision.

The provision of a submission is important because Local Governments are now the second largest employer in the State industrial relations system (after the State Government) and the decision issued may impact on Local Government employee wages.

In response to questions raised in written or oral submissions by any party, the WAIRC may direct the parties to file further written submissions within a limited timeframe, often within one week.

In making its decision, the WAIRC is required to consider the need to:

- ensure that Western Australians have a system of fair wages and conditions of employment; and
- meet the needs of the low paid; and
- provide fair wage standards in the context of living standards generally prevailing in the community; and
- contribute to improved living standards for employees; and
- protect employees who may be unable to reach an industrial agreement; and
- encourage ongoing skills development.

It is also required to consider:

- the state of the economy of Western Australia and the likely effect of its decision on; and

- that economy and, in particular, on the level of employment, inflation and productivity in Western Australia; and
- to the extent that it is relevant, the state of the national economy; and
- to the extent that it is relevant, the capacity of employers as a whole to bear the costs of increased wages, salaries, allowances, and other remuneration; and
- the need to ensure that the Western Australian award framework represents a system of fair wages and conditions of employment; and
- relevant decisions of other industrial courts and tribunals; and
- any other relevant matters.

COMMENT

WALGA's submission provides an opportunity for the Local Government sector to influence minimum wage and award pay rates, which in turn impacts on wages paid to Local Government employees. The organisations which traditionally make State Wage Case submissions provide extensive economic data for WA (in particular the State Government). The provision of Local Government specific background and economic data will assist the WAIRC to consider the Local Government sector in its decision.

WALGA's submission supports wage increases that balance the provision of fair and sustainable wages with the capacity of Local Governments to responsibly manage their budgets in the interest of the communities they serve, including increases in line with wage fixing principles.

The 2026 State Wage Case is being conducted within an unusually volatile economic environment, in which geopolitical tensions and events are having a pronounced and immediate impact on the domestic economy and, in turn, the Local Government sector. Given the rapidly evolving global context, WALGA considers it may be necessary to amend the 2026 State Wage Case Submission at short notice to ensure compliance with WAIRC timeframes. Accordingly, additional submissions may be required to ensure that it reflects the most current and relevant economic information.

Western Australian Industrial Relations Commission

Application No. CICS 1 of 2026

2026 State Wage Order

Filed on behalf of: the Western Australian Local Government Association

Julie Love, Employee Relations Service Manager
Western Australian Local Government Association
LV1, 170 Railway Parade
West Leederville, WA 6007
Email: employeerelations@walga.asn.au

Date of filing: 13 May 2026

Written Submission Western Australian Local Government Association

Introduction

1. The Western Australian Local Government Association (**WALGA**) provides this submission in response to application no. CICS 1 of 2026 regarding the 2026 State Wage Case.
2. WALGA is an independent, member based, not for profit organisation representing and supporting the WA Local Government sector. Our Ordinary Members include all 147 Local Governments and Regional Councils (**Local Governments**) in WA. WALGA uses its influence, support, and expertise to

deliver better outcomes for Local Governments and their communities. WALGA is not a government department.

3. WALGA supports:
 - a. Wage increases that balance the provision of fair and sustainable wages with the capacity of Local Governments to responsibly manage their budgets in the interests of the communities they serve; and
 - b. Wage increases determined in accordance with established wage-fixing principles.

Industrial Relations Context of WA Local Governments

4. There is a total of 147 Local Governments established under the *Local Government Act 1995* (WA)¹, 145 of which are employers regulated by the State industrial relations system:
 - a. 145 (being 137 “Local Government employers” and 8 “Regional Local Government employers”) were declared not to be national system employers.²
 - b. Two of the 147 Local Governments (Shire of Christmas Island and the Shire of Cocos (Keeling) Islands) were not included in the declaration referred to in subparagraph a. immediately above.
5. According to [Australian Bureau of Statistics](#) data released on 6 November 2025, 26,500 employees were employed in the WA Local Government sector at the end of June 2025.³
6. Local Government employers apply one or more of the following industrial instruments:
 - a. State Awards.
 - b. Industrial agreements that:
 - i. were negotiated and registered in the State industrial relations system; or
 - ii. are new State instruments (**NSI**) by virtue of s 80BB of the *Industrial Relations Act 1979* (WA) (**IR Act**).

¹ See definition of local government in s 1.4.

² IR Act s 80A of the *Industrial Relations Act 1979* (WA) and *Industrial Relations (General) Regulations 1997* (WA) r 7 and Schedule 4. Some of the Regional Councils have no employees apart from a Chief Executive Officer.

³ Public sector employment and earnings, Australia 2024-25 financial year.

7. Most employees in the Local Government sector have a safety net for their entitlements determined by an industrial agreement (whether negotiated and registered in the State system or a NSI).
8. Of the 145 Local Governments who are regulated by the State industrial relations system, approximately 105 apply a NSI or a relevant State Award. Specifically:
 - a. 83 Local Governments apply a NSI that mirrors the terms and conditions of the Local Government Industry Award 2020 (being the federal modern award that applied to employees immediately prior to 1 January 2023) **(LGIA NSI)**.⁴
 - b. 32 Local Governments apply the relevant State Awards.
9. Local Governments are classified into different 'Bands' 1 to 4 based on their size (economic and population).⁵
10. Of the 105 Local Governments that apply a NSI or the relevant State Awards, 88 are Band 3 or Band 4 Local Governments.⁶ Approximately:
 - a. 58 Band 3 and Band 4 Local Governments apply the LGIA; and
 - b. 30 Band 3 and Band 4 Local Governments apply the relevant State Awards.
11. Both the relevant State Awards and the LGIA NSIs contain wage rates that are materially affected by movements in the State Minimum Wage. Accordingly, any increase to the State Minimum Wage has a direct impact on the wage costs incurred by Local Governments.

Impact of Geopolitical Events

12. The outbreak of conflict in the Middle East in March 2026 has driven significant volatility in global financial and commodity markets, most notably through sharp increases in oil prices following the closure of the Strait of Hormuz and disruptions to critical energy infrastructure. These developments have materially heightened uncertainty regarding supply chains and input costs in an already fragile global economic environment.
13. Given the critical role that oil plays in the global economy, there are growing expectations of a downgrade in global growth forecasts if oil prices remain

⁴ There may be other Local Governments which are covered by a LGIA NSI because they may have an industrial agreement or a new State instrument enterprise agreement that excludes from its coverage certain senior/executive employees (who would therefore be covered by a LGIA NSI).

⁵ Local Government Chief Executive Officers and Elected Council Members Determination No. 1 of 2025, Schedule 1.

⁶ Two Local Governments apply both the LGIA and a relevant State Award.

elevated at the \$US120-\$US150 range over a sustained period. Not only would high oil prices curtail global economic growth, but it would create inflationary pressures that could require central banks to prioritise inflation risks. The pressure to raise interest rates are likely to be most acute in countries already facing 'sticky' inflation challenges over the second half of 2025, such as Australia.

14. At a local level, the impacts of the conflict in the Middle East are already being felt to the extent that the supply of fuel to Australia has been curtailed, bringing with it supply shortages around Australia, and sharp increases in the price of fuel, with the impacts most pronounced in regional areas. Fuel supply shortages, especially the supply of diesel fuel, are particularly impacting the resources and agricultural industries where diesel is a key input in production processes.
15. Within regional areas of Western Australia, the uplift in the diesel price has been even sharper than those in the Perth metropolitan area, with supply shortages complementing concerns about the sharp uplift in prices. Across the first quarter of 2026, cases have emerged of petrol stations across several regional areas of the state where supplies of unleaded petrol or diesel have run out.
16. As Local Governments frequently operate as primary parties within complex supply chains, they are particularly exposed to price increases and legislative changes that materially affect operating costs. This includes regulatory interventions such as the Road Transport Contractual Chain Order – Fuel Cost Recovery 2026, made by the Fair Work Commission on 20 April 2026.⁷ Such regulatory measures have the potential to impose additional downstream cost liabilities on Local Governments, including through price variation claims and the administrative and governance costs associated with reviewing, approving, and implementing fuel rate adjustments (for example, obtaining legal advice on coverage and convening Council meetings to approve amended payment arrangements).
17. As the cost and availability of essential inputs continue to deteriorate, Local Governments are increasingly exposed to the risk of disruption to the essential services upon which their communities rely. This risk is particularly acute for Local Government functions that are heavily dependent on fuel supply, impacted by regulatory measures such as the Road Transport Contract Chain Order – Fuel Cost Recovery 2026, and are directly affected by escalating prices, including (but not limited to) urgent road maintenance, waste collection services, and water and sewerage operations.

⁷ Road Transport Contractual Chain Order – Fuel Cost Recovery – 2026 (MS2026/1)

18. As a specific example applicable for Local Governments, diesel is critical for all stages of *"road construction and maintenance, from aggregate heating and drying at asphalt plants, to the operation of pavers, rollers, and bitumen sprayers, to material haulage from quarry to site"*.⁸
19. The impact of price movements in the oil price extends beyond diesel prices and flows through to other critical inputs used widely throughout the WA economy, a number of which are critical to the Local Government sector, such as bitumen.
20. Australia imports the majority of its bitumen supply for asphalt and bitumen spray seal applications, primarily from Asian refineries in South Korea, Singapore, and Thailand, which depend on Middle Eastern crude oil as feedstock.⁹ It is understood a number of those suppliers may have cancelled supply commitments or invoked force majeure provisions in response to current conditions.¹⁰
21. This is one example of what are clear and observable relationships between movements in the price of oil, the price of fuel, and associated input and output prices which impact on the costs faced by the Local Government sector in Western Australia.
22. Local Governments, as providers of essential community services, may be required to absorb or mitigate the impacts of fuel price increases and supply disruptions on their workforce. This may include pressure to increase allowances or related entitlements, such as the Award variations sought by the Australian Council of Trade Unions and others in application AM2026/10 currently before the Fair Work Commission.¹¹ Such measures would impose additional cost pressures but may be necessary to maintain essential service delivery.
23. Band 3 and Band 4 Local Governments are particularly exposed to prevailing economic pressures driven by global events and uncertainty, as they comprise the majority of Local Governments operating under minimum statutory industrial instruments. As a result, these Local Governments are acutely vulnerable to increases in the State Minimum Wage, which translate directly and immediately into heightened operating costs.

⁸ Australian Flexible Pavement Association: Industry Statement – Global Bitumen Supply Chain Disruption: Material and Cost Impacts on Australia’s Flexible Pavement Sector (12 March 2026), page 2.

⁹ Australian Flexible Pavement Association: Industry Statement – Global Bitumen Supply Chain Disruption: Material and Cost Impacts on Australia’s Flexible Pavement Sector (12 March 2026).

¹⁰ Australian Flexible Pavement Association: Industry Statement – Global Bitumen Supply Chain Disruption: Material and Cost Impacts on Australia’s Flexible Pavement Sector (12 March 2026).

¹¹ Applications to vary vehicle allowances in over 40 Awards (see AM2026/10, AM2026/11, AM2026/12, AM2026/13).

24. WALGA submits that, in determining the State Minimum Wage and State Award wages, appropriate weight should be given to the cumulative impacts of rising costs, constraints on the availability of essential inputs, and heightened economic uncertainty arising from geopolitical events, particularly as they affect regional Local Governments.

WA Economic Context

Economic Growth

25. The Western Australian economy grew by 1.3% in 2024-25, an increase from the 1.2% growth rate recorded in the previous financial year but lower than the five year post-COVID average of 2.5% per annum. The WA Department of Treasury and Finance (DTF) forecasts that the WA economy will grow by 3.25% this financial year in the 2026-27 State Budget, with medium term economic growth projected to sit around 2.25% per annum.¹²
26. The domestic economy, as measured by State Final Demand, performed strongly in 2024-25 recording growth of 3.2%, with further growth of 3.25% forecast in 2025-26 according to DTF. The domestic economy is forecast to moderate to annual growth of 2.25% in 2026-27, and remaining between 2.25% and 2.75% in the medium term.
27. Economic activity in Western Australia continues to be fuelled by sustained high levels of public and business investment, with strong population growth helping to stimulate household consumption and dwelling investment to further boost domestic economic activity.
28. WA recorded the strongest growth in total population across all States and Territories over the 12 months to June 2025 at 2.2%, with Victoria and Queensland next in line at 1.8%. DTF had forecast a decline in WA's population growth to 1.8% in 2025-26, suggesting continued strong demand for migration into Western Australia.
29. DTF's forecasts for the WA economy in the 2025-26 Mid Year Review suggest a pullback in both public consumption and investment over the years ahead relative to recent history, with average growth of 1.0% and 2.0% per annum respectively in 2026-27 before settling at 2.5% and 1.25% respectively in the medium term compared to growth of 5.7% and 10.2% respectively in the 2024-25 financial year.

¹² 2026-27 Western Australian State Budget.

30. Household disposable income, an indicator of living standards, increased by 1.6% in the March quarter at a national level, bringing year-on-year growth up to 6.3%.
31. There are a range of risks to economic growth in Western Australia, including an extended period of conflict in the Middle East, which presents as a significant risk factor for a further increase in inflationary pressures. Other downside risks to the Western Australian economy centre on continued supply pressures in the building and construction industry, broader geopolitical risks impacting on commodity markets, and sustained pressure on staff and other costs across all sectors of the economy.

