

# Great Eastern Country Zone Minutes

Thursday,  
14 November 2024

Hosted by the Shire of Merredin  
Merredin Regional Community  
Leisure Centre  
Commencing at 9:30am

## ZONE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The following items are the Zone's priority issues, as resolved at the February 2024 Zone meeting:

- Regional Health Services to include:
  - Hospitals
  - Aged Care
  - Future of Nurse Practitioner Service
- St John Ambulance Service – Impact on Volunteers and the provision of the service generally.
- Regional Subsidiaries
- Transport – Road Network
- Telecommunications
- Education
- Review of GROH Housing and Regional Housing issues
- Waste Management
- Agricultural Land Use

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## ATTACHMENTS

The following are provided as attachments to the Minutes:

1. Item 5.1.1 Wheatbelt Development Commission presentation
2. Item 5.1.2 Wester Power presentation
3. Item 5.1.3 Western Roads Federation presentation

The full [State Council Agenda](#) can be found on the [WALGA website](#).

## 1. OPENING, ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

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### 1.1. OPENING

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The Chair opened the meeting at 9:30am.

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### 1.2. ATTENDANCE

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<b>MEMBERS</b>	<b>2 Voting Delegates from each Member Council</b>
<b>Shire of Bruce Rock</b>	President Cr Ram Rajagopalan
	Cr Stephen Strange ( <b>State Council Representative</b> )
	Mr Mark Furr, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting
<b>Shire of Cunderdin</b>	President Cr Alison Harris
	Mr Stuart Hopley, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting
<b>Shire of Dowerin</b>	President Cr Robert Trepp
	Mrs Manisha Barthakur, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting
<b>Shire of Kellerberrin</b>	Mr Raymond Griffiths, Chief Executive Officer (voting delegate)
<b>Shire of Kondinin</b>	Deputy President Cr Bev Gangell
	Mr David Burton, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting
<b>Shire of Koorda</b>	President Cr Jannah Stratford
	Mr Zac Donovan, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting
<b>Shire of Merredin</b>	Deputy President Cr Renee Manning
	Cr Mark McKenzie
<b>Shire of Mount Marshall</b>	President Cr Tony Sachse ( <b>Zone Chair</b> )
	Deputy President Cr Nick Gillett
	Mr Ben McKay, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting
<b>Shire of Mukinbudin</b>	Ms Tanika McLennan, A/Chief Executive Officer, non-voting

<b>Shire of Narembeen</b>	Deputy President Cr Holly Cusack
	Ms Rebecca McCall, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting
<b>Shire of Nungarin</b>	President Cr Pippa de Lacy
	Deputy President Cr Gary Coumbe
	Mr David Nayda, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting
<b>Shire of Tammin</b>	Deputy President Cr Tanya Nicholls
	President Cr Charmaine Thomson (observer)
<b>Shire of Trayning</b>	President Cr Melanie Brown
	Cr Michelle McHugh
<b>Shire of Westonia</b>	President Cr Mark Crees
	Mr Bill Price, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting
<b>Shire of Wyalkatchem</b>	Cr Mischa Stratford (observer)
<b>Shire of Yilgarn</b>	President Cr Wayne Della Bosca
	Mr Nic Warren, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting

<b>GUESTS</b>	
<b>Wheatbelt Development Commission</b>	Mr Rob Cossart, CEO Mr Alex MacKenzie, Senior Regional Development Officer (Ms Renee Manning, Director Regional Development)
<b>Western Power</b>	Marisa Chapman, Stakeholder Engagement Team Leader, SPS Terrence King, Field Operations Team Leader, Merredin Kelly Nelson, Senior Communications Specialist
<b>Western Roads Federation</b>	Mr Cam Dumesny, CEO Mr Neil Savage

<b>MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT</b>
Ms Michelle Gethin for Mr Rick Wilson MP, Member for O'Connor

<b>WALGA</b>
President Cr Karen Chappel AM JP, WALGA President
Mr James McGovern, Manager Governance & Procurement
Ms Rebecca Brown, Policy Manager Environment and Waste
Mr Jason Russell, Senior Governance Specialist
Ms Meghan Dwyer, Executive Officer Governance

