Final

Local Government Performance Monitoring

2019/20

March 2021

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1. Project Objective

To develop and test a suite of indicators to measure the planning and building performance of Local Governments. This Report provides:

- 1. A framework for developing performance indicators for Local Government planning functions;
- 2. Potential performance indicators; and
- 3. Examples of the application of the indicators for a group of 29 Local Governments (both metropolitan and non-metropolitan).

1.1 General Comments

The following comments are offered to help understand the nature of data used in this report and the overall intention of the report.

- 1. The data collected to compile these indicators relies on self-reporting by Local Government. It has not been independently verified although obvious inconstancies in data have been identified and resolved.
- 2. All averages in the report are real averages, not averages of averages.
- 3. Whilst there is some comment on the indicators, the Report is not a comparative assessment of the performance of the Benchmark Councils.

2 Background

The Growth Alliance Perth and Peel (GAPP) Local Governments initiated a project with WALGA, to develop a suite of performance indicators to measure how well Local Government is managing its development functions. This report provides information collected from the third year of the project. The number of Local Governments participating in the Project has increased from the original 11 in the 1st year of the project to 29 this year. Four addition Local Governments joined the project in its fourth year and one previous participant did not submit data for this year,

2.1 Geographic Character

To ensure that the indicators have application beyond the Benchmark Councils the Local Governments have been classified based on Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) classifications (see table below). A revised classification was used to match the characteristics of the participating Local Governments and to ensure that there was a minimum of four Local Governments in each classification. Details of how the classifications were derived can be seen at Appendix B.

This grouping is used in Section 7 of the Report.

Developed High population Density, mix of population size, growth medium to low	Growth Lower density, mix of land uses, medium to high growth rates, mixed population size	Fringe Share a boundary with peri urban local governments, generally high growth rates, low population density, mixed population sizes	Regional Relatively small, low density, variable growth rate. Some are service centres for their regions
Stirling (C)	Gosnells (C)	Mandurah (C)	Broome (S)
Bayswater (C)	Canning (C)	Mundaring (S)	Greater Geraldton (C)
Victoria Park (T)	Cockburn (C)	Kalamunda (C)	Port Hedland (T)
Vincent (C)		Wanneroo (C)	Bunbury (C)
Fremantle (C)		Swan (C)	Nannup
Joondalup (C)		Rockingham (C)	Busselton
Melville (C)		Armadale (C)	Augusta Margaret River
South Perth (C)		Kwinana (C)	
Subiaco (C)			
Belmont			

86% of Growth

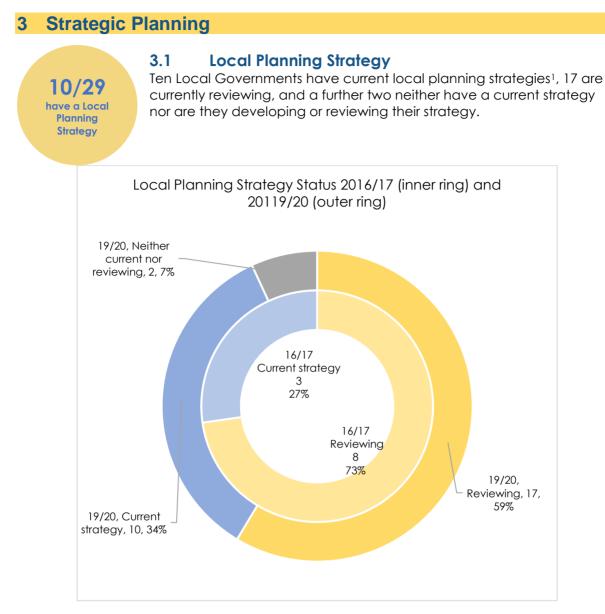
2.2 Population

Based on the 2019 ABS Estimated Resident Population (ERP), the Benchmark Councils constitute over nearly 80% of the State's population. The distribution of residents between participating Local Government is shown in the table below. They also accounted 86% of the State's growth between 2009 and 2019.

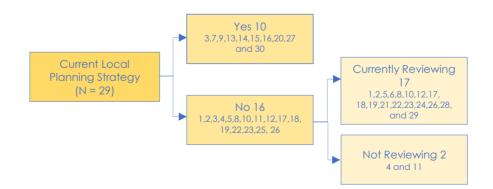
It is reasonable to conclude that the Benchmark Councils participating in this project provide a good geographic spread and represent a significant proportion of both the current population of Western Australia and account for almost all of its growth. As such, the performance indicators developed through this project provide a representative sample that is likely to be applicable to other Local Governments throughout the metropolitan region and many regional Local Governments as well.

	2009 2019 2009-19		-19	
Area	Number	Number	Number	%
Total Western Australia	2,240,250	2,621,509	381,259	15%
Armadale (C)	58,508	90,797	32,289	36%
Augusta-Margaret River (S)	11,766	16,172	4,406	27%
Bassendean (T)	14,626	15,823	1,197	8%
Bayswater (C)	64,192	68,362	4,170	6%
Belmont (C)	35,204	42,078	6,874	16%
Broome (S)	15,172	16,907	1,735	10%
Bunbury (C)	31,993	31,644	(349)	-1%
Busselton (C)	29,596	39,623	10,027	25%
Canning (C)	87,242	92,888	5,646	6%
Cockburn (C)	88,935	114,320	25,385	22%
Fremantle (C)	27,607	31,084	3,477	11%
Gosnells (C)	105,782	124,081	18,299	15%
Greater Geraldton (C)	37,512	38,288	776	2%
Joondalup (C)	159,156	159,806	650	0%
Kalamunda (C)	54,487	58,954	4,467	8%
Kwinana (C)	28,047	45,092	17,045	38%
Mandurah (C)	68,218	86,474	18,256	21%
Melville (C)	99,882	102,307	2,425	2%
Mundaring (S)	37,466	39,100	1,634	4%
Nannup (S)	1,296	1,386	90	6%
Port Hedland (T)	14,825	15,144	319	2%
Rockingham (C)	100,639	135,943	35,304	26%
South Perth (C)	42,925	43,773	848	2%
Stirling (C)	200,137	221,040	20,903	9%
Subiaco (C)	15,570	17,251	1,681	10%
Swan (C)	106,847	147,353	40,506	27%
Victoria Park (T)	32,751	36,962	4,211	11%
Vincent (C)	32,000	36,561	4,561	12%
Wanneroo (C)	145,855	208,237	62,382	30%
Total Participating LGs	1,748,236	2,077,450	329,214	16%
% of Western Australian Total	78%	79 %	86%	
Data extracted on 11 Feb 2021 08:30 UTC		mmonwealth of Australia	1. Creative Commons Attril	oution 2.5 Australia

Data extracted on 11 Feb 2021 08:30 UIC (GMI) from ABS.Stat © Commonwealth of Australia. Creative Commons Attribution 2.5 Australia (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.5/au)



The strategy status of the participating Local Governments can be seen below.



¹ A current strategy is defined as one that has been adopted by Council within the last five years.