Inflation

32. Over the year to the March 2026 quarter, underlying inflation (as measured by the Trimmed Mean) rose to 3.3%, unchanged from the 12 months to February 2026. The re-emergence of inflationary pressures over the second half of 2025 resulted saw the RBA increase the official cash rate by 25 basis points at its February, March and May Board meetings. The cash rate now stands at 4.35%, the highest level since February 2025 and equal to the post-COVID high of 4.35%.
33. Capacity constraints across key markets, including the labour market, as well as supply chains which are yet to fully normalise following the post-COVID upheaval, are conspiring to place upward pressure on inflation and prices.
34. In Western Australia, the Perth CPI increased by 1.2% for the March quarter, which was above the 1.1% increase for national CPI. However, in annual terms, the Perth CPI of 4.6% was equal to the national CPI of 4.6% in March 2026 year end terms, and the equal fourth highest across all Australian capital cities after Brisbane (4.7%), Adelaide (4.9%) and Hobart (5.1%).
35. The Perth CPI has increased at a faster rate than the national CPI in annual terms since the June 2024 quarter, albeit the gap has now narrowed to its smallest margin of the most recent data release. DTF forecasts the Perth CPI to end 2025-26 up 5.5%, before returning to within the RBA's target range of 2% to 3% in the medium term.
36. However, this forecast would be expected to be subject to higher revision given the continued above-target growth observed in the ABS's monthly CPI series, and the significant increase in global energy and other commodity prices flowing from turmoil in the Middle East.

Labour and Wages

37. Wages growth continued in the March quarter with the WA Wage Price Index (WPI) increasing by 3.6% over the last year, above the national figure of 3.2% and the second highest level across all Australian States and Territories after the Australian Capital Territory (3.7%).
38. DTF's 2026-27 State Budget forecast suggested wages growth across the State of 3.75% over the course of 2025-26. Wages growth is then expected to ease marginally to 3.25% over the subsequent three years. As a result, DTF is forecasting growth in real wages over the forward outlook period.
39. A persistent tight labour market in WA, and to a lesser extent nationally, has been a key driver of wages growth. In the 2025 calendar year, 28,800 jobs were created in WA, an increase of 1.8%. This was down from the 65,700 jobs created in the 2024 calendar year (a 4.2% increase).
40. Western Australia's labour market continues to benefit from a persistently higher participation rate than in other States and Territories, sitting at 68.8% as of March 2026. As of March 2026, WA had the fourth lowest unemployment rate across all states and territories in Australia at 4.1%.
41. The total number of job vacancies across Western Australia displayed a high degree of stability throughout the 2025 calendar year, sitting within a range of approximately 40,400 to 43,200 job vacancies over this period. This remains well above the pre-pandemic level of 20,000 – 30,000 job vacancies in WA at any given time.
42. So far in 2025-26, job creation has been below the DTF's expectations from the June Budget, with its job growth forecast revised downwards from 1.75% to 1.5% in the 2026-27 State Budget. This rate is below its updated population growth forecast of 1.8% in 2025-26, suggesting potential relief for the labour market in the short to medium term.
43. Local Governments should expect to continue to find attracting and retaining staff challenging in the short term, however this challenge is expected to ease in the medium term as the tightness in the labour market eases.

Local Government Capacity to Pay

44. Maintaining financial sustainability is important for all Local Governments. However, the objective is to ensure they can deliver services and infrastructure

for their communities and minimise the burden on rate payers, rather than general commercial returns or deliver shareholder value.

45. Local Governments' set their budget with an aim to generate sufficient revenue to meet the needs of the community, as set out in each Local Governments' Strategic Community Plan.
46. Unlike other levels of Government which have a range of revenue generating levers at their disposal, Local Government's capacity to raise revenue is constrained.
47. Local Governments' primary lever for generating revenue is rates – which are a form of property tax levied by Local Governments to fund local infrastructure and services. In 2022-23, rates accounted for approximately 55% of the sector's total revenue and 65% of its own sourced revenue.¹³ Local Governments also rely heavily on grants from the Federal and State Governments to meet their operating and capital needs.
48. As wages paid to Local Government employees are the largest component of Local Government budgets, any increase in wages costs has implications for the rate setting process. Local Governments must determine whether any increase in wage costs should be funded through an increase in rates that are payable by its ratepayers, a commensurate reduction in services to residents in the community, or a combination of both. This is an important consideration in the context of the current economic environment where cost of living pressures are negatively impacting on the community.
49. Recent years has seen above average wage outcomes for Local Government employees, increasing by an average annual rate of 8.5% over 2022-23 and 2023-24, which was significantly greater than the average annual rate of 2.4% over the preceding seven-year period between 2015-16 and 2021-22.¹⁴ Above average wage outcomes place pressure on Local Governments to address the budget shortfall by raising rates, which over the period between 2015-16 and 2022-23 increased by an average annual rate of 4.3%.¹⁵
50. In relation to wage increases provided under Local Government Industrial Agreements, an analysis of 33 Local Government agreements registered since 1 July 2025 demonstrates that those instruments will deliver an average annual wage increase of approximately 3.7% over their term. This rate of increase is broadly consistent with national CPI outcomes for the December quarter and

¹³ <https://mycouncil.wa.gov.au/Home/KeyFacts> (accessed 22 March 2026).

¹⁴ Australian Bureau of Statistics: Government Finance Statistics (2023-24) – Table 335 (General government – local – Western Australia).

¹⁵ <https://mycouncil.wa.gov.au/Home/KeyFacts> (accessed 22 March 2026) – 2023-24 data anticipated to be made available on MyCouncil in 2026.

exceeds the short-term projected Perth CPI rate of 3.25% for the 2025–2026 period.

51. It is also important to note that the Local Government sector is not homogenous. Some Local Governments face significant financial sustainability challenges – typically, those with declining populations which are facing an ongoing underlying operating deficit. Increased wage costs will place further financial pressure on Local Governments, and ultimately its ratepayers and broader communities.

Local Government Costs

52. Local Governments have also been operating in an environment of rising costs in recent years.
53. The Local Government Cost Index (LGCI) is an indicator which aims to measure changes in a basket of cost items commonly incurred by Local Governments. The components of the Index capture the key inputs that Local Governments purchase to undertake its activities and include both capital and operating costs.
54. Local Governments have keenly felt the impact of inflation in recent years with the LGCI increasing 4.4% in 2022-23, up 3.6% in 2023-24, and up 3.8% in 2024-25. Over the year to December, the LGCI increased by 4.8%, however has started to slow with the 0.9% increase recorded in the December quarter the smallest quarterly increase since the equivalent quarter 12 months earlier.
55. The main driver of LGCI growth remains wages costs, which make up around a third of the index. Growth in construction costs, which comprise around a quarter of the index, have continued to stabilise primarily driven by the construction market moving closer to a balance between supply and demand, linked to a range of factors including a moderation in supply chain challenges and the completion of major public infrastructure projects, in particular the Metronet program.
56. Macromonitor forecast annual construction cost growth in Western Australia for Non-Residential Building, Non-Road Infrastructure, and Road and Bridge Construction to sit within a range of 2 – 3.5% over the three-year period between 2026-27 and 2028-29.
57. The LGCI is forecast to end 2025-26 up 3.1% and remain at this level in 2026-27. Subsequently, annual growth of the LGCI is forecast to decline marginally to 3% in 2027-28 and to 2.8% in 2028-29.

58. However, the Local Government sector remains highly exposed to renewed cost escalation if fuel supply disruptions and associated price shocks re-emerge under conditions similar to those previously experienced. Adverse movements in a small number of critical input costs have the capacity to materially increase the LGCI above current baseline forecasts.
59. Price shocks affecting key sub-components within the Non-Residential Building, Non-Road Infrastructure, and Road and Bridge Construction categories, which together comprise approximately one quarter of the LGCI and are among the most sensitive to energy-related volatility, may result in a consequential increase in the LGCI. This risk is exacerbated by Local Governments' reliance on fuel, freight, materials, and plant and equipment to deliver essential services and capital works.
60. Under conditions comparable to past periods of upswings in the oil price, specifically December 2007 to December 2008, December 2016 to December 2019, and June 2020 to June 2022, the following shocks could reasonably eventuate over a twelve-month period:
- a. Fuel prices increasing by approximately 80 per cent (quarterly changes of 75%, 25%, -10%, -10%).
 - b. Material costs increasing by approximately 12 per cent (6% in the March quarter of 2026, then 2% in each subsequent quarter).
 - c. New construction equipment costs increasing by approximately 20 per cent (5% in each quarter of 2026).
 - d. Plant hire costs increasing by approximately 8 per cent (2% in each quarter of 2026); and
 - e. Freight costs increasing by approximately 15 per cent (quarterly changes of 5%, 10%, 0%, 0%).
61. If shocks of this nature were to materialise, the LGCI would increase materially above current forecasts. The scenario demonstrates an LGCI outcome of 4.8 per cent in 2025–26, compared to a baseline forecast of 3.1 per cent, and 3.3 per cent in 2026–27, compared to 3.1 per cent. This illustrates the extent to which the LGCI is vulnerable to renewed fuel-driven cost escalation.
62. In reality, there are likely to be shocks and impacts across all components of the LGCI, such as utilities, which would be impacted by a sustained period of fuel supply issues. These cannot be accounted for within the forecast based on current information. It is considered likely that the actual LGCI forecast will be revised higher over time as more information becomes available.
63. Accordingly, the risk of further and potentially sudden increases in Local Government input costs remains substantial. These risks have direct implications for the financial capacity of Local Governments - particularly

smaller and resource-constrained Councils - and reinforce the need for caution in assuming cost stability in forward-looking wage and expenditure settings.

Restrictions on Fees and Charges

64. Local Governments also impose fees and charges for a range of activities. However, a number of fees and charges are prescribed and restricted by legislation, and are specifically limited to recouping the cost of service provision. This has become an issue because a number of fees determined by State Government legislation represent significant revenue leakage because of:
 - a. lack of indexation;
 - b. lack of regular review (fees may remain at the same nominal levels for decades); and
 - c. lack of transparent methodology in setting the fees (fees do not appear to be set with regard to appropriate costs recovery levels).
65. Examples of fees and charges of this nature include dog registrations fees, town planning fees and building permits. Since Local Governments do not have direct control over the determination of fees set by legislation, this revenue leakage is recovered from rate revenue.

Financial Assistance Grants

66. Financial Assistance (FA) Grants are provided to all Local Government bodies and are an important component of operating revenue for all Local Governments.
67. In 2026-27, the Commonwealth Government will provide \$89.5 million in FA Grants funding to support Local Governments across Western Australia, which equates to 12.4% of FA Grants funding distributed nationwide. FA Grants as a proportion of Commonwealth Tax Revenue in 2026-27 are estimated to be 0.49%, which is a decrease from 0.51% in the 2025-26 Budget, and a decline on the one per cent of Commonwealth taxation revenue in 1996.
68. The methodology adopted by the WA Local Government Grants Commission provides higher levels of funding to Local Governments that are regional, rural and remote, in recognition of the disproportionate effect of population distribution on their comparative ability to raise revenue and the expenditure required to operate a Local Government in a sustainable manner.
69. As outlined by the WA Local Government Grants Submission in their submission to the Federal Inquiry into Local Government Sustainability in 2024, any reductions to FA Grant arrangements could disproportionately impact WA Local Governments, particularly in relation to the ongoing sustainability of those in regional WA.

Local Government Reserves

70. Many Local Governments also have significant assets in the form of reserves, that are generally held for a specific purpose.
71. While the *Local Government Act 1995* does not specify the purpose for which reserves can be used, sound financial management implies that reserves should be used for the purposes for which they have been set aside. Typically, reserves are used for capital projects rather than ongoing operating expenditure.

8.8 FINANCE AND SERVICES COMMITTEE MINUTES – 29 APRIL 2026

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Eman Seif
Seconded: Matthew Niikkula

That State Council:

1. **Endorse the Minutes of the Finance and Services Committee meeting held on 29 April 2026.**
2. **Endorse the reallocation within the WALGA Capex Budget for 2025-26 as recommended by the Finance and Services Committee.**

RESOLUTION 025.2/2026

CARRIED

ATTACHMENTS – CONFIDENTIAL

- Finance and Services Committee Minutes – 29 April 2026.
- Attachment to Minutes:
 - 6.1 WALGA Finance Board Pack – 31 March 2026.
 - 6.6 WALGA Business Continuity Policy
 - 6.6 WALGA Master BCP
 - 6.6 WALGA Crisis Management Plan
 - 6.7 Scyne’s Internal Audit Planning Report
 - 6.7 Scheme Management Agreement (SMA)

BACKGROUND

The Finance and Services Committee met on 29 April 2026.

The Minutes of the meeting, together with the attachments, have been distributed to members of State Council under separate cover.

COMMENT

At the meeting, the Secretariat provided an overview of the upcoming budget cycle process.

The Committee endorsed the \$168,000 reallocation within the WALGA Capex Budget for 2025-26.

In addition to the standard finance and services reporting, the Committee considered the following matters:

- Business Continuity Planning Update
- Budget Plan 2026-27
- Internal Audit – LGISWA Scheme Contract Management

Finance and Services Committee members were in attendance at the State Council meeting to respond to questions and provide any further explanation that may be sought

8.9 LOCAL GOVERNMENT HOUSE TRUST MINUTES – 29 APRIL 2026

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Laurene Bonza

Seconded: Phil Blight

That State Council endorse the Minutes of the Local Government House Trust Board of Management meeting held on 29 April 2026.

RESOLUTION 026.2/2026

CARRIED

ATTACHMENT – CONFIDENTIAL

- Local Government House Trust Board of Management Minutes – 29 April 2026.

BACKGROUND

The Local Government House Trust (LGHT) Board of Management met on 29 April 2026.

The Minutes of the meeting have been distributed to members of State Council under separate cover.

COMMENT

The Board considered the matter of property management services for the building at ONE70.

The current property management agreement with Qube will end on 30 June 2026. Following a previous decision of the Board, the WALGA secretariat recently conducted an RFQ process to appoint a new property management firm.

Based on the submissions received and interviews conducted with shortlisted firms, the selection panel unanimously selected a preferred option for recommendation to the LGHT Board.

At the meeting on 29 April, the Board endorsed the appointment of the proposed new property management firm for an initial three-year term.

LGHT members were in attendance at the State Council meeting to respond to questions and provide any further explanation that may be sought.