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### 1.3. APOLOGIES

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#### MEMBERS

<b>Shire of Cunderdin</b>	Deputy President Cr Tony Smith
<b>Shire of Dowerin</b>	Deputy President Cr Nadine McMorran
<b>Shire of Kellerberrin</b>	Deputy President Cr Emily Ryan
<b>Shire of Kondinin</b>	President Cr Kent Mouritz
<b>Shire of Merredin</b>	Mr Craig Watts, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting
<b>Shire of Mukinbudin</b>	President Cr Gary Shadbolt
<b>Shire of Narembeen</b>	President Cr Scott Stirrat
<b>Shire of Tammin</b>	Cr Nick Caffell
	Mr Darren Mollenoyux, Temporary Chief Executive Officer, non-voting
<b>Shire of Trayning</b>	Ms Leanne Parola, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting
<b>Shire of Westonia</b>	Deputy President Cr Ross Della Bosca
<b>Shire of Wyalkatchem</b>	President Cr Owen Garner
	Deputy President Cr Christy Petchell
	Ms Sabine Taylor, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting
<b>Shire of Yilgarn</b>	Deputy President Cr Bryan Close

#### GUESTS

<b>Regional Development Australia WA</b>	Mr Josh Pomykala, Director Regional Development
<b>CBH Group</b>	Ms Kellie Todman, Manager Governance and Industry Relations
<b>Water Corporation</b>	Ms Rebecca Bowler, Manager Customer & Stakeholder – Goldfields & Agricultural Region

#### MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

Hon Melissa Price MP, Member for Durack
Mr Rick Wilson MP, Member for O'Connor
Hon Mia Davies MLA, Member for Central Wheatbelt
Hon Martin Aldridge MLC, Member for Agricultural Region
Hon Colin de Grussa MLC, Member for Agricultural Region

#### WALGA

Ms Tracey Peacock, Regional Road Safety Advisor
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## 2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We, the Great Eastern Country Zone of WALGA acknowledge the continuing connection of Aboriginal people to Country, culture and community, and pay our respects to Elders past and present.

## 3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

Nil

## 4. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The WALGA Great Eastern Country Zone would like to thank Mr James McGovern for his outstanding contribution as Executive Officer to the Great Eastern Country Zone. We have all enjoyed working constructively with James on our Zone priorities and Agenda, our meetings and Executive meetings, WALGA business and of course Governance and Procurement. James has also provided valuable assistance to individual Local Governments during his time at WALGA. It has been a pleasure working with you James and we wish you all the very best in your future endeavours. Thank you.

## 5. GUEST SPEAKERS / DEPUTATIONS

All Deputations have a time limit of 20 minutes, which includes questions time.

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### 5.1. SPEAKERS FOR THE NOVEMBER ZONE MEETING

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#### 5.1.1. Wheatbelt Development Commission

WDC presented on their Strategic Plan and sub-regional priorities. A copy of this presentation is provided as an attachment (Attachment 1).

#### 5.1.2. Western Power

Western Power attendees presented on Western Power's network initiatives and investment undertaken to minimise bushfire risk ahead of summer and Stand-alone Power Systems (SPS). A copy of this presentation is provided as an attachment (Attachment 2)

#### 5.1.3. Western Roads Federation

Mr Cam Dumesny and Mr Neil Savage present on the Heavy Vehicle Driver Program. A copy of this presentation is provided as an attachment (Attachment 3).



## 6. MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

Nil

## 7. AGENCY REPORTS

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### 7.1. DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, SPORT AND CULTURAL INDUSTRIES

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The DLGSC report was provided as an attachment to the Agenda.

**Noted**

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### 7.2. WHEATBELT DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

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WDC Agency Report provided as a component of their presentation (item 5.1.1).

**Noted**

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### 7.3. REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AUSTRALIA WHEATBELT

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*Josh Pomykala, Director Regional Development is an apology for the meeting.*

The RDAW report was provided as an attachment to the Agenda.

**Noted**

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### 7.4. MAIN ROADS WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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*Ms Elizabeth Davies, Stakeholder Engagement Manager, Wheatbelt Region*

The MRWA report was provided as an attachment to the Agenda.

- The Shire of Kondinin acknowledged the effort of MRWA on their works on Brookton Highway
- The Shire of Yilgarn requested information on plans for additional passing lanes for Great Eastern Highway.

**Noted**

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### 7.5. WATER CORPORATION

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*Rebecca Bowler, Manager Customer and Stakeholder is an apology for the meeting.*

## 8. MINUTES

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### 8.1. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES FROM THE GREAT EASTERN COUNTRY ZONE MEETING HELD ON 15 AUGUST 2024

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The Minutes of the Great Eastern Country Zone meeting held on 15 August 2024 have previously been circulated to Member Councils.