3.2 Stage of Review

A number of Local Governments have made progress developing or reviewing their strategies. The time taken to develop LP Strategies is based on two main factors: the complexity of strategies; and the time taken to get approval to advertise and endorsement from the Western Australian Planning Commission.





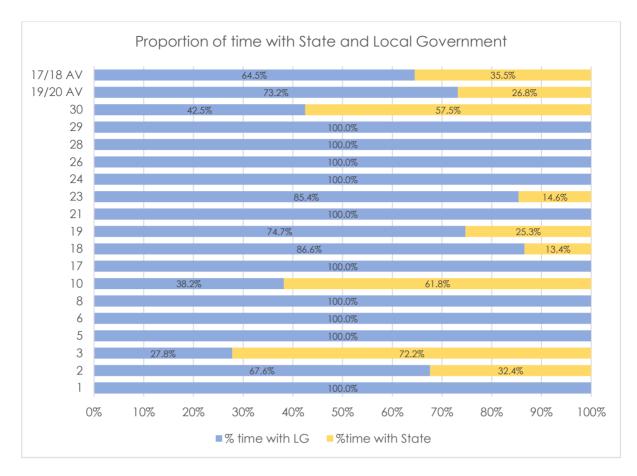
The average time spent on reviewing a Local Planning Strategy is 3.3 years. This reflects the time taken up to 30 June 2020, not the time taken to complete a review. One Local Government has been developing its strategy for over ten years and is yet to submit a draft to the WAPC for consent to advertise. Local Government 30 (the only local government to finalise a strategy in 2019/20) took 6.6 years to finalise its review.





The following graph illustrates the time taken to date for reviews, showing the proportion of time with the Local Government and the State. It is important to note that Local Governments are all at different stages of their review process.

There are significant variations between the experiences of Local Governments in their review processes. On average, some 27% of the review process is taken up by waiting for consent, from the State Government, to advertise or for final endorsement of strategies. However, one Local Government has spent over 70% of its review time waiting on the State Government and in another this amounts to over 60% of its review time). Ten Local Governments have yet to submit their Strategies to the WAPC for permission to advertise. They show as 100% of time with the Local Government.



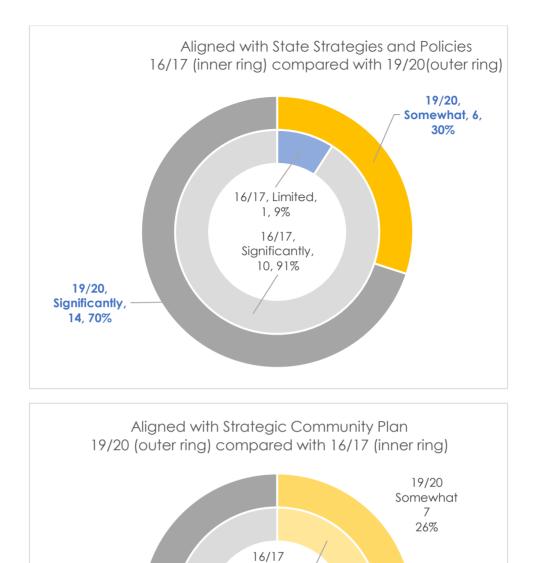
3.3 Strategic Alignment

Current strategies and strategies under review show a degree of alignment with both:

- A Council's **Strategic Community Plan (SCP)** with 20 councils (74%) saying their Local Planning Strategy was significantly aligned with their SCP; and
- State policies and strategies with 14 councils (70%) stating that their Strategy (or draft) was significantly aligned with State planning strategies and policies.

Some 70% of Local Governments reported a significant alignment with State planning strategies. Almost three quarters of Local Governments report a significant alignment between their Planning Strategy and their SCP.

Strategic Alignment	2016/17 N=11	2019/20	
State Strategies and Policies		N=20	
Limited	1	0	
Some	0	6 LGs 8,11,16,17,22,28	
Significant	10	14 LGs 2,3,5,6,7,9,10,12,13,14, 15,18,19,26	
		N=27	
Limited	0	0	
Some	2	7 LGs 8,11,18,19,23,24,26	
Significant	8	20 LGs 2,5,6,7,9,10,12-21, 23,26,27,30	



Somewhat 2 20%

16/17 Significantly 8

80%

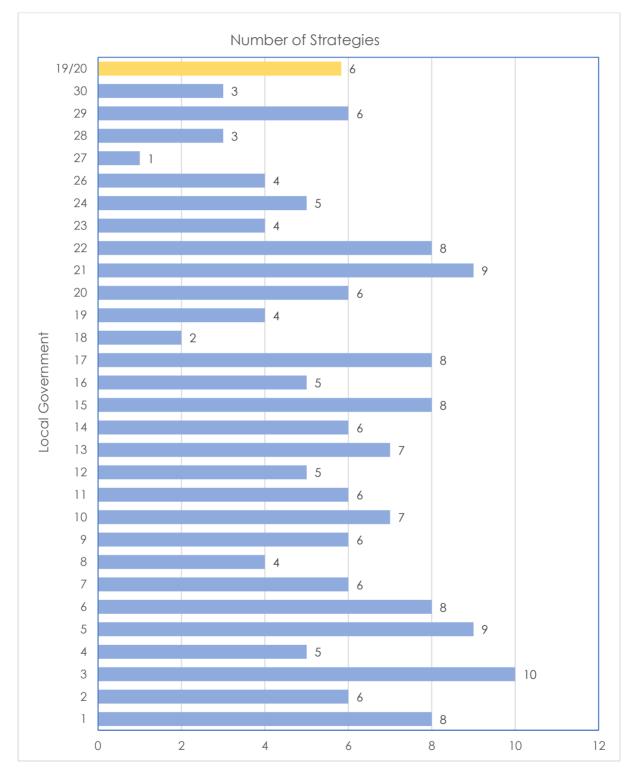
19/20

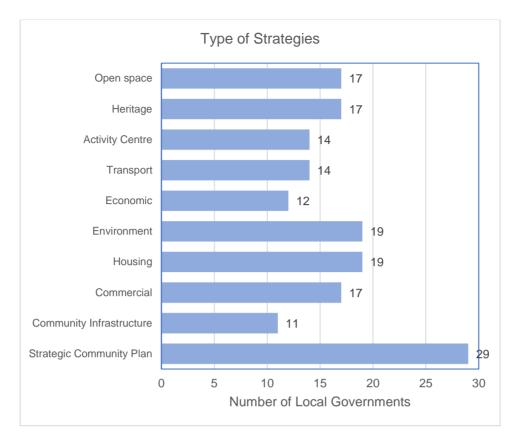
Significantly 20 74%



3.4 Other Strategies

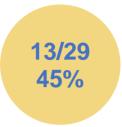
Local Governments have a wide range of other strategic documents that support their planning functions. On average, this group had at least six individual strategies supporting land use planning functions.