8.10 SELECTION COMMITTEE MINUTES – 21 APRIL 2026

By Chantelle O'Brien, Zones Governance Officer

RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Karen Wheatland
Seconded: Les Price

That State Council endorse the recommendations contained in the 21 April 2026 Selection Committee Minutes.

RESOLUTION 027.2/2026

CARRIED

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Selection Committee recently met for their scheduled ordinary meeting on 21 April.
- The Committee endorsed the proposed process to conduct the biennial review of the Selection Committee Guidelines.
- Additionally, the Committee considered nominees for the following vacancies:
 - WA Local Government Grants Commission (Country Urban Member and Deputy Member)
 - Local Health Authorities Analytical Committee (LHAAC) (3 Metropolitan Members)

ATTACHMENT

- Selection Committee Minutes – 21 April 2026 – CONFIDENTIAL

BACKGROUND

Pursuant to the resolution of State Council in February 2002, the WALGA Selection Committee was established to oversee the selection process for Local Government vacancies on boards and committees.

The Selection Committee conducts a merit-based and transparent assessment process encompassing the principle of 'best person for the job'. Upon completion of the assessment of nominations for vacancies, the Selection Committee either endorses preferred candidates for appointment (under delegated authority) or makes advisory recommendations to State Council for ratification of preferred candidates.

COMMENT

There were two vacancies for the Selection Committee's consideration at the April meeting:

- WA Local Government Grants Commission (Country Urban Member and Deputy Member)
- Local Health Authorities Analytical Committee (LHAAC) (three Metropolitan Members)

Nominations opened in early March and closed on 10 April.

WA Local Government Grants Commission

The Minister for Local Government requested that WALGA provide a list of nominees for consideration for appointments to two positions on the WA Local Government Grants Commission: Country Urban Member and Deputy Country Urban Member.

A panel of at least three nominees was requested from the Minister.

Nominations from three eligible candidates were received. The Selection Committee resolved to put forward all three nominees in order of preference for the Minister's consideration to appoint as Member and Deputy Member from Cities or Towns outside of the Metropolitan area.

Local Health Authorities Analytical Committee (LHAAC)

Three Metropolitan positions on the LHAAC are due to expire in June 2026. The Director General requested WALGA provide appropriately qualified nominees for consideration of appointment.

Three nominations were received (all from the incumbents whose term is expiring). The Selection Committee resolved to submit all three nominees to the Director General.

8.11 HONOURS PANEL MINUTES – 15 APRIL 2026 – CONFIDENTIAL

NOTED

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Honours Panel met on 15 April 2026.
- The meeting was to consider the nominations submitted for the 2026 Honours Program and to determine the Award recipients.
- A total of 78 nominations for the 2026 Honours Program were received.
- 42 Award recipients were determined by the Honours Panel.

BACKGROUND

The annual Local Government Honours Program recognises and celebrates the outstanding achievements and lasting contributions made by Elected Members and employees to their respective Local Governments, the Local Government sector, WALGA, and the wider community.

In 2026, there are five Awards available:

- Local Government Medal
- WALGA Life Membership
- Eminent Service Award
- Merit Award
- Troy Pickard Young Achievers Award

As per Schedule 2 of the Association Constitution, the Honours Panel has delegated powers from State Council to oversee the entire Honours Program process.

COMMENT

Nominations for the 2026 Honours Program opened on 2 February and closed on 2 April. A total of 75 individuals were nominated for the 2026 Honours Program (one person received two separate nominations for the same award, and one person was nominated for three different awards), representing 78 nominations in total. This represents a record number of nominations received for the Honours Program.

42 Award recipients were determined by the Honours Panel. Several award recipients were recognised in categories different from those in which they were nominated.

| Award | Nominations Received | Award Recipients |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Local Government Medal | 12 | 1 |
| WALGA Life Membership | 2 | 1 |
| Eminent Service Award | 26 | 8 |
| Merit Award | 29 | 31 |
| Troy Pickard Young Achievers Award | 9 | 1 |
| Total | 78 | 42 |

The Nominators and Award recipients have been notified of the Honours Panel decision.

The Honours Awards will be presented at a function on Friday, 12 June at the Western Australian Museum, Boola Bardip. State Councillors receive a complimentary ticket to the Awards.

8.12 LGISWA BOARD APPOINTMENTS - CONFIDENTIAL

Paul Kelly declared an interest in this item and left the meeting at 12:06pm.

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Phil Bight
Seconded: Scott Crosby

That State Council re-appoint Cr Paul Kelly as the Metropolitan Elected Member Director on the LGISWA Board for a further three-year term, concluding on 6 May 2029.

RESOLUTION 028.2/2026

CARRIED

Paul Kelly returned to the meeting at 12:10pm.

8.13 LGISWA BOARD MINUTES – CONFIDENTIAL

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Cate McCullough
Seconded: Chontelle Stone

That State Council receive the Minutes of the LGISWA Board meetings held on 30 January 2026 and 20 March 2026.

RESOLUTION 029.2/2026

CARRIED

8.14 LGISWA SCHEME MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT – CONFIDENTIAL

NOTED

8.15 USE OF THE ASSOCIATION'S COMMON SEAL

By Nick Sloan, Chief Executive Officer

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Mike Walmsley

Seconded: Eman Seif

That State Council note the use of the Association's common seal for the Design Review Training Collaboration Agreement between the State of Western Australia (Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage) and the Western Australian Local Government Association (WALGA) dated 22 April 2026.

RESOLUTION 030.2/2026

CARRIED

8.16 APPOINTMENT TO GOVERNANCE POLICY TEAM

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Scott Crosby

Seconded: Eman Seif

That State Council endorse the appointment of Suzanne Migdale, the State Council representative from the North Metropolitan Zone, to the Governance Policy Team.

RESOLUTION 0.31.2/2026

CARRIED

BACKGROUND

Mark Irwin was elected WALGA President at the previous State Council meeting, on 4 March 2026.

This resulted in a vacancy on the Governance Policy Team.

An election was held at the April North Metropolitan Zone meeting for the vacant State Councillor position, and Suzanne Migdale was elected.

COMMENT

It is proposed that the newly elected State Councillor, Suzanne Migdale, fill the vacant position on the Governance Policy Team.

9 POLICY TEAM AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

9.1 INFRASTRUCTURE POLICY TEAM REPORT

Presented by Policy Team Chair, Stephen Strange

NOTED

The Infrastructure Policy Team includes the following subject areas:

- *Transport*
- *Infrastructure*
- *Road Safety*
- *Underground power*
- *Street lighting*

This Report provides an update on matters considered, since the last State Council meeting, by the Infrastructure Policy Team at its meeting held on 4 March 2026.

An overview of the current policy priorities and key issues for the Infrastructure Policy Team was provided by Ian Duncan, Executive Manager Infrastructure, Suzanne Butler, Manager Road Safety and Mark Bondietti, Policy Manager Transport and Roads.

1. MATTERS FOR STATE COUNCIL DECISION

The Policy Team considered proposed new advocacy positions in relation to regional airports and remote air services. The Policy Team discussed the Zone resolutions in response to this item and agreed to move the following composite resolution at the March State Council meeting:

That State Council endorse two new Advocacy Positions as follows:

1. Regional Airports

WALGA supports the sustainable operation of Local Government owned regional airports and advocates for proportionate regulatory frameworks, targeted funding, and operational guidance to ensure safe, efficient, and resilient airport infrastructure and services.

2. Regional and Remote Air Services

WALGA advocates for reliable, affordable, and equitable regional air services, calling for greater oversight of airline pricing practices, including providing adequate capacity net of contracted (FIFO) seats, transparent fare structures and equitable access to discounted and lower-cost fares, to mitigate the impacts of limited competition and dynamic pricing on regional residents, businesses, and essential travel. WALGA also promotes the continued viability of essential routes and recognises regional aviation as an essential service supporting community and emergency access, workforce mobility, and regional economic development.

The new Advocacy Positions, as above, were endorsed by State Council at the March State Council meeting.

2. MATTERS FOR STATE COUNCIL NOTING

Nil.

3. MATTERS REFERRED FROM ZONES

The Peel Country Zone has highlighted problems in relation to the condition and maintenance of the Water Corporation's Swan Coastal Plains Bridges and requested WALGA to advocate for solutions.

A meeting has been agreed with Water Corporation, and an update is to be provided at the next Policy Team meeting.

9.2 PEOPLE AND PLACE POLICY TEAM REPORT

Presented by Policy Team Chair, Phillip Blight

NOTED

The People and Place Policy Team includes the following subject areas:

- *Community*
- *Emergency Management*

This Report provides an update on matters considered, since the last State Council meeting, at the People and Place Policy Team meetings held on 11 February and 19 March, and the Joint Environment and People and Place Meeting held on 19 March.

1. MATTERS FOR STATE COUNCIL DECISION

Flying Minute - DFES Bushfire Place of Last Resort Discussion Paper Submission

The Environment and People and Place Policy Teams recommended that State Council endorse WALGA's submission to the DFES Bushfire Place of Last Resort – Preliminary Stakeholder Engagement Discussion Paper. The submission was endorsed by State Council by Flying Minute on 30 March 2026.

Advocacy Position Reviews

The People and Place Policy Team recommended that State Council retire Advocacy Position 3.12 Off Roads Vehicles. Last year the State Government passed the *Control of Vehicles (Off-road Areas) Amendment Act 2025*, which addressed the core objectives of the WALGA ORV Advocacy Position, particularly as it relates to registration and enforcement. As the intended outcomes of the Advocacy Position have been achieved, it is proposed that Advocacy Position 3.12 Off Road Vehicles be retired. State Council [item 8.4](#) relates to this matter.

The People and Place Policy Team also recommended that State Council endorse the updated Homelessness Advocacy Position. The revised position provides a contemporary and sector informed Advocacy Position that includes a clear ask and expectation of the Australian and Western Australian Government. State Council [item 8.5](#) relates to this matter.

2. MATTERS FOR STATE COUNCIL NOTING

At the February meeting, the People and Place Policy Team considered WALGA's submission to the WA Office of Multicultural Interests on the Discussion Paper: A Multicultural Act for WA. This submission was endorsed by State Council via the Flying Minute process on 26 February.

3. PEOPLE AND PLACE POLICY TEAM MATTERS

Team Updates

In the February meeting, the Emergency Management and Community Policy Teams gave the new Policy Team Members an introduction to the areas of work covered by each team and the priorities for the year ahead.

At the March meeting, the Emergency Management Team provided an update on:

- The 2025 Emergency Management Survey
 - Once survey results are finalised the team will provide presentations and updates across working groups and Committees.
- The Emergency Management Forum
 - Details are being finalised, with the Forum to be held in May.

At the March meeting, the Community Policy Team provided an update on:

- Rural and remote primary health advocacy, including develop service model solutions in collaboration with Rural Health West and other stakeholders.
- The Aboriginal Elected Members Roundtable and Aboriginal Engagement Forum held on 17 and 18 March.
- Advocacy work surrounding the Community Sporting and Recreation Facilities Fund (CSRFF) pause, including meeting with the Minister's Advisor.

9.3 GOVERNANCE POLICY TEAM REPORT

Presented by Policy Team Chair, Patrick Hall

NOTED

The Governance Policy Team includes the following subject areas:

- *Governance (Local Government legislation)*
- *Local Government Reform/Regional Service Delivery*
- *Local Government Revenue*
- *Local Government Elections*
- *Employee Relations/Industrial Relations*
- *Training*

This Report provides an update on matters considered, since the last State Council meeting, by the Governance Policy Team at meetings held on 23 February and 26 March 2026.

At the meeting on 23 February, the Governance Policy Team elected Patrick Hall as the Chair and confirmed the dates for the 2026 meetings.

1. MATTERS FOR STATE COUNCIL DECISION

Protecting Council Member and Employee Privacy Advocacy Position

The Policy Team considered a report on a new Advocacy Position on Protecting Council Member and Employee Privacy. Specifically, the necessary legislative amendments to strike an appropriate balance between transparency, personal safety and contemporary community expectations of privacy.

State Council Agenda [item 8.1](#) relates to this matter.

2. MATTERS FOR STATE COUNCIL NOTING

Nil.

9.4 ENVIRONMENT POLICY TEAM REPORT

Presented by Policy Team Chair, Les Price

NOTED

The Environment Policy Team includes the following subject areas:

- *Climate change*
- *Native vegetation and biodiversity*
- *Biosecurity*
- *Water resources*
- *Sustainability*
- *Planning and building*

This Report provides an update on matters considered, since the last State Council meeting, by the Environment Policy Team at its meeting held on 19 March 2026.

1. MATTERS FOR STATE COUNCIL DECISION

State Council [item 8.3](#) Water Management Advocacy Position

2. MATTERS FOR STATE COUNCIL NOTING

Flying Minute - DFES Bushfire Place of Last Resort Discussion Paper Submission

The Environment and People and Place Policy Teams recommended that State Council endorse WALGA's submission to the DFES Bushfire Place of Last Resort – Preliminary Stakeholder Engagement Discussion Paper. The submission was endorsed by State Council by Flying Minute on 30 March 2026.

Flying Minute - Renewable Energy Code Submission

The Environment Policy Team recommended that State Council endorse the submission to the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage on the draft Renewable Energy Code, supporting Guidelines and associated regulatory amendments. The submission was endorsed by State Council by Flying Minute on 30 March 2026.

3. ENVIRONMENT POLICY TEAM MATTERS

Feedback provided to DWER on Compliance and Enforcement Policy

The Environment Policy Team noted the feedback provided to the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) on their Draft Compliance and Enforcement Policy and associated Guidelines. This was not a public consultation; the documents were only provided to peak industry bodies and relevant State Government Departments.

These documents do not differ substantially from DWER's existing Policy and Guidelines. WALGA provided an extensive submission on the development of this Policy in 2019 and used that submission and subsequent feedback from the sector as the basis for commentary.