#### RESOLUTION

**Mover:** Shire of Westonia

**Seconded:** Shire of Koorda

**That the Minutes of the meeting of the Great Eastern Country Zone held on 15 August 2024 be confirmed as a true and accurate record of the proceedings.**

**CARRIED**

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### 8.2. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE GREAT EASTERN COUNTRY ZONE MEETING HELD ON 15 AUGUST 2024

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#### 8.2.1. Office of the Auditor General Audit Fees Response

The Estimates and Financial Operations Committee held a hearing with the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) on 11 September. The video of the hearing is available on the [Parliamentary Committee's website](#).

A summary of comments from the OAG:

- Audit fees should be recoverable rather than through appropriations. It is not sustainable for the OAG to absorb costs that have until now been absorbed.
- Contractor fees have increased due to market forces.
- Beyond the Audit Opinion received, Local Governments receive additional value e.g. entity specific findings and recommendations, comparable and consistent format, sector results reports, capability development (e.g. financial statement preparation guidance, audit readiness tools, liaison with professional and sector bodies) and advocacy on financial governance.
- Fees do not cover Performance Audits, Information Systems Audits, Better Practice Guidance or Audit Chair Forum, which are covered by appropriations.
- Recognise there is a disproportionate increase (percentage) for smaller Local Governments. Their concerns are understood.
- It is difficult to complete an audit in compliance with Standards for less than \$30,000 (unavoidable baseline cost).
- The OAG has published a guide to their tender procurement process (<https://audit.wa.gov.au/resources/audit-fees/oag-tender-process/>)
- Admission that the timing of audit fees was “terrible” and acknowledgement of impact on Local Governments. However, the increase is beyond the OAG’s control.

- There was some communication with some Local Governments regarding increased fees. However, there was no structured communication process.
- Future plans include:
  - bringing forward the process and advising earlier
  - better communication of the process and causes behind cost increases
  - better data analytics to improve efficiency
  - target of 80% of audits being conducted by the OAG (currently 8%)
  - more education on the value and benefits of the OAG audit process
- There has been an increase in scope of audits since the OAG commenced. This is not within the OAG's discretion, it is in response to changes to the Auditing Standards.
- The Auditor General was unable to provide a firm target date for notification for the next financial year. The earliest that has been achieved previously has been May.
- In comparison to when the audit process was not conducted by the OAG:
  - There is a view that audits were previously conducted as "loss leaders" and audits fees may have been artificially low.
  - There is an extra cost to the additional value that the OAG provides. However, this is a benefit to the sector that was not previously obtained.
- The Committee also conducted a Private Hearing.

## **Noted**

### **8.2.2. Wheatbelt District Leadership Group**

The Wheatbelt District Leadership Group (DLG) is seeking a representative from the Great Eastern Country Zone to join the Group. Previous correspondence from the DLG and the Terms of Reference are attached (Attachment 4).

At the August Zone meeting, the Zone resolved to seek Cr Harris' interest in filling the position.

Cr Harris has unfortunately had to decline the invitation to join the DLG due to work commitments.

It was recommended the Zone nominate a Zone representative to the DLG.

## **RESOLUTION**

**Mover:** Shire of Koorda  
**Seconder:** Shire of Nungarin

**That the Great Eastern Country Zone appoint Cr Ram Rajagopalan as its representative to the Wheatbelt Leadership Group.**

**CARRIED**

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### **8.3. MINUTES OF THE GREAT EASTERN COUNTRY ZONE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 5 NOVEMBER 2024**

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The Minutes of the Great Eastern Country Zone Executive Committee meeting held on 5 November 2024 are provided as an attachment (Attachment 5.).

#### **RESOLUTION**

**Mover:** Shire of Westonia  
**Seconded:** Shire of Cunderdin

**That the Minutes of the Great Eastern Country Zone Executive Committee meeting held on 5 November 2024 be received.**

**CARRIED**

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### **8.4. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE GREAT EASTERN COUNTRY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 5 NOVEMBER 2024**

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#### **8.4.1. School Bus Services**

The Executive Officer, Mr James McGovern, advised that initial investigations indicated that there were no significant changes planned, only typical minor changes as a result of changing usage due to increase/decrease of student numbers in locations.

The Zone will be informed of any further information received.

**Noted**

## 9. ZONE BUSINESS

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### 9.1. 2025 MEETING DATES

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The Executive Committee considered a report on meeting dates for 2025 and made a recommendation to the Zone.