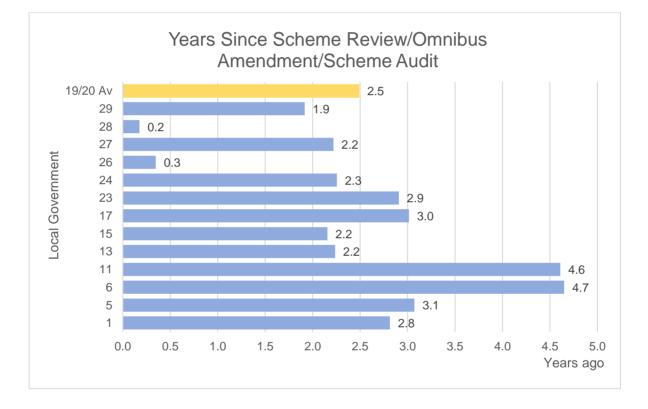
The range of strategies developed by each Local Government can be seen in the Figure above. This gives a good indication of the complexity and detail of Local Government planning systems. It also provides an insight into why it takes such a long time for some Local Governments to develop their Local Planning Strategy.

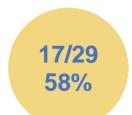
4 Statutory Planning



4.1 Local Planning Scheme

Some 45% of the participating Local Governments had reviewed, consolidated or undertaken an audit of their Scheme within the last five years.



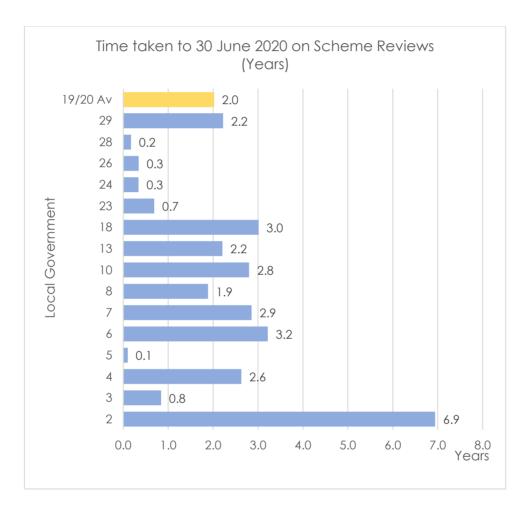


4.2 Scheme Reviews

Seventeen Local Governments are currently reviewing their Scheme. Of those who provided additional information, ten were at the initial stage of the process and a further four have made some progress towards their review and, one has completed its review.

On average, Local Governments have been reviewing their Schemes for nearly two years. However, one Local Government has been reviewing its

scheme for nearly seven years.

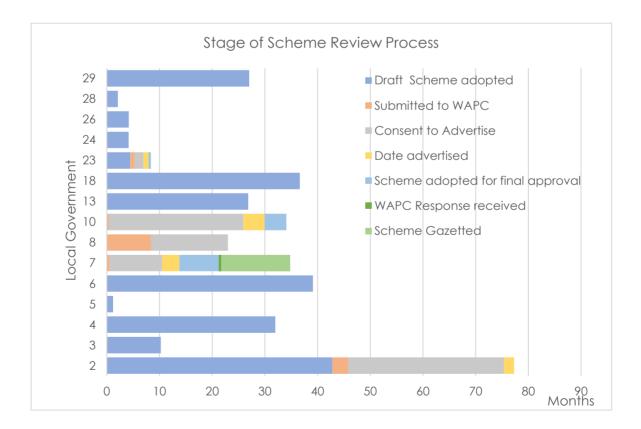


4.2.1 Details on progress of Scheme Reviews

The table below shows Local Governments who have commenced their Review. One Local Governments finalised its review in 2019/20, taking nearly three years to complete.

	Time to	aken (in Month	ns) to Complet	te Stages of th	e Scheme Rev	view Process	
Local Gov #	Draft Scheme adopted	Submitted to WAPC	Consent to Advertise	Date advertised	Scheme adopted for final approval	WAPC Response received	Scheme Gazetted
2	42.8	3.0	29.5	1.9			
3	10.2						
4	32.0						
5	1.2						
6	39.1						
7		0.5	10.0	3.3	7.5	0.5	13.1
8		8.4	14.6				
10	0.0	0.3	25.6	4.0	4.1		
13	26.8						
18	36.6						
23	4.5	0.8	1.7	1.0	0.4		
24	4.1						
26	4.2						
28	2.1						
29	27.0						

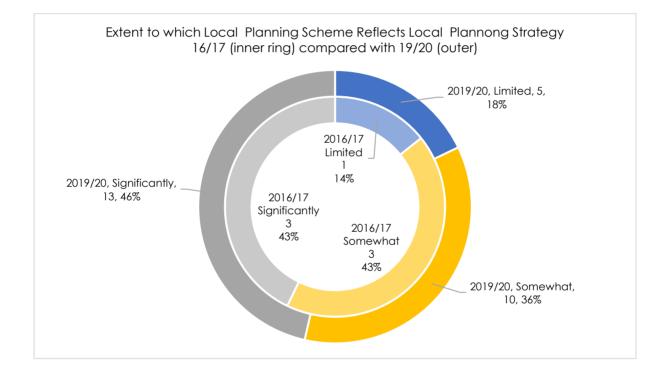
Numbers in red represent processes that are incomplete as at 30 June 2020



4.3 Strategic Alignment

Some 46% of the Local Governments recording a significant alignment between their Scheme and Strategy. Five Local Governments reported a limited alignment between their strategies and Schemes.

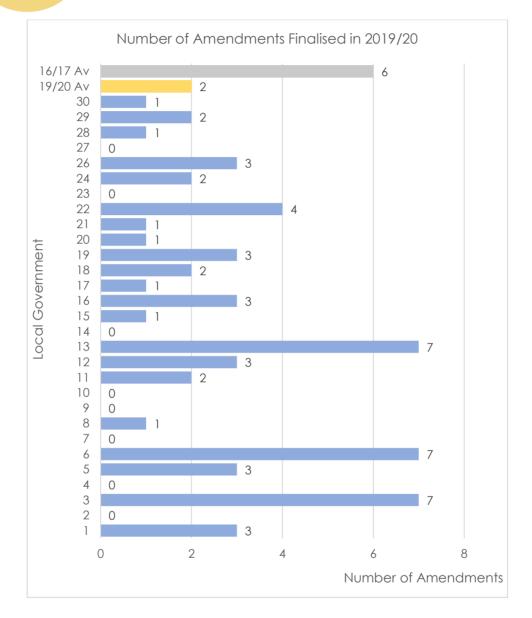
Strategic Alignment	2016/17 N=7	2019/20 N-28
Limited	1	5 LGs 4,6,8,18,19
Some	3	10 LGs 2,10,13,17,22,23,26,27,28,30
Significant	3	13 LGs 3,5,7,9,11,12,14,15,16,20,21,24,29





4.4 Number of Scheme Amendments

Local Governments finalised² an average of two scheme amendments in 2018/19 compared with an average of six scheme amendments in 2016/1. The greatest number of amendments was seven. Eight Local Governments did not finalise any amendments in 2019/20.