The main issues raised in 2019, which are still relevant, do not relate to the policy and guidance themselves but to the need for effective implementation. WALGA used this opportunity to identify key concerns for Local Governments to DWER including:

- Ensuring compliance and enforcement functions are prioritised as an essential component of the Department's activities.
- Ensuring the Department is adequately resourced, and has the systems in place, to effectively deliver compliance and enforcement functions.
- Reviewing the adequacy of the legislative framework for compliance and enforcement.

Feedback provided to the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority on Anticoagulant Rodenticide Ban

On 2 November 2021, the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority's (APVMA's) commenced a review of the risks of anticoagulant rodenticide products. In December 2025, the APVMA released the Anticoagulant Rodenticides Review Technical Report and commenced consultation on proposed regulatory changes to protect the safety of people and the environment, especially native birds and mammals. This review included a focus on Second Generation Anticoagulant Rodenticides (SGARs), which are most problematic in relation to secondary poisoning risk.

Local Government has been vocal on this issue and supportive of bans or restrictions on the use of SGARs. Following a motion to the 2022 National General Assembly of Local Government, the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) Board supported a call on the Australian Government to recognise the harmful impact of SGARs and promote alternative methods of rodent management. In response to feedback from Zones, WALGA has promoted the Owl Friendly Council Program and there are currently 32 Local Governments that have declared Owl Friendly status or promote use of alternatives to SGARs. WALGA promoted the opportunity to comment to Local Government and provided a short response identifying the issues Local Governments have raised regarding SGARs.

Advocacy Request – State Agreements and Mining

The Environment Policy Team considered a motion by the East Metropolitan, South East Metropolitan and Peel Country Zones regarding State Agreements and mining in drinking water catchments.

State Agreements have been used to develop resource projects in WA since the 1950's. They are legal agreements between the WA Government and a proponent, ratified by Acts of Parliament. In October 2024, the [Office of the Auditor General](#) delivered the outcomes of an audit which assessed if the Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation (JTSI) is managing State Agreements effectively and monitoring benefits to the State and community. The audit had a number of recommendations which the Department (now Department of Energy and Economic Diversification (DEED)) is working to address.

WALGA's existing [Advocacy Position](#) 4.6 Environmental Regulations for Mining, speaks generally to environmental impact of mining activities but not specifically to the impact on public drinking water supply. The draft Advocacy Position on Water Management ([item 8.3](#)) identifies the critical role of water for Local Government.

The Policy Team recommended:

1. WALGA incorporate the Zones' resolution into the review of Advocacy Positions currently underway.
2. WALGA write to the Director General of DEED requesting an update on progress relating to the recommendations of the Office of the Auditor General Report, in particular those regarding engagement with community and Local Government.

9.5 MUNICIPAL WASTE ADVISORY COUNCIL (MWAC) REPORT

Presented by Chair, Karen Wheatland

NOTED

This Report provides an update on matters considered, since the last State Council meeting, by the Municipal Waste Advisory Council (MWAC) at the meeting held on 25 February 2026.

1. MATTERS FOR STATE COUNCIL DECISION

New MWAC Structure

MWAC discussed and agreed with the recommended approach put forward by WALGA to create a new structure for MWAC. The focus of this new structure will be to ensure that all Local Government waste management organisations (Regional Councils and Subsidiaries), as well as Local Governments, can continue to effectively engage and contribute to WALGA's waste policy and advocacy work. Under this approach, MWAC would be wound up and replaced with a Waste Management Advisory Group.

2. MATTERS FOR STATE COUNCIL NOTING

Nil.

3. MUNICIPAL WASTE ADVISORY COUNCIL MATTERS

MWAC also considered:

- Circular Economy Advocacy Position and Background Paper:
 - MWAC noted the Circular Economy Advocacy Position and Background Paper that has been developed for consultation.
 - This Paper will be released for Local Government comment and, following feedback, an Advocacy Position provided to State Council for consideration.
- Review of policy statements and better practice documents.
- Inquiry into Solar Panel Reuse and Recycling in Australia.

10 MATTERS NOTED / INFORMATION

10.1 FLYING MINUTES ENDORSED BY STATE COUNCIL

NOTED

The following Flying Minutes have been endorsed by State Council since the March 2026 meeting:

- Inquiry into Australia's Aviation Sector;
- Western Power Access Arrangement 6 Framework and Approach;
- Submission on the Multicultural Act for Western Australia Discussion Paper;
- DFES Bushfire Place of Last Resort Guideline Discussion Paper; and
- Draft Renewable Energy Planning Code Submission.

The full Flying Minutes are available on the [WALGA website](#).

11 ORGANISATION REPORTS

11.1 KEY ACTIVITY REPORTS

Karen Wheatland left the meeting at 12:25pm and returned at 12:28pm.

This item was brought forward in the Agenda.

11.1.4 REPORT ON KEY ACTIVITIES, POLICY PORTFOLIO

Presented by Nicole Matthews, Executive Manager Policy

NOTED

The Policy Portfolio comprises the following work units:

- *Economic Policy and Development*
- *Environment and Waste*
- *Planning and Building*
- *Emergency Management*
- *Community*

The following outlines the activities of the Policy Portfolio since the March 2026 State Council meeting.

1. ECONOMICS

The WALGA Economic Briefing for quarter 1 of 2026 will be released in April. A key consideration is the impact of rising oil prices as a result of the war in the Middle East.

2. ENVIRONMENT AND WASTE

H5 Bird Flu Webinar

On 18 March, WALGA held a webinar to provide an update to 85 Local Government representatives on the current status of H5 Bird Flu and the work the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) has been undertaking in relation to preparedness. The webinar also outlined the work WALGA has been doing to assist Local Governments with preparedness. Australia remains the only continent free of H5 Bird Flu.

Cat Act Review

On 26 March, the WALGA Governance and Environment Teams hosted a webinar to seek feedback from 83 Local Government representatives on necessary changes to the Cat Act as part of developing the WALGA Submission on the Review, which closes in August 2026. This Review follows WALGA's successful advocacy to modify the legislation to allow Local Governments to include Cat Containment in Local Laws.

Polyphagous shot-hole borer (PSHB) Engagement

WALGA is continuing advocacy on PSHB, meeting with representatives from DPIRD to discuss the ongoing needs of the sector. On 19 March, DPIRD held a national workshop with stakeholders across Australia and international presentations on the management of PSHB.

3. PLANNING AND BUILDING

Urban Greening Strategy – Let's Grow Action Plan 2026-2030

Following the release of the Urban Greening Strategy for Whadjuk (Perth) and Bindjareb (Peel) *Let's Grow: Leafy & Liveable Communities* in January 2026, the State Government has released the [Let's Grow Action Plan 2026-2030](#) and Let's Grow Grant Program. The Action Plan outlines 66 actions, with 11 identifying Local Government or WALGA as co-leads. One of these actions includes establishing a *Let's Grow* Local Government Facilitator to support best-practice greening outcomes across the sector. The Facilitator will be grant funded and employed by WALGA.

The [Grant Program](#) has committed \$10 million over four years to deliver the Let's Grow Grants, with \$2.5 million allocated each financial year. This round of grant programs is targeted at community groups, schools and charities in the Perth and Peel regions. Local Governments can be a project sponsor for these groups. Round One is open until 30 June 2026, with grants of between \$500 to \$100,000 (ex. GST) available. The grant program provides funding for trees, understorey and associated supplementary items. While there is no dedicated Let's Grow grant stream for Local Government in the current round, WALGA is discussing opportunities for future rounds.

4. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Local Emergency Management Arrangements (LEMA) Improvement Project

The LEMA Improvement Program is on track to conclude on 15 April 2026, delivering three key products: a LEMA Development Model, revised LEMA templates and guidance, and an online Statement of Policy, the [Knowledge Hub](#). WALGA has supported this work in its role as sector liaison with a focus on practical, consistent outcomes for Local Government.

WALGA 2026 Emergency Management Forum – 26 May

Building on the success of last year's sold-out event, WALGA's Emergency Management Forum is back for 2026, taking place on Tuesday, 26 May. The Forum theme, 'One State, Many Realities' will delve into WA's evolving emergency management landscape and provide industry experts, sector leaders, change makers and EM practitioners with a day of learning and collaboration across all facets of emergency management. Tickets are available now via the [WALGA website](#).

CEO Bushfire Roundtable

The WALGA CEO Bushfire Roundtable brings together Local Government CEOs and the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) to discuss key bushfire management issues. It is designed to provide a direct line of communication between DFES and Local Government leadership, a space to raise emerging issues affecting brigade management, resourcing and capability. It also provides an opportunity for DFES to provide updates and seek feedback from Local Government CEOs. This year's Roundtable was held on 23 March at the Bushfire Centre of Excellence. The key discussion topics covered experiences from the 2025–26 High Threat Weather period, volunteers and workforce sustainability, work health and safety, bushfire risk mitigation, and governance.

Local Government Grants Scheme Advocacy

At the 5 March 2026 meeting of the State Bushfire Advisory Council (SBAC), WALGA presented a Local Government Grants Scheme (LGGS) Discussion Paper, highlighting that the Scheme is no longer delivering on its foundational intent of fully funding volunteer and career bushfire services, and that the scale and urgency of current funding and system issues now requires coordinated reform across the sector, agencies and Ministerial level.

The SBAC, formally established in 2019, provides advice to the Minister for Emergency Services and the Fire and Emergency Services Commissioner on bushfire management in Western Australia, drawing on the skills, knowledge and practical experience of members from across the bushfire management sector, including volunteers and community representatives. WALGA is a founding member of the SBAC.

The SBAC Chair has written to the Minister and the Fire and Emergency Services Commissioner recommending consideration of the issues and decision points outlined in the WALGA Paper and an independent review of the LGGS.

WALGA will continue to advocate for reform of the LGGS to ensure a sustainable and equitable funding model that meets the future needs of bushfire response and, in the interim, additional funding to clear the backlog of unfunded capital grants requests.

5. COMMUNITY

Community Sporting and Recreation Facilities Fund (CSRFF) and Club Night Lights Program Funding Review

WALGA is continuing to work with the State Government to seek more information on the timing and outcomes of the current funding pause to the CSRFF and Club Night Lights Programs. WALGA is developing an advocacy plan and working with Local Governments to understand the impacts of the funding review and uncertainty of future rounds.

2026 Aboriginal Elected Member Roundtable (AEM Roundtable)

WALGA hosted its second AEM Roundtable on 17 March 2026 and successfully built on the foundations established in 2025. Fifteen Aboriginal Elected Members joined WALGA's President, Senior Executive Team and the Director General of the Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety (LGIRS) to share their experience of leading and representing their communities on Council. Feedback from participants was very positive.

WALGA invited LGIRS to join the Roundtable to hear directly what would support Aboriginal Elected Members to thrive in their Council roles. These insights will enable WALGA to work collaboratively with LGIRS to fulfil the Department's commitment to support Aboriginal Elected Members made at the 2025 Aboriginal Engagement Forum.

2026 Aboriginal Engagement Forum

The 2026 Aboriginal Engagement Forum was held at the State Reception Centre, Kaarta Gar-up | Kings Park, on 18 March. The theme of the Forum was Empowerment in Action | Kaarditjin kwop Koorliny. The program content focused on opportunities for Local Government to build pathways to employment, business and leadership.

The event sold out with approximately 250 attendees, and a record number of Aboriginal Elected Members, Aboriginal Local and State Government officers and community partners. Within the program, the Forum promoted key projects WALGA has delivered over the past 12 months, including increasing the number and visibility of Aboriginal businesses on WALGA's Preferred Supplier Panels, and Kolbang Yanginy, the online Local Government Reconciliation Resource developed in partnership with Reconciliation WA and State Government partners.

Rural and Remote Primary Health

In January 2026, WALGA published the finding of the [Local Government General Practice Support Survey 2025](#). The survey findings have informed WALGA's ongoing advocacy

including meetings with the State Health Minister, media coverage of the issue and developing potential policy solutions with health sector partners.

WALGA has also provided a submission on behalf of the sector to the [Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport References Committee inquiry into Rural, regional and remote Medicare access and funding](#). The submission aligns to Advocacy Position 3.2.2 Rural and Remote Healthcare Services and is available to review on the WALGA website.

Independent Child Safeguarding Oversight Body

In October 2025, the State Government [announcement](#) the appointment of the Ombudsman Western Australia as the independent oversight body for organisations who engage in child-related work. In March 2026, WALGA met with the Director of Independent Oversight who shared their intended direction of capacity building and support for the oversight function. WALGA will continue to work with the Ombudsman WA to share information and support with Members.

WALGA Public Library Forum

On 13 February WALGA delivered the Public Library Forum for Local Government librarians. The Forum focused on the facilitation of community partnerships with presentations including community partnership examples from the City of Cockburn and other libraries across the state. Public librarians from across the state participated in-person

11.1.1 REPORT ON KEY ACTIVITIES, ADVOCACY PORTFOLIO

Presented by Rachel Horton, Executive Manager Advocacy

NOTED

The Advocacy Portfolio comprises the following work units:

- *Marketing*
- *Media & Communications*
- *External Affairs*
- *Events*
- *Association Governance*

The following outlines the activities of the Advocacy Portfolio since the March 2026 State Council meeting.

1. **MARKETING**

Employee Value Proposition

On March 31 WALGA launched its Employee Value Proposition internally. An external launch will follow throughout April. The launch included a surprise desk drop with sustainable merchandise for staff, a reveal of the EVP internal graphics along with a presentation on the research findings with a themed morning tea. Work will be ongoing to create assets for the whole of the employee lifecycle.

WALGA Members Hub

Marketing of the Level 3 Members Hub has trebled the usage of the Member hot desks and bookable rooms since January. Further promotion will continue to ensure all Members are aware of this resource.