#### RESOLUTION

**Mover:** Shire of Yilgarn  
**Seconder:** Shire of Trayning

1. That the Great Eastern Country Zone adopt the following Zone meeting dates for 2025:

Zone Meeting Date 2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday	Time	Host Council
13 February	9:30 am	Kellerberrin
10 April	9:30 am	Merredin
12 June	9:30 am	Kellerberrin
14 August	9:30 am	Merredin
13 November	9:30 am	Kellerberrin

2. That the Great Eastern Country Zone Executive Committee meetings be conducted on the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of the month at 8:00am as an electronic meeting, as follows:

Executive Meeting Date 1 <sup>st</sup> Tuesday
4 February
1 April
3 June
5 August
4 November

**CARRIED**

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### 9.2. LOCAL GOVERNMENT 'VIRTUAL HOST' PRESENTATIONS

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The Executive Committee discussed the introduction of a Zone Agenda item at all future meetings, to invite a Zone member Local Government, on a rotational basis to present to the Zone. This provides the opportunity for each Local Government to update the Zone on their Local Government activities, in the absence of the Zone meetings being hosted at all Local Governments localities. This will provide each Zone Local Government with the opportunity to act as a 'virtual host' and to inform Zone members of initiatives, activities and events that are of local significance.

## RESOLUTION

**Mover:** Shire of Cunderdin

**Seconder:** Shire of Nungarin

**A Local Government, on a rotational basis (reverse alphabetical order) be provided an opportunity to make a short (10 minute) presentation on what is occurring in their Local Government at the commencement of each Zone meeting.**

<b>Zone Meeting Date</b>	<b>Local Government</b>
<b>13 February</b>	<b>Shire of Yilgarn</b>
<b>10 April</b>	<b>Shire of Wyalkatchem</b>
<b>12 June</b>	<b>Shire of Westonia</b>
<b>14 August</b>	<b>Shire of Trayning</b>
<b>13 November</b>	<b>Shire of Tammin</b>

**CARRIED**

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### 9.3. 2025 GREAT EASTERN COUNTRY ZONE CONFERENCE

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#### **Background**

At the February Zone meeting, a Zone Conference Planning Subcommittee was established. Members of the committee are Cr Melanie Brown, Cr Jannah Stratford, Cr Ram Rajagopalan, Cr Gary Shadbolt, Cr Tony Sasche, Cr Stephen Strange and Cr Mark Crees.

#### **Comment**

The first meeting of the Subcommittee was held on 19 September. Subsequent meetings were held on 10 and 30 October to formalise the program and speakers.

The draft Conference Program is attached for the Zone's information (Attachment 6). **Please note all sessions and speakers are to be confirmed and are subject to change.**

WALGA staff will visit the Conference venue at the Shire of Bruce Rock following the Zone meeting to consider logistical needs such as audio visual equipment, seating arrangements, catering and accommodation.

#### **Noted**

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### 9.4. NORTHAM REGIONAL HOSPITAL UPGRADE

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The Avon-Midland Country Zone (AMCZ) has been advocating for the Northam Regional Hospital to be upgraded to a larger Regional Hospital.

The AMCZ has requested that the GECZ provides a letter of support for this advocacy.

The following information was recorded in the minutes of the AMCZ regarding this matter:

*Cr Antonio has provided the following information from Nancy Bineham, Director Strategy, Change & Service Development WA Country Health Service Wheatbelt regarding health/hospital planning in WA and how this applies to the Wheatbelt and Northam -*

*While some services in the Wheatbelt such as cancer care, renal dialysis & rehabilitation have grown in the last couple of years, many people still have to travel to Perth to receive care that people in other country regions can access within their region at their larger regional hospitals (e.g. more complex surgery & medical care, emergency surgery, mental health, obstetrics & gynaecology, high dependency care).*

*The Wheatbelt does not currently have a larger regional hospital but we are currently reviewing & refreshing future plans through the WA Clinical Services Framework (the State's hospital & outpatient planning framework).*

*The region is proposing via WACHS central office to Department of Health, that we aim to grow our services locally at Northam & to a lesser extent Narrogin, over the next 10 years to be able to provide more care closer to home (up from the current 42% levels to closer to 80% hospital care within the region) to reduce the need for travel to Perth for Wheatbelt patients.*

*Other country regions currently achieve this, but it will require significant capital & resource investment from government, particularly at Northam.*

## **RESOLUTION**

**Mover: Shire of Cunderdin**

**Seconder: Shire of Koorda**

**That the Great Eastern Country Zone provides a letter of support for the Avon-Midland Country Zone's (AMCZ) advocacy for the Northam Regional Hospital to be upgraded to a larger Regional Hospital.**

**CARRIED**

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## **9.5. BAND 4 LOCAL GOVERNMENTS MEETING**

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*By Tony Brown, Executive Director Member Services*

### **BACKGROUND**

On 3 September, the Minister for Local Government, Hon Hannah Beasley, hosted a roundtable meeting of all Band 4 Local Governments in WA.