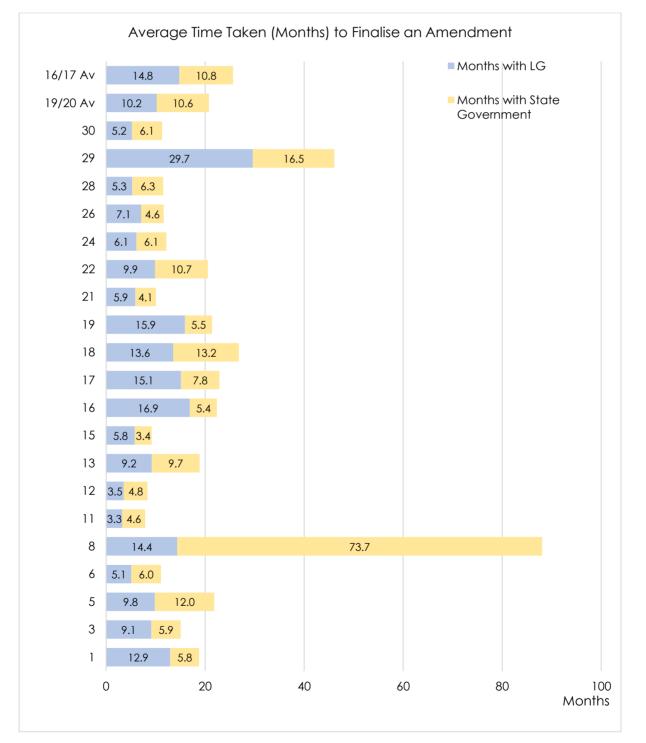
 $^{^{\}rm 2}$ This includes amendments that were initialled before 2019/20

Average 20.8 Months

4.5 Average Time to Finalise Amendments

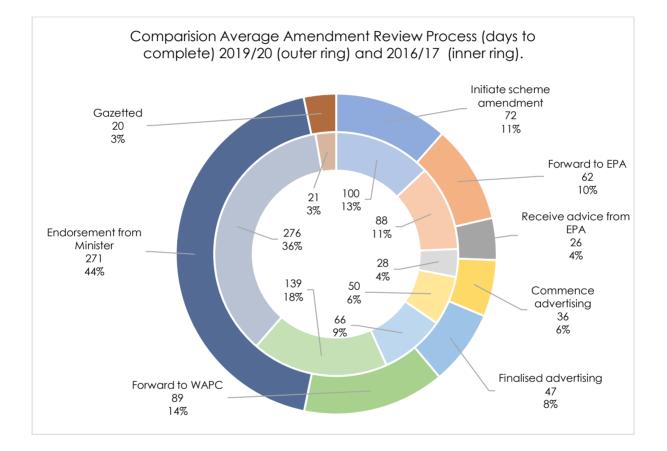
This data is based on the average times taken for the last five amendments finalised within the given financial year.

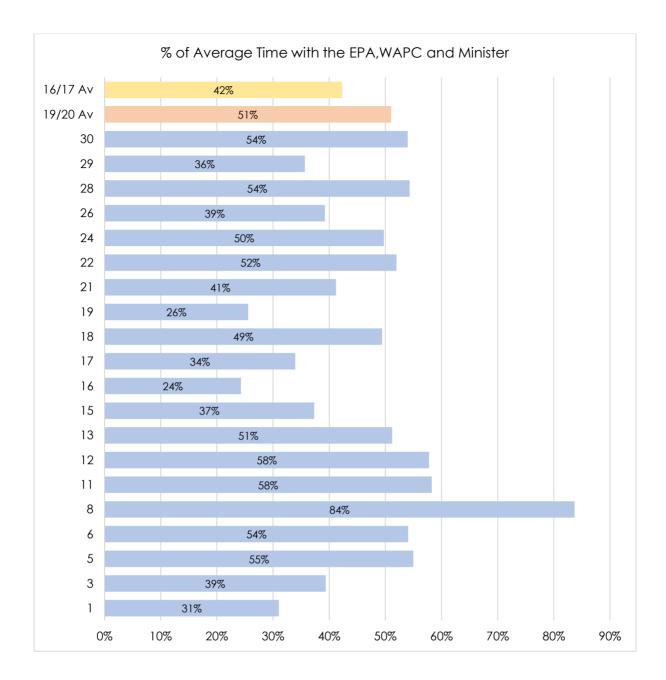
It takes the Benchmark Councils an average of 20.8 months to complete a Scheme Amendment. This time is divided between time taken for Local Governments to adopt draft amendment and time taken for the State to approve and gazette amendments. This compares with an average of 25.6 months in 2016/17.



Average 51% Time with State

In many cases, a significant amount of the amendment processing time occurs while awaiting the advice of the EPA and after the amendment is sent to the WAPC for Ministerial endorsement. On average, 51% of amendment time is associated with the State Government processes. A more detailed breakdown of the time spent on each stage of the process is shown below.





5 Approvals

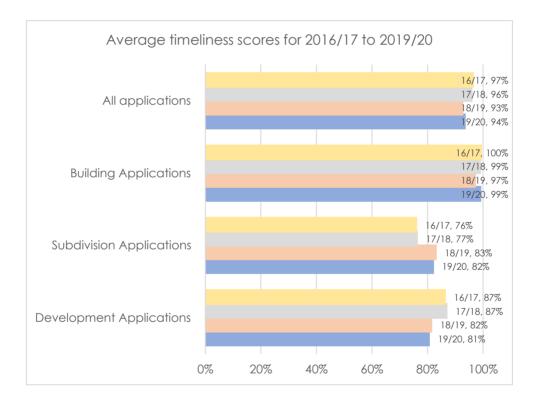
Average 93% Approved within time

5.1 Timeliness

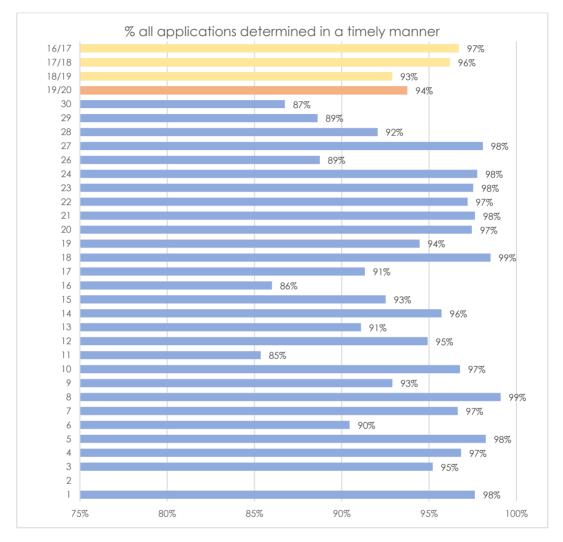
The Benchmark Councils are efficient at processing applications with more than 90% of all applications being processed within statutory timeframes. Whist this represents a reduction over previous years, it should be noted that there is a wider range of Local Governments participating in this year's survey.

This indicator is a composite of the following activities:

- 1. Development applications
- 2. Subdivision referrals
- 3. Building applications.



The performance of individual Local Governments is influenced by whether Local Governments use "stop the clock" when assessing applications and how this is applied. In addition, some Local Governments could not provide data for all of the categories being compiled. In 2019/20 the proportion of applications processed in a timely manner ranged from 85% to 100% with 18 Local Governments processing at 95% or better.