Training Campaigns (Short Courses, Cert III & Diploma)

After a Marketing push from February 2026, registrations for WALGA's Short Courses have increased significantly, rising from 2,596 to 4,389, representing nearly 1,800 additional registrations over an eight-week period.

A new approach was taken to promote the Cert III and Diploma by presenting both as part of a connected professional journey, rather than standalone offerings. New messages, channels and mediums were introduced including:

- Instagram stories
- EDMs targeting LG employees in HR/Training/Workforce Development roles
- A dedicated landing page designed to support pathway messaging and to ease user navigation.

Overall, February showed strong year-on-year growth across all training related engagement metrics.

- Organic Search through Google returned to the number one position
- Email engagement doubled
- 93% increase in new users
- 69% engagement rate
- Cert III Conversion rate: 45%
- Diploma Conversion rate: 19%

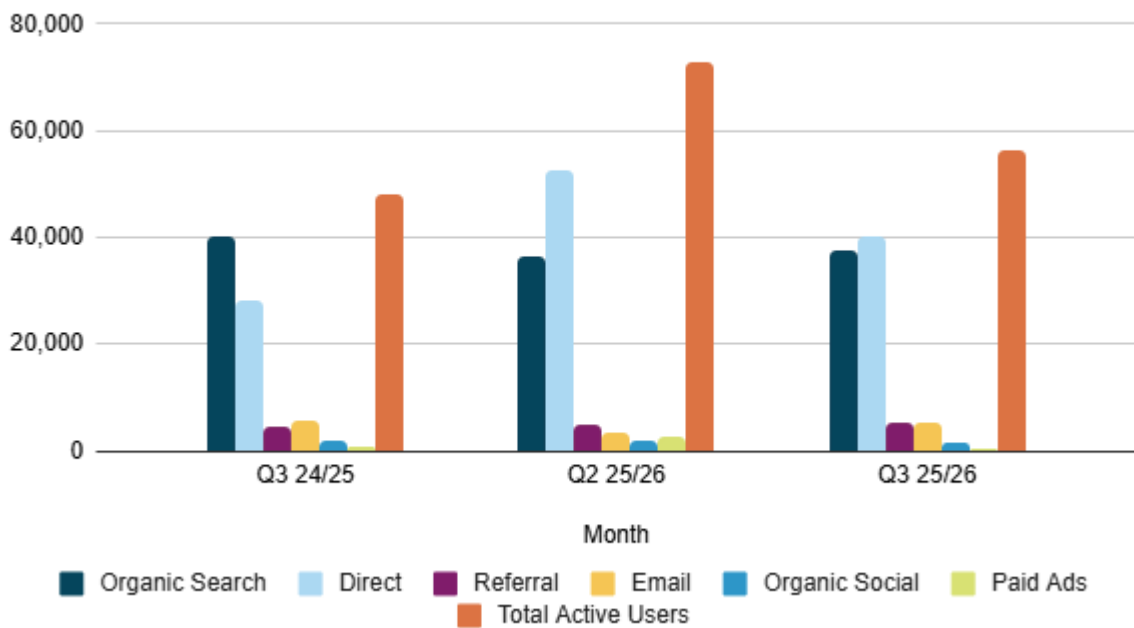
Training Material audit

A marketing audit of all training materials is currently underway to ensure they are on brand and contemporary. Due to training audit requirements, some materials cannot be reviewed while courses are in progress, meaning the audit will be phased.

WALGA Website Q3 25/26 data (Jan to March 2026)

Website traffic for Jan–Mar 2026 (Q3 25/26) is 17% higher than the same period last year, but 23% lower than the previous quarter (Q2 had unusually high traffic due to covering the Convention and October elections in the reporting period).

Quarterly Web Traffic by Source



RoadWise Website

Work is underway to integrate the RoadWise website into the existing WALGA website. This will improve navigation, strengthen the visibility of RoadWise programs and ensure a consistent brand and user experience. Completion is scheduled for the end of June.

DWER Partnership

WALGA, in partnership with DWER, launched a new social media campaign on 16 March to promote safe battery disposal. The campaign is being promoted on Meta and features an educational element, awareness through videos of firefighters, and a call to action showing how easy it is to dispose of batteries safely at collection points.

Event Campaigns

Marketing supported the promotion and production of collateral, event staging and assets for the below events.

- 2026 Aboriginal Engagement Forum
- 20206 Economic Development Case Studies launch
- 2026 Local Government Honours Awards
- 2026 Emergency Management Forum

2. COMMUNICATIONS

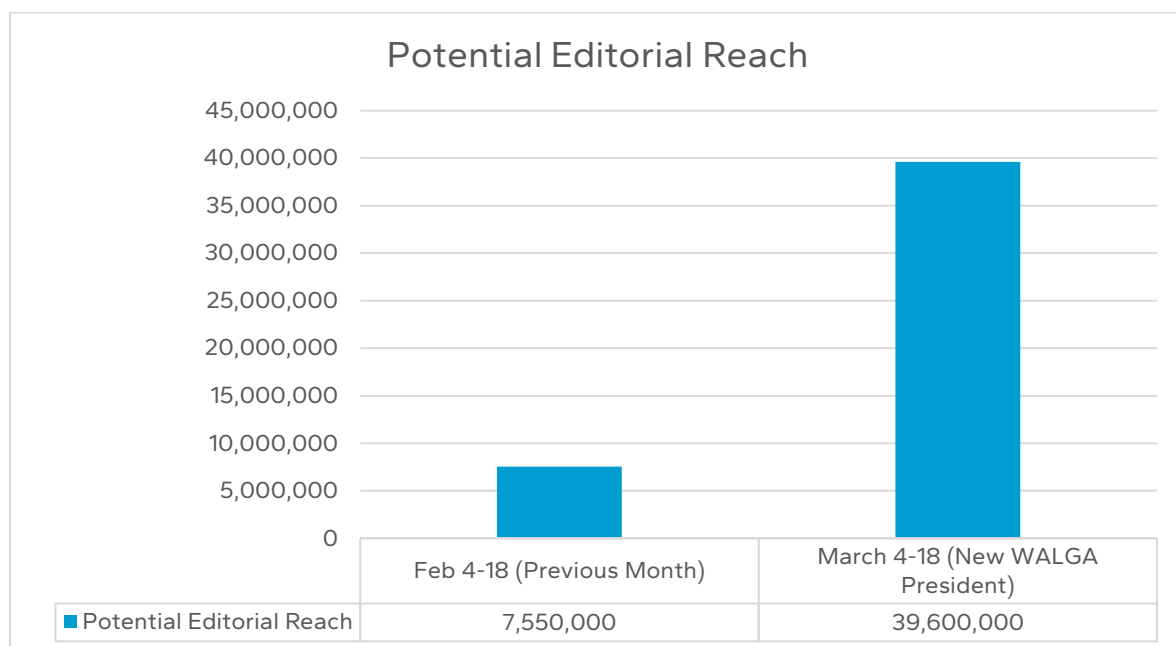
Multiple internal and external communications were prepared throughout the reporting period between Sunday, 1 February and Friday, 20 March (47 Days) including:

- Seven LG Direct weekly newsletters distributed to more than 2,000 Elected Members and senior staff
- Seven WALGA Media Releases
- Annual LG Directory to be issued in April 2026.

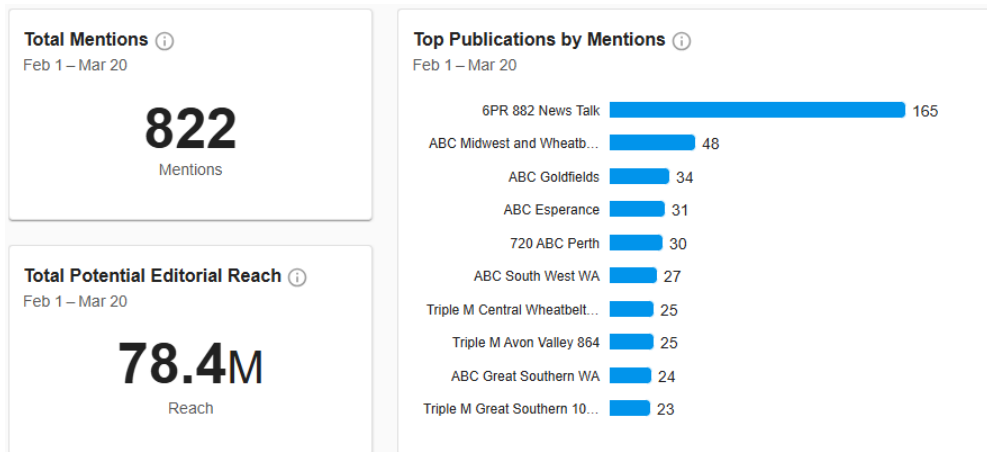
3. MEDIA

There were 822 mentions of WALGA and the WALGA President between Sunday, 1 February and Friday, 20 March (47 Days). NB: The previous reporting period was 80 days and both the current WALGA President Mark Irwin and former President Karen Chappel AM JP are captured in this reporting period.

WALGA hosted a press conference on Thursday, 5 March with the newly elected WALGA President which generated significant media interest and resulted in a 222% increase in media mentions in the first two weeks.



Overall, there has been a 74% increase from 486 in the previous reporting period. The majority of mentions were from 6PR, ABC Midwest and Wheatbelt and ABC Goldfields.



Earned Media:

WALGA has received 33 requests for comment across print, radio, television and online media. Topics included the WALGA President election, renewable energy, Local Government reform, emergency management, and cat containment.

- 4 x TV
- 20 x Print Media
- 9 x Radio

Top Advocacy mainstream media mentions by reach:

- Renewables – 14.6m
- Emergency Management – 14.6m
- Local Government Reform – 14.5m

Media Releases:

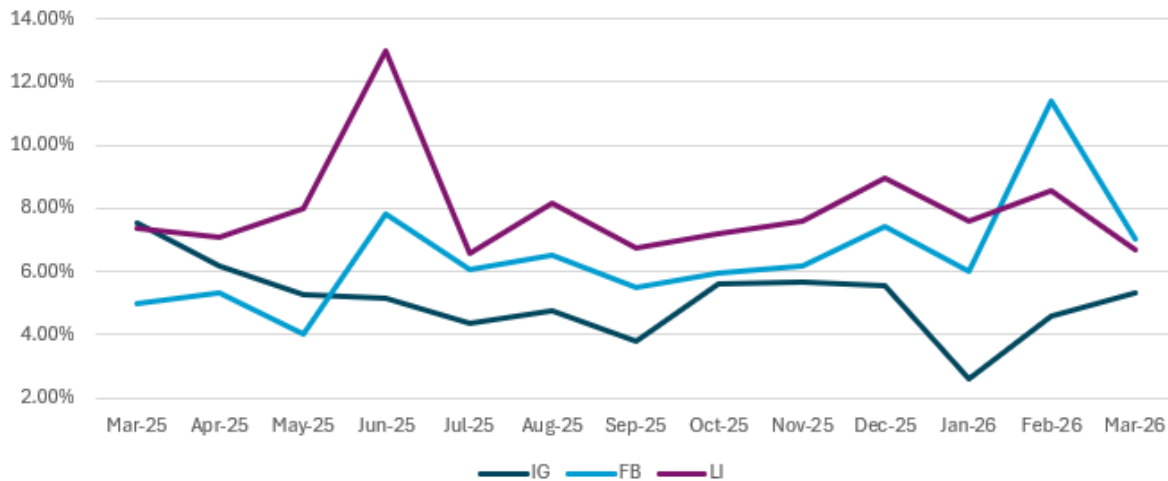
WALGA released seven proactive media statements in the reporting period, regarding the election of the new WALGA President, cat containment, renewables and the release of WALGA's Federal Budget Submission.

- [WALGA submits 2026-27 Federal Budget Submission](#) – Tuesday, 3 February
- [WALGA commends State Government extension of CoastWA program](#) – Thursday, 12 February
- [WALGA supports State Government move to introduce the Cat Amendment \(Local Laws\) Bill](#) – Friday, 20 February
- [Statement from WALGA President Karen Chappel AM JP](#) - Tuesday, 3 March
- [WALGA pays tribute to outgoing President Karen Chappel AM JP](#) - Tuesday, 3 March
- [Importance of community benefits recognised by State Government in release of Renewable Energy Guideline](#) – Wednesday, 4 March
- [City of Stirling Mayor Mark Irwin elected as WA Local Government Association President](#) – Thursday, 5 March

Social Media:

The below statistics cover the period between Sunday, 1 February and Friday, 20 March (47 Days) compared Saturday, 1 November 2025 - Tuesday, 20 January 2026 (80 days).

Social Media Engagement %



Facebook saw a spike in March with a 13% increase in post reactions which can be attributed to engagement with training campaigns and Aboriginal Engagement Forum content. Engagement on Instagram is tracking well with the highest performing post being the welcome of the new President. Whilst LinkedIn shows a decline, post engagement tracks higher (average of 33%) than Facebook (7%) and Instagram (4%).

4. GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

WALGA's external and government engagement has focused on initiating discussions with key decision makers. The WALGA President has written to all Ministers, Shadow Ministers, and State and Federal Members of Parliament to seek early meetings and explore opportunities for constructive collaboration.

5. EVENTS

2026 Aboriginal Elected Member Roundtable & Aboriginal Engagement Forum

The 2026 Aboriginal Elected Member Roundtable, held the day before the Aboriginal Engagement forum was attended by 15 Aboriginal Elected Members, including some newly elected Members in October 2025. The Roundtable session fostered meaningful collaboration and valuable peer support, while also providing firsthand insights into the barriers and issues faced by Aboriginal Elected Members in their roles, helping to inform WALGA's ongoing advocacy and sector support.

The 2026 WALGA Aboriginal Engagement Forum was held on 18 March at Kaarta Gar-up (Kings Park), bringing together more than 250 attendees from across the sector. Participants included First Nations leaders, Local Government Officers, State Government representatives and WA business owners, with 46 Local Governments represented.