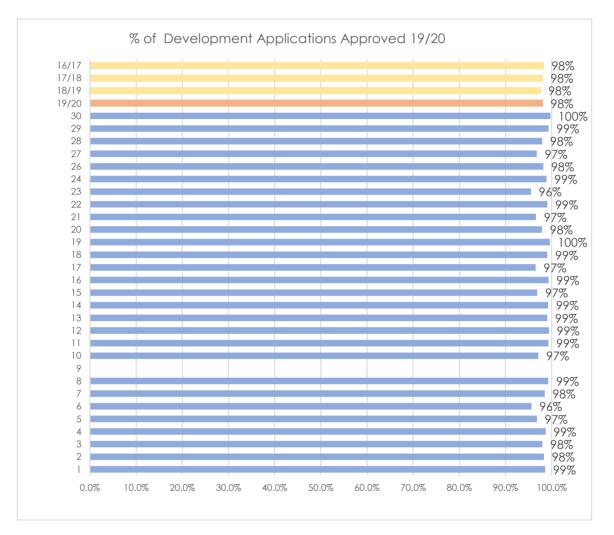


5.2 **Development Applications**

98% Applications are approved

5.2.1 Approvals

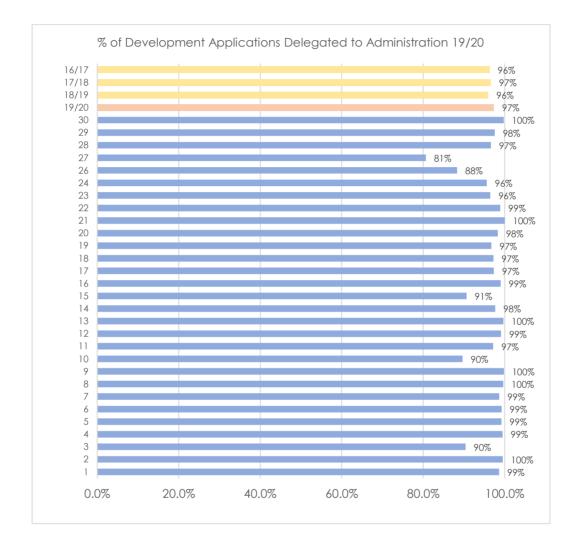
Some 98% of all development applications are approved. This score is high for all Benchmark Councils and is consistent with previous years. The lowest rate of approvals are Local Governments 7 and 23 at 96% (see figure below).



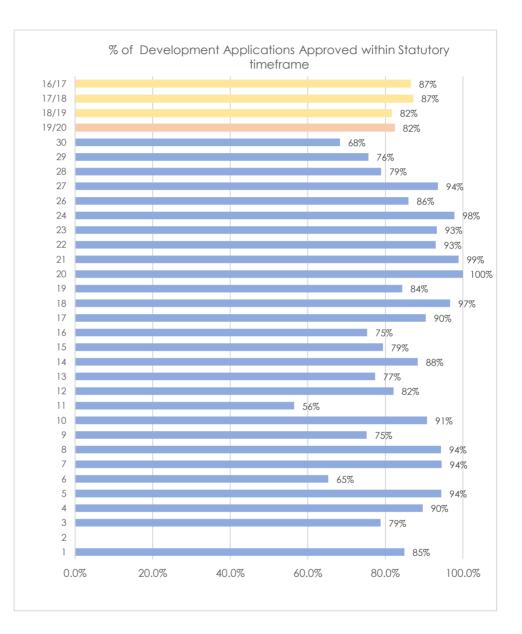
Local Government 9 did not provide any data for this measure.

5.2.2 Delegation

On average 97% of development applications are approved under delegated authority. Two Local Governments approved 100% of development applications under delegation. Local Government 27 had the lowest level of delegation at 81%. Local Government 26 had a delegation rate of 88%.



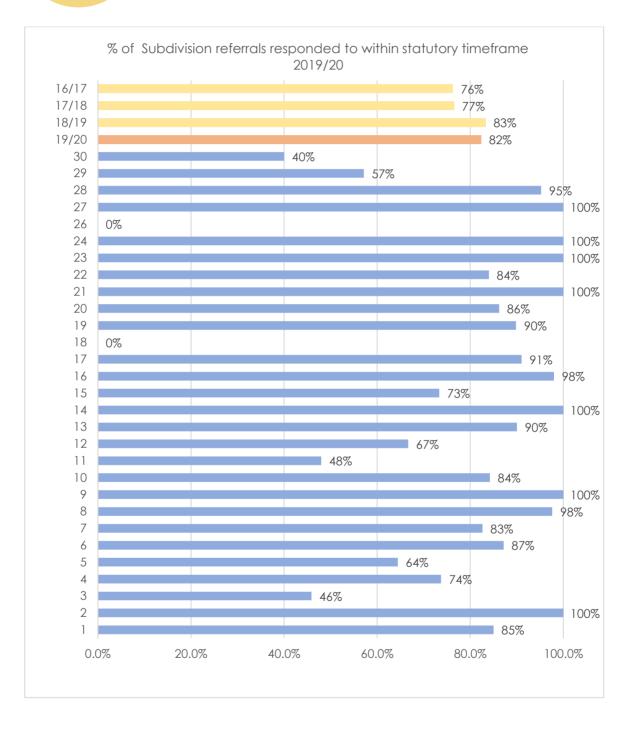
82% DAs are approved on time On average, 81% of development applications are determined within the required statutory time frames of 60 days and 90 days respectively. However, there are significant variations within the Benchmark Group. Four Local Governments have rates of less than 70%, with the lowest being 54%.



82% Subdivision referrals responded to on time

5.3 Subdivision referrals

On average 82% of subdivision referrals are responded to within the statutory timeframe. Four Local Governments had processing levels of less than 70%. Two Local Government did not receive any subdivision applications to process.



99% Building approvals responded to on time

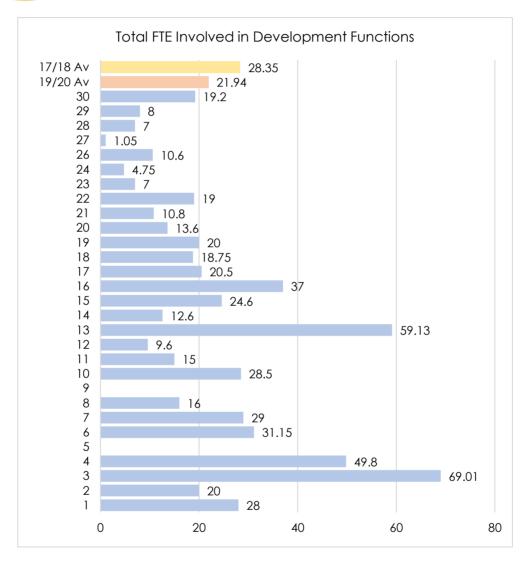
5.4 Building Approvals

The processing of building applications is particularly efficient with an average of 99% of applications approved within statutory timeframes. All Local Governments process more than 90% of building approvals in a timely manner.



6 **Resources**

21.94 FTE associated with planning and development There is an average of 21.94 FTE involved in the planning and development functions of the participating Local Governments. Not surprisingly, larger local governments have more FTE than smaller ones (Figure below). The proportion of smaller Local Governments taking part in the project has grown and this has led to a reduction in the overall average number of FTEs from 2017/18.

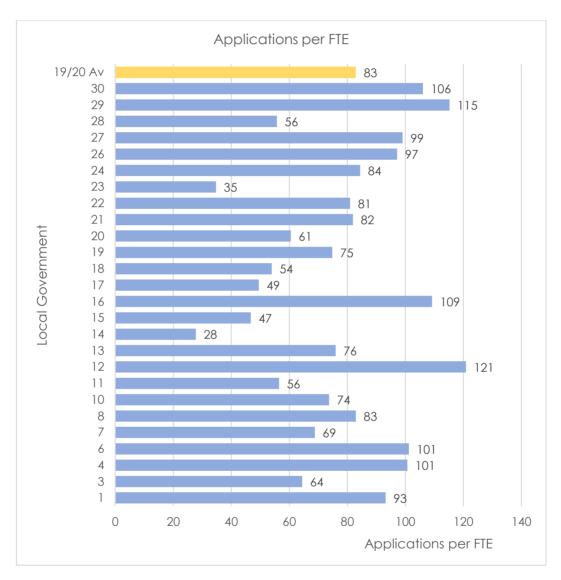


Local Governments 5 and 9 did not provide data

A basic efficiency indicator:

Total applications approved or responded to in 2017/18 total FTE

can be derived from the data collected. Four Local Governments who could not provide information in one or more categories have been excluded from this analysis. Whilst there are potential problems with this indicator, it can provide some insights into the relative scale of activity for the benchmark group (Figure below).

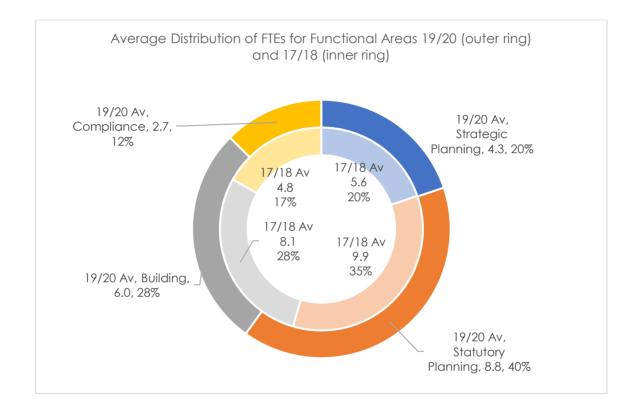


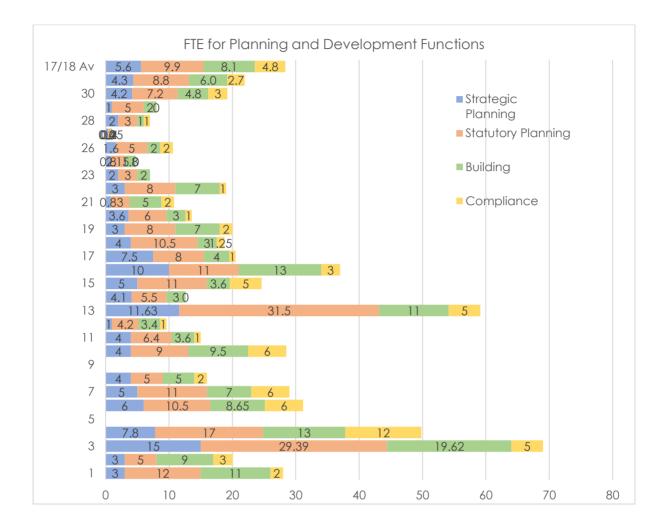
Local Governments 2, 5 and 9 were excluded because of missing data

6.1 FTE for functional areas

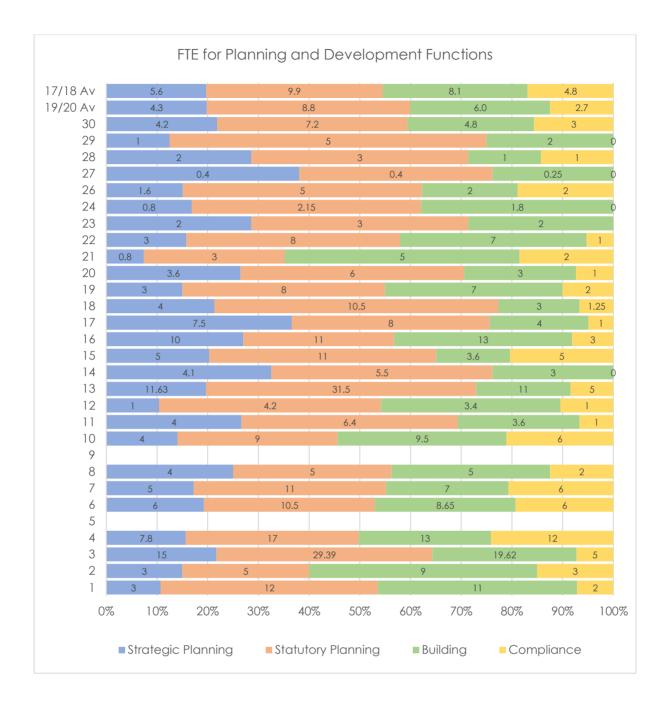
Based on data provided by Local Governments an average Local Government would comprise:

- 20% strategic
- 39% statutory
- 28% building; and
- 13% compliance.





Not surprisingly, there are some variations between Local Governments (see figure below).



7 Data based on Local Government Size and Development Status

The participation of Local Governments provides the opportunity to compare categories of Local Government. Section 2 identifies four categories:

- 1. Developed,
- 2. Growth,
- 3. Fringe, and
- 4. Regional.

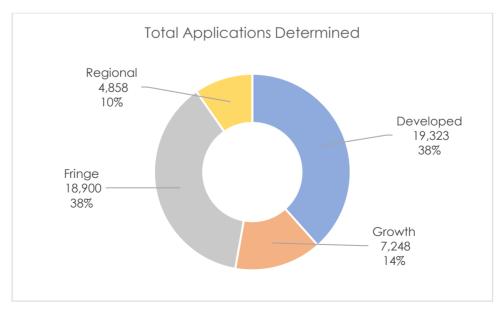
Developed High population Density, mix of population size, growth medium to low	Growth Lower density, mix of land uses, medium to high growth rates, mixed population size	Fringe Share a boundary with peri urban local governments, generally high growth rates, low population density, mixed population sizes	Regional Relatively small, low density, variable growth rate. Some are service centres for their regions
Stirling (C)	Gosnells (C)	Mandurah (C)	Broome (S)
Bayswater (C)	Canning (C)	Mundaring (S)	Greater Geraldton (C)
Victoria Park (T)	Cockburn (C)	Kalamunda (C)	Port Hedland (T)
Vincent (C)		Wanneroo (C)	Bunbury (C)
Fremantle (C)		Swan (C)	Nannup
Joondalup (C)		Rockingham (C)	Busselton
Melville (C)		Armadale (C)	Augusta Margaret River
South Perth (C)		Kwinana (C)	
Subiaco (C)			
Belmont			

The categorisation of Local Governments and the review of performance by the categories has the potential to provide further insight into the way that different Local Governments perform.