The Forum was opened by State Councillor and City of Kwinana Deputy Mayor Barry Winmar, followed by addresses from the Honourable Don Punch MLA, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and WALGA President, Mark Irwin.

Survey results indicate high overall relevance, with the majority of respondents rating the Forum content as very relevant or extremely relevant to their work and local communities, and 92% indicating they are likely to attend future Forums.

2026 Mayors and Presidents Forum

The first Mayors and Presidents Forum of 2026 was held on Friday, 27 March at the WALGA Members Hub with 55 registered attendees.

Mayors and Presidents heard an address from newly elected WALGA President Mark Irwin, Hon Hannah Beazley MLA, Minister for Local Government; Disability Services; Volunteering; Youth; Gascoyne, and Local Government Inspector Tony Brown. Delegates had the opportunity to engage directly with the new President through an audience Q&A session, along with questions to the Local Government Inspector.

Upcoming Events

- Economic Development Case Studies Launch - 11 May 2026
- Emergency Management Forum – 26 May 2026
- Local Government Awards – 12 June 2026
- ALGA National General Assembly - 23-25 June 2026 with WALGA Welcome Sundowner on Tuesday 23 June
- NGA WALGA Sundowner - 23 June 2026
- People and Culture Seminar - 3 July 2026
- Certificate III Virtual Graduation - 23 July 2026

11.1.2 REPORT ON KEY ACTIVITIES, INFRASTRUCTURE PORTFOLIO

By Ian Duncan, Executive Manager Infrastructure

NOTED

The Infrastructure Portfolio comprises the following work units:

- *Roads*
- *Road Funding*
- *Transport*
- *Asset Management*
- *Utilities*
- *Road Safety*

The following outlines the activities of the Infrastructure Portfolio since the last State Council meeting.

1. ROADS

Local Government Transport and Roads Research and Innovation Program (LGTRRIP)

The development of a road safety rating tool for intersections and a guideline for the use of Marginal Materials in road construction is progressing. During March, WALGA and the National Transport Research Organisation (NTRO) have convened a series of workshops with Local Governments and industry to develop the next pipeline of projects.

Guidelines and Specifications for Residential Crossovers

WALGA is reviewing the Residential Crossover Guidelines and Specifications to ensure they continue to meet the needs of Local Governments. Following the completion and analysis of a survey to gather feedback from Local Governments on how the document is applied, which sections are most useful, and where improvements may be required, the document is now being reviewed and revised accordingly. Further engagement will inform potential updates to the guidelines.

Heavy Vehicle Access on Local Roads

Main Roads recently announced that they were changing the access condition that requires a restricted access vehicle operator/generator to obtain a letter of approval from a Local Government (referred to as a CA07 condition) to a notification system. Main Roads allege that this condition is unlawful as only Main Roads can approve access.

This decision is contrary to the WALGA policy position that states that WALGA:

“Opposes the withdrawal of the ‘Letter of Approval’ Restricted Access Vehicle Operating Condition until an acceptable alternative to Local Government is developed by Main Roads WA.”

After discussions with Main Roads, they have agreed to convene a working group to develop an acceptable alternative.

2. ROAD FUNDING

Regional Road Safety Program

Work is progressing on 28 projects totalling 457km across 21 Local Governments under Tranche 1 of the Regional Road Safety Program (Local Roads). Nominations have been received and evaluated for Tranche 2 and recommendations prepared for Ministerial approval. WALGA and RAC are continuing to seek Federal Government funding support for the program in line with the State Government commitment.

Multi-Criteria Assessment (MCA) Model Revisions

WALGA continues to work with Regional Road Groups to better align the MCA models used by Regional Road Groups to prioritise projects for Road Project Grant funding with the provisions outlined in the procedures document of the State Road Funds to Local Government Agreement (Agreement). All the Regional Road Groups have commenced the MCA revision process, with the process in the Gascoyne, Great Southern, Kimberley and South-West region now complete. Significant progress has been made in each of the other regions.

3. TRANSPORT

Active Transport and Micromobility Advocacy Plan

Development of the Active Transport and Micromobility Advocacy Plan is progressing. Recent work has included reviewing the State Government's response to the Parliamentary Inquiry into eRideables, which has informed and refined the advocacy approach. The initial policy positions included a range of supporting actions, which have now been consolidated into a more focused and strategic set of advocacy actions, reducing duplication and clarifying priorities. The consolidated actions will be presented to the Infrastructure Policy Team for feedback prior to progressing to the next stage.

4. ASSET MANAGEMENT

Road Assets and Expenditure Report Project

The WALGA Infrastructure team together with the Business Intelligence & Analytics team is undertaking work to modernise the architecture and processes used to manage data and generate the annual Road Assets and Expenditure Report. The project will include the development of a database, reporting interface, and dashboard to go live in August 2026 for the data entry component of the 2025/26 report. WALGA will be delivering a range of measures to assist Local Governments to navigate the new dashboard.

Review of the WALGA Road Visual Condition Assessment Manual

A revised WALGA Road Visual Condition Assessment Manual, originally published in 2016, has been finalised and will be published soon. The revised manual will necessitate some changes to the RAMM software and to allow Local Government practitioners time to adjust proposed surveys, there will be a three-month lag period before switching RAMM to the revised manual. An instructional webinar will be delivered shortly.

Western Power

WALGA continues to liaise with Western Power to support more efficient and timely delivery of Local Governments projects with impacts to Western Power infrastructure. WALGA successfully advocated for Western Power to reintroduce the option for Local Governments to undertake streetlighting installation and modification projects using approved consultants and contractors (Option B). This allows Local Governments to circumvent the lengthy and costly Western Power process for programming, funding, and implementing

streetlighting projects, offering significant cost and time savings on projects. WALGA is seeking to promote this choice to Local Governments, so Western Power retain it.

Economic Regulation Authority (ERA) Framework and Approach

While the ERA is finalising the Framework and Approach for Access Arrangement 6, Western Power is keen to engage with the Local Government sector to better understand customer expectations and include these in their proposed Access Arrangement. Meetings have been proposed for coming months, and work is underway to identify Local Governments keen to participate in the process.

Telecommunications

Despite regular meetings with Telstra, the Department of Primary Industry and Regional Development and other stakeholders, work to define an operational model and agreements that would enable deployment by Local Governments of backup generators to support telecommunications during power failures is progressing only slowly.

WALGA is working to provide a submission to the Senate Environment and Communications Legislation Committee Inquiry into the Telecommunications Legislation Amendment (Universal Outdoor Mobile Obligation) Bill 2025. The stated objectives of this Bill are strongly aligned with the Association's advocacy position. Whether the proposed legislation will achieve these objectives needs consideration. This submission would reinforce existing advocacy positions.

5. ROAD SAFETY

Road Safety Council

The Road Safety Council met on 6 March, primarily to consider submissions for Road Trauma Trust Account (RTTA) funding. The other matters considered at that meeting included: eligibility criteria for RTTA submissions, serious injuries reporting and safer speeds. The Road Safety Council meet next in June. The Road Safety Council Communiques can viewed at [Road Safety Council Meeting Communiques](#).

11.1.3 REPORT ON KEY ACTIVITIES, MEMBER SERVICES PORTFOLIO

Presented by Kirsty Martin, Executive Manager Member Services

NOTED

The Member Services Portfolio comprises the following work units:

- *Commercial Contract Services*
- *Commercial Development*
- *Commercial Management*
- *Employee Relations*
- *Governance and Procurement*
- *Training*

The following outlines the activities of the Member Services Portfolio since the March 2026 State Council meeting.

1. COMMERCIAL

A tender was undertaken to increase the number of Aboriginal businesses within the WALGA Preferred Supplier Program (PSP) and there are now 66 Aboriginal businesses prequalified on the program. WALGA has also enhanced its Preferred Supplier website Directory to enable filtering functionality to identify Aboriginal businesses.

The current round of Preferred Supplier onboarding has 169 tender respondents, with evaluation and contracting intended to be completed by July.

A new supply category of Building Inspection Services has been added to the PSP with new suppliers currently being contracted.

ARENA Project

WALGA is currently finalising the last deliverables for the ARENA project, in line with the planned conclusion prior to the end of this financial year.

2. EMPLOYEE RELATIONS (ER)

WALGA continues to represent the sector in applications in the WA Industrial Relations Commission (WAIRC), including:

- Applications CICS 5, 8 and 9 of 2023 - Union demarcation dispute and associated applications:
 - CICS 5, 8 and 9 of 2023 is an application by the Western Australian Municipal, Administrative, Clerical and Services Union of Employees (WASU), for coverage of Local Government employees to the exclusion of the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union of Workers (CFMEUW) (the Demarcation claim).
 - The Local Government, Racing and Cemeteries Employees Union (LGRCEU) and WALGA are intervenors.
 - The Demarcation claim was heard by the WAIRC, sitting as the Commission in Court Session (CICS), over 41 days in July and October of 2024 and October and November 2025. The CICS has reserved its decision in the Demarcation claim. Given the length of the hearing, the number of witnesses and amount of evidence produced during the hearing it is not possible to predict when the Demarcation claim decision will be handed down.

- State Wage Case:
 - Annually the WAIRC in Court Session issues a decision setting the WA minimum wage.
 - The WAIRC has called for submissions that are due by 13 May 2026. WALGA will submit a written submission on behalf of the Local Government sector, see Item under Separate Cover for endorsement by State Council.

WALGA's Salary and Workforce Survey closed on 21 November 2025. 92 Local Governments completed the survey (84 WA and 8 Northern Territory Local Governments). The results of the survey have been compiled into a report, and a webinar was held on 11 March 2026 to share key highlights. Subscribers of the ER Service who completed the survey have full access to the results of the survey and the report as part of their subscription.

3. GOVERNANCE AND PROCUREMENT

WALGA continues to provide a high level of support to Local Governments implementing the ongoing program of Local Government Act reforms.

The Audit Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC) requirements, which commenced on 1 January 2026, have been an area of significant focus. WALGA has assisted Local Governments with the transitional arrangements for existing audit committees, the mandatory appointments of independent persons, payments to committee members and presiding arrangements when the presiding member is unavailable. To assist in developing the skills of independent members, WALGA has developed and delivered a new training course *Essential Skills for Independent ARIC Members*. The course featured a guest presentation by Grant Robinson, Assistant Auditor General Financial Audit from the Office of the Auditor General and was well received by participants. Expressions of interest for future delivery dates are being received.

4. TRAINING

WALGA Training has had a very busy start to 2026, with a record 89 On-Site courses booked for this financial year.

Certificate III in Local Government

Our February intake enjoyed strong enrolment numbers with eight Trainees and two Fee for Service students starting their Certificate III journey with WALGA Training. Our next intake is also looking strong with two Trainees and three Fee for Service already being signed up.

On 25 February, we celebrated the graduation of 14 students, receiving their Certificate III in Local Government. This brings us to a historic point as our Alumni has now 50 graduates. This is quite a milestone achievement.

Council Member Essentials

Overall, Councillors are well underway and progressing through their Council Member Essentials training. In October 2025, a total of 578 Councillors were elected, 231 of them are newly Elected Members.

Diploma of Local Government – Elected Member

In collaboration with the Marketing Team, a comprehensive campaign is underway to promote the next Diploma intake on 4 May, with registrations closing on 23 April. The campaign features Georgie Carey's journey from Councillor and Deputy Mayor for two terms to now studying a Master in Public Policy at Harvard Kennedy School. Georgie encourages Elected Members to "Take the time to learn; about your community, your fellow Councillors and how Local Government really works".

New eLearning courses coming

Local Government Design Review Panel

WALGA is working in collaboration with the Government Architect of Western Australia (GAWA) and the Western Australian Planning Commission (WAPC) to develop a set of new Local Government Design Review eLearning courses. The aim of this training is to make design review clearer, easier and more consistent for key stakeholders, such as Local Government officers, panel members and panel chairs.

New Officer Induction Training being developed in 2026

Currently there is one induction training course available to officers: "Introduction to Local Government". WALGA is developing three new eLearning courses over the next year, including:

- Introduction to Ethical Behaviour;
- Procurement Foundations in Local Government; and
- Introduction to Recordkeeping.

11.2 PRESIDENT'S REPORT

NOTED

Lewis Hutton left the meeting at 12:38pm.

11.3 CEO'S REPORT

NOTED

12 ADDITIONAL ZONE RESOLUTIONS

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Terresa Lynes
Seconded: Eman Seif

That the Additional Zone Resolutions from the April 2026 round of Zone meetings as follows be referred to the appropriate Portfolio for consideration and appropriate action.

RESOLUTION 032.2/2026

CARRIED

Lewis Hutton returned to the meeting at 12:47pm.

EAST METROPOLITAN ZONE (Policy Portfolio)

Rating of Social and Affordable Housing

That the East Metropolitan Zone requests WALGA to:

1. obtain legal advice as to whether the provision of affordable housing is likely to fall within the meaning of the relief of poverty for the purposes of section 6.26 of the *Local Government Act*. If not, obtain legal advice as to whether the minority provision of social housing within a mixed social/affordable housing development alters the position;
2. seek interest of like-minded Local Governments to identify and fund a suitable test case through the SAT and potentially Supreme Court; and
3. advocate to the State Government to agree to require all Community Housing Providers fund the payment of Local Government rates for affordable housing.