Approvals Fringe Developing Local Governments take the longest to complete scheme amendments. Growth Local Governments are the most efficient at completing amendments. It takes longer for a Developed Local Government to initiate an amendment once it has received one. It takes longer for the Minister to endorse an amendment from a Fringe Local Government.

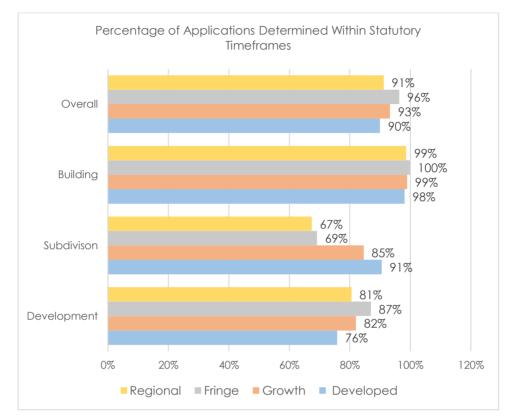
7.1.1 Total Applications Determined

Fringe and Developed accounted for 38% each of applications determined by participating Local Governments. Regional accounted for the lowest percentage of applications at 10%.



7.1.2 Timeliness

Overall Fringe Local Governments were the most efficient at determining applications within the required statutory timeframes. In general, Developed Local Governments were slightly less efficient than the other groupings (with the exception of processing subdivision referrals where they were the most efficient.)

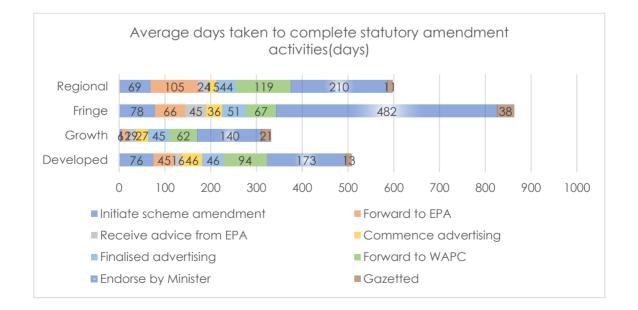


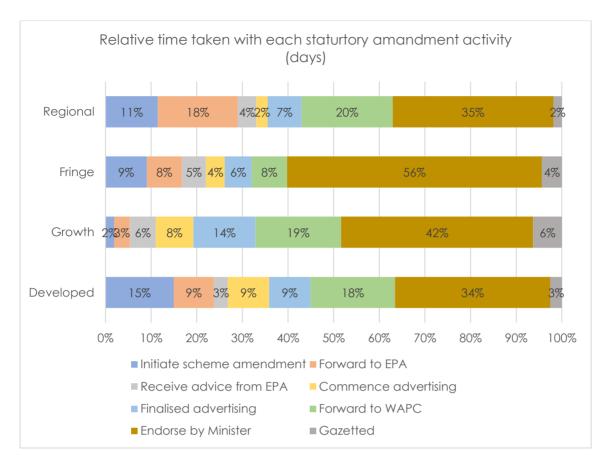
	Developed	Growth	Fringe	Regional
Total development applications	6,720	2,134	3,985	1,995
Applications determined within statutory timeframe	5,092	1,750	3,465	1,607
% Development Applications determined in statutory timeframe	76%	82%	87%	81%
Total referred subdivision applications	928	337	489	132
Subdivisions responded to within timeframe	840	285	338	89
% Subdivisions responded to within timeframe	91%	85%	69%	67%
Total building applications	11,675	4,777	14,426	3,288
Building applications determined within timeframe	11,449	4,725	14,399	3,242
% Building Applications determined within timeframe	98%	99%	100%	99%
Total applications determined	19,323	7,248	18,900	4,858
Applications determined within timeframe	17,381	6,760	18,202	4,402
% Applications determined within timeframe	90%	93%	96%	91%

7.2 Scheme Amendments

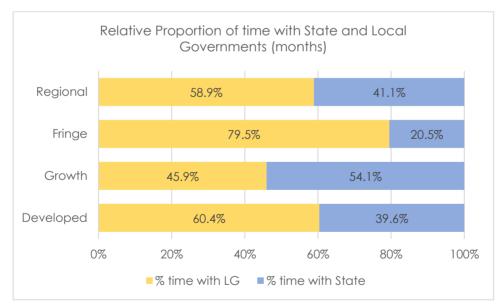
Fringe Developing Local Governments take the longest to complete scheme amendments. Growth Local Governments are the most efficient at completing amendments. It takes longer for a Developed Local Government to initiate an amendment once it has received one. It takes longer for the Minister to endorse an amendment from a Fringe Local Government.

	Developed	Growth	Fringe	Regional
Number of Local Governments	10	3	8	7
Number of Local Governments finalising amendments in 2019/20	9	1	6	5
Average number of amendments per LG finalising amendments	2.6	7	3.5	1.4
Processes (days taken)				
Initiate scheme amendment	76	6	78	69
Forward to EPA	45	12	66	105
Receive advice from EPA	16	19	45	24
Commence advertising	46	27	36	15
Finalised advertising	46	45	51	44
Forward to WAPC	94	62	67	119
Endorse by Minister	173	140	482	210
Gazetted	13	21	38	11
Days taken to complete amendment	508	332	863	597
Months	17	11	29	20
Days with State Government	201	180	565	246
Months with Local Gov	10	5	23	12
Months with State Government	7	6	6	8
% time with State	39.6%	54 .1%	20.5%	41.1%
% time with LG	60.4%	45.9%	79.5%	58.9%





Time with State Government Agencies makes up a significant proportion of the time it takes to finalise amendments.

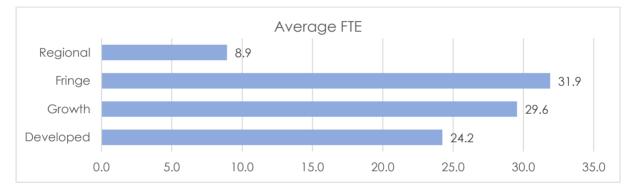


7.3 Resources

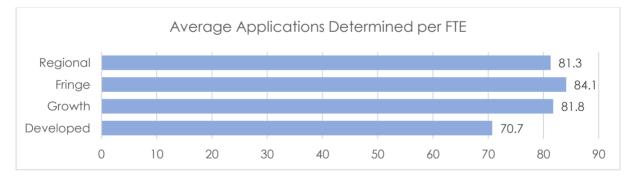
Summary Table						
Average	Developed	Growth	Fringe	Regional		
Strategic Planning	5.6	5.0	5.6	1.9		
Statutory Planning	10.8	10.2	12.6	3.7		
Building	5.6	8.4	9.8	2.5		
Compliance	2.3	6.0	3.8	0.9		
Total	24.2	29.6	31.9	8.9		
Average Applications	1715	2416	2683	725.6		
Average Applications per FTE	70.7	81.8	84.1	81.3		

7.3.1 Number of FTE

Fringe Local Governments have the highest average number of FTE associated with planning and development functions (including building). Regional Local Governments have the lowest number of FTE.