EAST METROPOLITAN ZONE (Policy Portfolio)

Community Sporting and Recreation Facilities Fund

That the East Metropolitan Zone request WALGA to:

1. Launch a public advocacy campaign, as a matter of priority, requesting the State Government restart the Community Sporting and Recreation Facilities Fund (CSRFF) for the 2026/27 financial year; and
2. The campaign should showcase the benefits of the CSRFF and the reliance the Local Government sector has on this funding

CENTRAL COUNTRY ZONE (Member Services Portfolio)

Urgent Advocacy: Forest Products Commission (FPC) "Rates-Equivalent" Payments Diverted to State Treasury – Immediate Local Government Budget Impacts (2025/26)

That the Central Country Zone request WALGA to advocate as a matter of urgency, prior to the Local Government Budget cycle, to the State Government (including the Treasurer, Minister for Local Government, and Minister for Forestry) to:

1. Establish a formal cross-portfolio arrangement (Treasury/Local Government/ Forestry, with WALGA and affected Local Governments) to:
 - a. confirm a transparent method for calculating and timing the rates-equivalent amounts under the current legislative settings; and
 - b. implement an agreed mechanism to allocate and remit the rates-equivalent payments to the impacted Local Governments from 2026/27 onward.
2. Provide impacted Local Governments with certainty and forward estimates regarding:
 - a. the FPC's land acquisition / plantation expansion trajectory; and
 - b. modelling of the projected financial impact on affected rating bases, so Councils can undertake responsible long-term financial planning.
3. (If required) Progress options for policy and/or legislative amendment to ensure ongoing equity and financial sustainability for communities hosting FPC freehold landholdings, including ensuring outcomes that do not unfairly transfer costs to remaining ratepayers.

CENTRAL COUNTRY ZONE (Infrastructure Portfolio)

Ministerial Decision to Allow Heavier Loads on Local Government Roads

That the Central Country Zone:

1. Writes to the Minister for Transport to express concern about this decision.
2. Notes the Ministerial decision to temporarily upgrade RAV networks to AMMS permit on Local Government roads.
3. Expresses concern that the decision was made without consultation with Local Governments or WALGA.
4. Requests WALGA advocate to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads Western Australia seeking clarification on:
 - a. risk assessments without route-specific road safety or asset capacity assessment for Local Government roads,
 - b. compliance and enforcement arrangements,
 - c. duration and process for revocation of the upgrade,
 - d. opt-out options for Local Government roads, and
 - e. additional funding support for impacted Local Government road assets.

GREAT SOUTHERN COUNTRY ZONE (Member Services Portfolio)

Forest Products Commission (FPC) Rates Equivalent Payments – Treasury Remittance Uncertainty and Local Government Budget Impact

That the Great Southern Country Zone request WALGA to advocate, as a matter of urgency, to the Western Australian Treasurer, Minister for Forestry and Minister for Local Government to:

1. Establish, prior to the finalisation of 2026/27 Local Government budgets, a clear, transparent, and ongoing mechanism for the calculation, remittance, and payment of those rates-equivalent amounts to affected Local Governments for 2026/27 and future financial years.
2. Work with WALGA and affected Local Governments to develop and implement a fair and sustainable long-term solution, including policy and legislative reform if required, to ensure Local Governments are not financially disadvantaged by future Forest Products Commission land acquisitions.

GREAT SOUTHERN COUNTRY ZONE (Infrastructure Portfolio)

RAV Network Accredited Mass Management Scheme (Level 3) – Ministerial Decision Enabling Heavier Loads on Selected Local Roads

That the Great Southern Country Zone:

1. Notes the Ministerial decision to temporarily upgrade RAV networks to AMMS Level 3 on Local Government roads.
2. Expresses concern that the decision was made without consultation with Local Governments or WALGA.
3. Requests WALGA advocate to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads Western Australia seeking clarification on:
 - a. risk assessments without route-specific road safety or asset capacity assessment for Local Government roads,
 - b. compliance and enforcement arrangements,
 - c. duration and process for revocation of the upgrade,
 - d. opt-out options for Local Government roads,
 - e. when the intervention will cease to apply; and
 - f. additional funding support for impacted Local Government road assets.
4. Requests GSCZ Secretariat write to the Minister for Transport expressing the Zone's concerns and requesting clarification as detailed in parts 2 and 3 above.

MURCHISON COUNTRY ZONE (Advocacy Portfolio)

WALGA State Government Advocacy Partnership Review

That the WALGA Murchison Country Zone:

1. Notes the Murchison Executive Group's 'WALGA State Government Advocacy Partnership Review' report.
2. Recognises the importance of a strong and structured partnership between the Western Australian State Government and the Local Government sector.
3. Requests WALGA State Council to undertake a review of successful Local–State Government partnership models operating in other Australian jurisdictions, including the Queensland 'Equal Partners in Government' agreement.
4. Advocates for the development of a comparable partnership framework in Western Australia that recognises Local Government as an equal partner in governance and establishes clear mechanisms for consultation, collaboration and regional input into State policy and legislative reform

NORTH METROPOLITAN ZONE (Policy Portfolio)

Building Surveyor Qualifications

That WALGA engage with the relevant Ministers to ensure future qualification pathways are established to support individuals to train and obtain registration, at minimum, as a Level 2 Building Surveyor with the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries in Western Australia.

NORTH METROPOLITAN ZONE (Infrastructure Portfolio)

Advocacy for Increased State Government Funding for the Targeted Underground Power Program (TUPP)

That the North Metropolitan Zone support, and subsequently WALGA State Council, strengthen and expand the advocacy position on underground power to advocate for increased State Government funding for the TUPP initiative and even spread of the initiative throughout the Perth Metropolitan area.

NORTHERN COUNTRY ZONE (Member Services / Policy / Infrastructure Portfolios)

WALGA Bulk Procurement – Low Earth Orbit (LEO) Satellite Connectivity for Volunteer Bushfire Vehicles

That the Northern Country Zone:

1. Request WALGA to investigate and scope a sector wide procurement solution, through the Preferred Supplier Program, for Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellite connectivity for Volunteer Bush Fire Vehicles, including but not limited to:
 - Starlink Mini hardware and associated business/government grade data plans (e.g. Local Priority plans); and
 - Integrated “vehicle as a node” platforms such as HyphaONE Mini that combine LEO satellite, 4G/5G, Wi Fi and mesh networking in a single emergency services ready unit.
2. Request WALGA to consult with DFES, Local Governments and relevant emergency services stakeholders to:
 - Define standard technical, installation and cyber security requirements for LEO satellite equipment on volunteer bush fire appliances; and
 - Identify preferred commercial models for ongoing user fees (for example, pooled data plans, fleet wide contracts or regional cost sharing arrangements).
3. Request WALGA to report back to Zones and State Council with options and recommendations, including indicative pricing, contract structures and implementation pathways, to enable interested Local Governments to access LEO satellite solutions for their Volunteer Bush Fire Vehicles via the Preferred Supplier Program and, where appropriate, to utilise the \$20,000 BGU one off grant funding being administered by DFES.
4. Request WALGA to advocate to the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) and relevant partners for the ongoing operational costs of Starlink services to be funded on a continuing basis through the Emergency Services Levy (ESL).

SOUTH METROPOLITAN ZONE (Policy Portfolio)

Request for Fertiliser

That the South Metropolitan Zone requests WALGA directly engage with Minister Jarvis regarding supply of fertiliser for Local Government across WA and requests increased communication regarding ongoing fertiliser supply.

SOUTH EAST METROPOLITAN ZONE (Advocacy Portfolio)

The Establishment of Mayors, Presidents and Councillors Association

That WALGA provides a report to State Council containing a business case for the establishment of a subsidiary WALGA Elected Members Association for Western Australian Mayors, Presidents and Councillors.

SOUTH EAST METROPOLITAN ZONE (Advocacy Portfolio)

Salaries and Allowances Tribunal (WA) 2026 Determination

That the South East Metropolitan Zone request that, with respect to the *2026 Local Government CEO and Elected Council Member Determination*, WALGA:

1. conducts consultation with the Local Government sector and subsequently presents a report to State Council advocating for changes to the Elected Council Member ICT Allowance in the 2027 Salaries and Allowances Tribunal Determination including, but not restricted to the following:
 - a. that the annual \$3,500 ICT allowance be significantly increased;
 - b. that where ICT equipment is supplied to Elected Council Members by the Local Government, that *the allowance is not to be reduced by the cost of the supplied ICT equipment.*
2. Writes to the Chair of the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal objecting to the generalisations made in paragraphs 46 and 47 of the *2026 Local Government CEO and Elected Council Member Determination preamble* and advises that, contrary to the comments contained in the Tribunal's determination, the role of Mayors and President (particularly in Band 1 and 2 Councils) is commensurate with full-time

employment, and that the “work value” of elected council members is often equivalent to or exceeds that of Members of Parliament.

3. Seeks a meeting with the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal Chair to articulate in person the matters outlined in 1 and 2.

SOUTH EAST METROPOLITAN ZONE (Policy Portfolio)

Social Cohesion Grants Program

That the South East Metropolitan Zone recommends that WALGA advocate to the State Government to establish a Social Cohesion Grants Program.

SOUTH WEST COUNTRY ZONE (Policy Portfolio)

CSRFF And Playon WA Funding – Lack of Clarity on Future Rounds

That the South West Country Zone:

1. notes the current lack of clarity regarding the timing and structure of future Community Sporting and Recreation Facilities Fund and Club Night Lights Program funding rounds; and
2. requests WALGA to advocate to the State Government for the provision of clear and timely information on future funding programs, including anticipated timelines, program structure and any proposed changes to funding criteria, to support effective Local Government planning and delivery of community sporting infrastructure.

SOUTH WEST COUNTRY ZONE (Infrastructure Portfolio)

Management of Water Corporation Bridges on Local Government Roads

That the South West Country Zone request WALGA to advocate to the WA State Government to develop a strategic solution to the asset management of Water Corporation bridges on state and Local Government roads by:

1. acknowledging the significant inadequacy of the current asset management and investment prioritisation associated with Water Corporation bridge assets; and
2. requesting that the State Government establish a dedicated funding program for an urgent bridge renewal program to address community safety and access risks.

SOUTH WEST COUNTRY ZONE (Member Services Portfolio)

Forest Products Commission (FPC) Rates Equivalent Payments – Treasury remittance uncertainty and Local Government budget impacts

That the South West Country Zone request WALGA to advocate, as a matter of urgency, to the Western Australian Treasurer, Minister for Forestry and Minister for Local Government to:

- a. provide urgent written confirmation that the rates-equivalent payments made by the Forest Products Commission to the State under section 43 of the *Forest Products Act 2000* will be remitted in full to the affected Local Governments;
- b. establish, prior to the finalisation of 2026/27 Local Government budgets, a clear, transparent, and ongoing mechanism for the calculation, remittance, and payment of those rates-equivalent amounts to affected Local Governments for 2026/27 and future financial years; and
- c. Work with WALGA and affected Local Governments to develop and implement a fair and sustainable long-term solution, including policy and legislative reform if required, to ensure Local Governments are not financially disadvantaged by future Forest Products Commission land acquisitions.

13 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next ordinary meeting of the WALGA State Council will be held in the Conference Room at WALGA, ONE70, LV3, 170 Railway Parade, West Leederville on 1 July 2026 commencing at 4:15pm.

14 CLOSURE

Chair, Chris Antonio, thanked the Shire of Pingelly and the Central Country Zone for hosting the Regional State Council meeting.

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 12:48pm.

STATUS REPORT ON STATE COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS

| MEETING | RESOLUTION | COMMENT | COMPLETION STATUS | OFFICER RESPONSIBLE |
|---|--|--|-------------------|--|
| <p>4 March 2026 Item 9.1 Aviation Advocacy Positions</p> | <p>That State Council endorse two new Advocacy Positions on Aviation as follows:</p> <p>1. Regional Airports WALGA supports the sustainable operation of Local Government owned regional airports and advocates for proportionate regulatory frameworks, targeted funding, and operational guidance to ensure safe, efficient, and resilient airport infrastructure and services.</p> <p>2. Regional and Remote Air Services WALGA advocates for reliable, affordable, and equitable regional air services, calling for greater oversight of airline pricing practices, including providing adequate capacity net of contracted (FIFO) seats, transparent fare structures and equitable access to discounted and lower-cost fares, to mitigate the impacts of limited competition and dynamic pricing on regional residents, businesses, and essential travel. WALGA also promotes the continued viability of essential routes and recognises regional aviation as an essential service supporting community and emergency access, workforce mobility, and regional economic development.</p> <p>RESOLUTION 003.1/2026</p> | <p>The Advocacy Positions Manual has been updated.</p> | <p>COMPLETE</p> | <p>Ian Duncan Executive Manager Infrastructure</p> |

| MEETING | RESOLUTION | COMMENT | COMPLETION STATUS | OFFICER RESPONSIBLE |
|--|--|--|-------------------|--|
| 4 March 2026 Item 9.2 Proposed Amendments to AGM Standing Orders | That State Council endorse the updated AGM Standing Orders. RESOLUTION 004.1/2026 | The WALGA AGM Standing Orders have been updated and are available on the WALGA website . | COMPLETE | Rachel Horton Executive Manager Advocacy |
| 4 March 2026 Item 9.3 Request for Delegated Authority – State Road Funds to Local Government Advisory Committee (SAC) | That State Council approves by Flying Minute confirmation of the three appointments to the vacant positions on the State Road Funds to Local Government Advisory Committee (SAC) as recommended by the Selection Committee. RESOLUTION 005.1/2026 | The three vacant positions on SAC were advertised to Members. Applications have now closed. A special meeting of the Selection Committee will be held on 7 April to consider applications received. A Flying Agenda including the recommendations of the Committee will be distributed to State Council for endorsement immediately following the special meeting. | Ongoing | Rachel Horton Executive Manager Advocacy |
| 3 December 2025 Item 7.1 Transport Oriented Development Advocacy Position | That: 1. State Council request WALGA to prepare an Advocacy Position in consultation with members, regarding the transport and planning principals required to ensure quality outcomes in the newly announced "Station Precinct Improvement Plans and Schemes" in Metropolitan Perth and regional stations if included. 2. The Advocacy Position includes transport and place-making outcomes on both government controlled and private land that maximise liveability and use of the public transport network. RESOLUTION 069.5/2025 | WALGA has commenced development of a draft position. Council Reports and Recommendations in relation to the 10 Train Station Precincts have been analysed and WALGA's Planning Advisory Group has been engaged to provide input into the content of the advocacy position. | Ongoing | Nicole Matthews Executive Manager Policy |

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| <p>3 December 2025 Item 8.1 2025 Annual General Meeting Resolutions</p> | <p>That:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the following resolutions from the 2025 WALGA Annual General Meeting be referred to the People and Place Policy Team for further work to be undertaken: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7.1 Provision of Medical Services in Remote and Very Remote Local Governments 7.2 Homelessness – Short-term Accommodation Solutions <p>RESOLUTION 070.5/2025</p> <p><i>The AGM resolutions are as follows:</i></p> <p>7.1 Provision of Medical Services in Remote and Very Remote Local Governments <i>That WALGA calls on the Western Australian Government and WA Grants Commission to:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>increase the total funding and then the Medical Facilities Cost Adjuster component of the Financial Assistance Grants to Local Governments; and</i> 2. <i>recalculate distributions to those Local Governments that are providing block cash payments to attract and retain general practitioners to allow affected Council to redirect ratepayer funds to Local Government responsibilities.</i> <p>7.2 Homelessness – Short-term Accommodation Solutions <i>That WALGA advocate to the State Government to provide culturally appropriate short term accommodation options and wrap-around support services that provide sustainable homelessness solutions in all Local Governments across Western Australia.</i></p> | <p>In relation to AGM item 7.1 – Improving access to primary healthcare services in rural and remote areas remains an advocacy priority for WALGA, supported by the WALGA 2025 General Practice Support Survey Report published in January 2026.</p> <p>This advocacy priority is also reflected in the current Federal and State Budget Submissions and aligned to the revised Advocacy Position endorsed by State Council in September 2025.</p> <p>WALGA is exploring opportunities for partnership advocacy on this matter with health sector stakeholders. This work includes developing solution options. Progress will be shared with State Council in due course.</p> <p>In relation to AGM item 7.2 – WALGA undertook a Local Government Homelessness Survey in February 2026 to inform a review of the current WALGA homelessness Advocacy Position that includes the need for funding for social and affordable housing and wraparound services. Item 8.5 refers to this.</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>Nicole Matthews Executive Manager Policy</p> |
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| MEETING | RESOLUTION | COMMENT | COMPLETION STATUS | OFFICER RESPONSIBLE |
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| <p>3 December 2025 Item 8.1 2025 Annual General Meeting Resolutions</p> | <p>That: ... 2. the following resolution from the 2025 WALGA Annual General Meeting be referred to the Governance Policy Team for further work to be undertaken: 7.4 Rating Exemption Advocacy Position</p> <p>RESOLUTION 070.5/2025</p> <p><i>The AGM resolution is as follows:</i></p> <p>7.4 Rating Exemption Advocacy Position <i>That WALGA, in addition to its current advocacy positions 2.1.1 and 2.1.2 relating to rating exemptions, advocate to the WA Government for the introduction of a reimbursement model, whereby the WA Government repays Local Government the greater of:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 75% of the value of rates lost in applying the charitable purposes exemption; or 2. 1% of the total rate revenue of the Local Government. | <p>This item has been referred to the Governance Policy Team for further consideration.</p> <p>WALGA's current advocacy positions call for a broad review into the justification and fairness of all rating exemption categories, with a particular focus on the charitable purpose's exemption. WALGA has also included funding for a review of rates in its most recent State Budget submission.</p> <p>Additional concerns regarding rating and rating exemptions have arisen. Further scoping work is being undertaken to consider the most effective way to address these concerns.</p> | Ongoing | Kirsty Martin Executive Manager Member Services |
| <p>3 December 2025 Item 8.1 2025 Annual General Meeting Resolutions</p> | <p>That: ... 3. the following resolution from the 2025 WALGA Annual General Meeting be endorsed: 7.5 Rateability of Miscellaneous Licences</p> <p>RESOLUTION 070.5/2025</p> <p><i>The AGM resolution is as follows:</i></p> <p>7.5 Rateability of Miscellaneous Licences <i>That WALGA:</i></p> | <p>Advocacy position 2.1.18 Rating of Miscellaneous Licences was adopted by State Council in September 2025.</p> <p>Correspondence has been sent to the Premier and Minister for Local Government. Opposition parties have been briefed.</p> <p>The Bill has been deferred in the Legislative Council.</p> | COMPLETE | Kirsty Martin Executive Manager Member Services |

| MEETING | RESOLUTION | COMMENT | COMPLETION STATUS | OFFICER RESPONSIBLE |
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| | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Formally oppose any move by the Local Government Minister to introduce amendments to the Local Government Act to restrict the application of rates on Miscellaneous Licenses. 2. Develop an advocacy position on sector consultation prior to any amendment to the Local Government Act. 3. Undertake a financial analysis of the cost to the Mining Industry of the rating of Miscellaneous Licenses compared to the benefit to the Local Government sector. | <p>Funding for the broad review of rating exemptions is included in the State Budget submission.</p> | | |
| <p>3 December 2025 Item 8.2 2026 Salaries and Allowances Tribunal Remuneration Inquiry for Local Government Chief Executive Officers and Elected Members</p> | <p>That State Council endorse the submission to the 2026 Salaries and Allowances Tribunal Remuneration Inquiry for Local Government Chief Executive Officers and Elected Members, with the following additions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A new recommendation that the Regional/Isolation Allowance be reviewed in full, noting that the application of the Allowance is inequal and inconsistent. 2. A new recommendation that an appropriate fee be set for the deputy to the presiding member of Audit, Risk and Improvement Committees to attend meetings. 3. A new recommendation that the travel costs incurred while driving a privately owned or leased vehicle be calculated at the same rate contained in the <i>Public Service Award 1992</i> to bring it in parity with the public sector. 4. The percentage values in recommendations 1 and 2 of the submission be amended from 3% to 4%. 5. Include a work-value argument regarding Elected Member remuneration to strengthen the case for an increase to Elected Member fees and allowances, and to refer the request to reclassify | <p>The submission to SAT was updated to include those additional points and provided to the Tribunal on 6 January 2026.</p> <p>The Advocacy Positions Manual has also been updated to reflect the recommendations contained in the submission.</p> <p>The request to reclassify Elected Members as not volunteers (as per point 5 of the resolution) has been referred to the Governance Policy Team for further consideration.</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>Rachel Horton Executive Manager Advocacy</p> <p>Kirsty Martin Executive Manager Member Services</p> |

| MEETING | RESOLUTION | COMMENT | COMPLETION STATUS | OFFICER RESPONSIBLE |
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| | Elected Members as not volunteers to the relevant Policy Team. RESOLUTION 073.5/2025 | | | |
| 3 December 2025 Item 8.5 Electoral Material – Authorisation Statement Address Requirements | That: 2. WALGA advocate to the State Government to amend section 4.87 of the <i>Local Government Act 1995</i> to: 1. Replace the requirement to include the name and address of the person authorising the electoral material, with a requirement to include the name and locality of the person authorising the material. 2. Remove the requirement for the name and business address of the electoral material printer to appear at the end of the electoral material. 3. The suggestion from the South East Metropolitan Zone to advocate to amend section 5.95 of the <i>Local Government Act 1995</i> to specify that the right to inspect Primary and Annual Returns contained in the Register of Financial Interests under s.5.94(b) does not extend to the residential address of the relevant person be referred to the Governance Policy Team so that a full report can be presented to State Council for consideration. RESOLUTION 077.5/2025 | The Advocacy Positions Manual has been updated. A new advocacy position addressing Resolution 2 was considered by the Governance Policy Team on 23 March 2026. Item 8.1 relates to this matter. | Ongoing | Kirsty Martin Executive Manager Member Services |
| 5 September 2025 | That WALGA: 1. Advocate for Local Governments to continue to have the ability to rate miscellaneous licences under the <i>Mining Act 1978</i> , and | The Advocacy Positions Manual has been updated. | Ongoing | Kirsty Martin Executive Manager |

| MEETING | RESOLUTION | COMMENT | COMPLETION STATUS | OFFICER RESPONSIBLE |
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| Item 8.2 Rating of Miscellaneous Licenses | <p>2. Oppose legislative amendments that seek to exempt occupied miscellaneous licence land from rating.</p> <p>3. Continue to advocate for a broad review to be conducted into the justification and fairness of all rating exemption categories currently prescribed under section 6.26 of the Local Government Act 1995.</p> <p>RESOLUTION 050.4/2025</p> | <p>Correspondence has been sent to the Premier and Minister for Local Government. Opposition parties have been briefed.</p> <p>The Bill has been deferred by the Legislative Council.</p> <p>In addition, funding for the broad review of rating exemptions is included in the State Budget submission.</p> | | Member Services |
| <p>2 July 2025</p> <p>Item 8.1 Suspension and Disqualification for Offences Advocacy Position</p> | <p>That WALGA defers consideration of this matter for further work, including:</p> <p>a. defining appropriately serious offences for intervention; and</p> <p>b. addressing the role of the Local Government Inspector.</p> <p>c. evaluating whether advocacy for disqualification based on convictions under the Planning and Development Act 2005 and Building Act 2011 should be retained.</p> <p>RESOLUTION 037.3/2025</p> | <p>Work has commenced on defining appropriately serious offences for intervention.</p> <p>Further work will be undertaken pending clarification of the role of the Office of the Inspector.</p> | Ongoing | Kirsty Martin Executive Manager Member Services |
| <p>5 March 2025</p> <p>Item 9.1 Infrastructure Policy Team Report</p> | <p>That State Council:</p> <p>1. Note the report from the Infrastructure Policy Team for the 5 March 2025 meeting.</p> <p>2. Determine to:</p> <p>a. Delete Advocacy Position 5.2.8 (Towards Zero Road Safety Strategy 2008 – 2020).</p> <p>b. Amend the title of Advocacy Position 5.2.7 from Road Safety Strategy (Imagine Zero) to Driving Change Road Safety Strategy 2020-2030.</p> | <p>The Advocacy Positions Manual has been updated.</p> <p>The Infrastructure Policy Team resolved to recommend WALGA engage an independent specialist to develop a framework to support the Local Government sector in decision making and advocacy relating to speed limits.</p> | Ongoing | Ian Duncan Executive Manager Infrastructure |

| MEETING | RESOLUTION | COMMENT | COMPLETION STATUS | OFFICER RESPONSIBLE |
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| | <p>3. Undertake further policy development and consultation with Members regarding the default open road speed limit in Western Australia.</p> <p>RESOLUTION 013.1/2025</p> | | | |
| <p>6 December 2024 Item 8.1 2024 Annual General Meeting Resolutions</p> | <p>That:</p> <p>1. the item 7.1 Amendments to <i>Cat Act 2011</i>- Allow Local Governments to Make Local Laws to Contain Cats to the Owner's Property be endorsed.</p> <p>...</p> <p>3. the following resolutions from the 2024 WALGA Annual General Meeting be referred to the Governance Policy Team for further work to be undertaken:</p> <p>7.2 Advocacy for Legislative Reforms to Counter Land-Banking</p> <p>7.3 Advocacy for Expansion of Differential Rating to Include Long Term Unoccupied Commercial Buildings (Property Activation Levy).</p> <p>RESOLUTION 089.5/2024</p> | <p>The Advocacy Positions Manual has been updated.</p> <p><i>Cat Amendment (Local Laws) Bill 2026</i> was introduced on 25 February 2026, which will allow Local Governments to include cat containment in Local Laws. WALGA will continue to engage with Local Government and advocate for a collaborative, and resourced, approach will be needed.</p> <p>WALGA sought legal advice which confirmed that amendments to the <i>Local Government Act 1995</i> (the Act) would be required to allow differential rating based on occupancy status.</p> <p>A joint meeting of the Governance and Environment Policy teams was held on 12 September. The Joint Policy Teams considered that there was a significant level of risk associated with the proposal and that it should not proceed. Instead, incentives and activation</p> | <p>COMPLETE</p> | <p>Kirsty Martin Executive Manager Member Services</p> |

| MEETING | RESOLUTION | COMMENT | COMPLETION STATUS | OFFICER RESPONSIBLE |
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| | | <p>programs can be explored by Local Governments to encourage occupancy of buildings.</p> | | |
| <p>6 December 2024 Item 8.2 Local Government Elections Advocacy Positions</p> | <p>That item 1 be deferred, and the Secretariat further investigate implications of compulsory and voluntary participation in Local Government elections and report back to State Council.</p> <p>RESOLUTION 090.5/2024</p> <p>That WALGA adopt the following Elections Advocacy Positions:</p> <p><i>The Local Government sector supports:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Councillors serve four-year terms with elections every two years and half of the Council positions spilled at each election.</i> 2. <i>First-Past-The-Post (FPTP) voting system for Local Government elections. If Optional Preferential Voting (OPV) remains as the primary method of voting, the sector supports the removal of the 'proportional' part of the voting method for general elections.</i> 3. <i>First-Past-The-Post (FPTP) voting system for internal Council elections.</i> 4. <i>Councils holding elections by means of in-person, postal and/or electronic voting.</i> 5. <i>Current legislative provisions of Mayor/President of Class 1 and Class 2 Local Governments being directly elected by the community and Class 3 and Class 4 Local Governments determining whether its Mayor or President is elected by the Council or by the community.</i> <p>RESOLUTION 091.5/2024</p> | <p>The Advocacy Positions Manual has been updated.</p> <p>Correspondence has been sent to the Minister for Local Government advising on the five Advocacy Positions endorsed.</p> <p>Investigation of the implications of compulsory and voluntary voting continued with engagement from the Governance Policy Team.</p> <p>State Council endorsed a Discussion Paper for the purpose of sector consultation by Flying Minute on 20 January 2026.</p> <p>Sector consultation has been undertaken and an item has been included in the May State Council Agenda. Item 8.2 relates to this matter.</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>Kirsty Martin Executive Manager Member Services</p> |