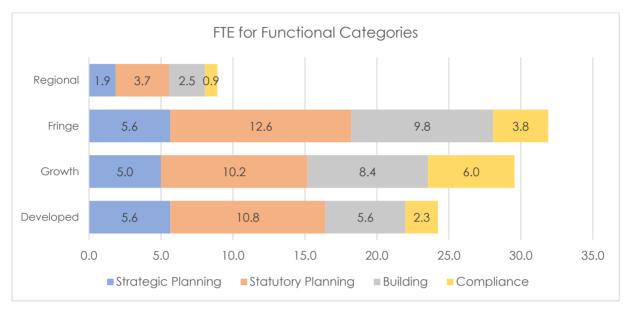


Developed Local Governments have the lowest average processing rates per FTE.

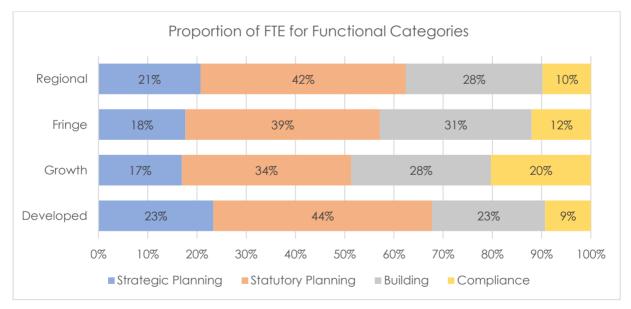


7.3.2 Distribution of FTE

The distribution of FTE between planning functional areas can be seen in the figure below. These figures suggest that there are differences in the distribution of FTE between the four Local Government Groups.



The figure below illustrates these differences. Developed Local Governments have relatively larger strategic planning areas and a greater focus on statutory planning with nearly half of their FTEs involved in this area. Growth Local Governments have a greater focus on compliance and Fringe Local Governments have a greater focus on building.



8 Where to Next

This Local Government Performance Monitoring Project allows Local Governments the opportunity to provide greater input and feedback into the methods of assessment and the presentation of their yearly statistics.

Each Local Governments involved in this project has been provided with a report that outlines their individual results, while this high-level collated version outlines the significant workload that the Local Government sector as a whole accomplishes within the planning and building functions.

WALGA will continue to discuss participation in this project with other Local Governments, with a view to increasing participation in coming years. For the 2019/20 iteration of the report WALGA will focus on increasing participation from the remaining 'Fringe Growth' and 'Developed' Local Governments within the Perth and Peel Regions, as well as high growth regional Local Governments from the South West Region.

In planning for the future of this project WALGA is cognisant of the work being undertaken by the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage, as part of their Action Plan for Planning Reform, to establish a framework of reporting planning activity of both Local and State Government authorities. WALGA is actively participating in the recently established Data Collection Industry Working Group, it is hoped that the experiences and learnings gathered over the past 3 years can be of use to guide the State Government in the formulation of their data collection regime. While WALGA has committed in the short-term to the Local Government Performance Monitoring Project, the final design and purpose of the State Government's data collection regime will ultimately determine the future direction and purpose of this project.

A copy of this report will also be provided to the State Government, Ministers of Planning, Building, and Local Government, and also to other relevant industry associations.

9 Appendix A

9.1 Measurement Framework

A system of performance monitoring should be guided by a series of principles that reflect the roles and responsibilities of Local Government with respect to land use planning. These could include that:

- 1. it is a strategic planning led system which reflects both State and Local Government visions for the district. as such it should be an evolving system which responds to changes at both state and local levels;
- 2. the Local Government statutory planning tools of its scheme and policies should reflect and reinforce the strategic vision;
- 3. approval processes adopted by council should support certainty and consistency in decision making and provide for transparency; and
- 4. the system is both accountable and current.

9.2 Potential Performance Indicators

The following indicator were developed and refined through a series of workshops with the Benchmark Councils.

Performance Indicators	Responses					
STRATEGIC PLANNING						
Local Planning Strategy						
Current (2011 or later)	Yes/No					
Older than 2011	Date					
Currently being developed or reviewed	Yes/No					
Stage of development or review						
1. Council Resolution						
2. Draft Plan Developed						
3. Submitted to WAPC for approval to advertise						
4. Draft Plan Advertised						
5. Plan amended, adopted and forwarded to WAPC						
6. Plan Endorsed STATUTORY PLANNING						
Local Planning Scheme						
Current (2011 or later)	Yes/No					
Date of most recent comprehensive review audit, or consolidation	Date					
Stage of development or review	Dale					
1. Council Resolution						
2. Draft Scheme Developed						
 Submitted to WAPC for approval to advertise 						
4. Draft Scheme Advertised						
5. Scheme amended, adopted and forwarded to WAPC						
6. Approved by Minister						
7. Scheme Gazetted						
Scheme Amendments ³						
Date of most recent amendment(s)	Commenced					
	Completed					
Number of Basic Amendments finalised in the financial year	Number					
Time taken to complete minor amendment Time						
Number of Standard Amendments finalised in the financial year						
Time taken to complete standard amendment						
Number of Complex Amendments completed in the financial year	Number					
Time taken to complete major amendment	Time					
Time taken to complete Development Contribution Plan amendments						

³ Classification of Basic, Standard and Major amendments only applied after October 2016 therefore won't apply to all amendments finalised in 2016/17

Performance Indicators	Responses
Structure Plans (not in the first round of assessment)	Number
	Time
Activity centre plans required (based on requirements of the Activity	Number
Centres Policy)	
Number activity centre plans completed	Number
Other Required Structure Plans?	Number
APPROVALS PROCESSES	
Development Applications	
Number of Applications	Number
Number of Applications determined	Number
Number of Application approved	% of determined
Applications dealt with under delegated approval	% of determined
Applications required to be dealt within 60 days	Number
Applications dealt with in 60 days	Number
Administration recommendations overturned by Council	% of determined
Number of applications determined by DAP	Number
Number of RAR recommendations overturned by DAP	Number
Subdivision Applications	
Number of Subdivision Applications	Number
Number determined within 42 days	% of determined
Number of Form 24s	Number
Number determined in 40 days	% of determined
Number of Form 26s	Number
Number determined in 30 days	% of determined
Building Permits	
Number of Building Permit applications received (all)	Number
Compliance with processing timeframes - certified (10 days) and	% of determined
uncertified (25 Days)	
RESOURCING	
Number of FTE in functional areas of	% of FTE in each
• strategic	functional area
• statutory	Total FTE
• building	
compliance	
Efficiency Total Approvals and referral responses/	
Total FTE	
MONITORING	
Do you have a monitoring and reporting mechanism for planning?	
Where do you report planning indicators?	
1. Internally only	
2. On website	
3. As audited indicators in Annual Report	