To continue the discussion, WALGA hosted a further meeting of Band 4 Local Governments. The meeting was held on 11 October at the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre. Chief Executive Officers and Presidents from all 60 Band 4 Local Governments in the State were invited to attend.

Ahead of the meeting, WALGA emailed all Band 4 Local Governments asking for their top three priorities. Responses were received from 33 Local Governments. The top issues (in order of priority) are listed below:

1. Housing
2. Medical services
3. Audit fees
4. Financial Assistance Grants
5. Waste management funding
6. Compliance requirements
7. Financial sustainability
8. ICT systems
9. Renewable energy

These top 9 issues were separated into operational challenges and strategic issues at the meeting and presented for further discussion and comment.

The aim of the meeting was to identify and agree on the top issues facing Band 4 Local Governments, to enable the group to consider and develop potential solutions to these issues, before presenting to the Minister.

#### **ATTACHMENT**

Band 4 Local Governments meeting summary report (Attachment 7).

#### **COMMENT**

Overall, 72 representatives from 48 Local Governments attended the meeting on 11 October.

Attached is a summary report from the meeting.

Please note that this report provides a summary of the discussion and feedback received from participants at the meeting. The comments and views are those of participants, and do not necessarily reflect the endorsed position of WALGA or its Members.

As the main outcome of the meeting, WALGA will undertake work on the top four issues identified by the group:

1. Housing;
2. Audit fees;
3. Medical services; and
4. Financial Assistance Grants

WALGA will provide a progress update to all Band 4 Local Governments early next year.

#### **Noted**



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## 9.6. CONSULTATION OPPORTUNITIES

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### 9.6.1. Native Vegetation Clearing

*By Sarah Coles, Environment Policy Officer*

*Rebecca Brown Policy Manager Environment and Waste in attendance to speak to the item.*

#### **BACKGROUND**

WALGA has developed an Issues Paper on Native Vegetation Clearing Regulations (Attachment 8) based on input from Local Government and analysis of Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER), and Appeals Convenor, data. Drawing on this data and Local Government case studies, the Paper outlines challenges Local Governments have encountered in navigating the regulatory system and identifies opportunities for improvement.

WALGA's data analysis identifies that 60% of Local Government clearing permits applications relate to road construction or upgrade. Key challenges relate to the complexity of navigating the regulatory environment, costs associated with the process and the time taken (for assessment of permits and appeals). These challenges can delay road and infrastructure projects and impact on Local Government's ability to attract and retain grant funding.

Based on discussions with the sector, and recommendations of previous submissions, WALGA has identified a range of potential opportunities to improve the native vegetation process. These focus on DWER process improvements, Local Government capacity building and taking strategic approaches to data collection, clearing permits and offsets:

1. The implementation of a State Government coordinated and funded biodiversity survey program.
2. Funding for a trial using Artificial Intelligence (AI) for biodiversity mapping.
3. DWER to develop a Strategic Offsets framework for Local Government.
4. The introduction of statutory timeframes for determination of referrals, permits and appeals and timely compliance and enforcement.
5. Increased support and capacity building for Local Governments to navigate the native vegetation clearing requirements.
6. Extended default periods for purpose permits and removal of the time limit requirement for maintenance in existing transport corridors.

The Issues Paper has been updated following consideration by the Environment and Infrastructure Policy Teams and is attached for zones' consideration and feedback. In particular Zones are requested provide feedback on the following:

- a. Does the Issues Paper capture the challenges experienced by Local Government in relation to native vegetation clearing regulations?
- b. The opportunities identified for improving the native vegetation clearing process for Local Government.
- c. Any additional opportunities.

The Zone can provide feedback at the meeting and Local Government's can email WALGA direct. Any written feedback should be provided by Friday, 13 December, to [environment@walga.asn.au](mailto:environment@walga.asn.au).

Following Zone feedback, an item will be prepared for the Zones and State Council in February/March 2025.

## RESOLUTION

**Mover:** Shire of Nungarin

**Seconder:** Shire of Yilgarn

**That the Great Eastern Country Zone:**

- 1. Note the Native Vegetation Clearing Regulations Issues Paper.**
- 2. Request Local Government's submit their written feedback directly to WALGA for consideration.**

**CARRIED**

### 9.6.2. Public Health Planning Guide for Local Governments

CEO's should have received an email from the Department of Health (DoH) last week to alert Local Governments to the release of the draft *Public Health Planning Guide for Local Government* for comment. The [draft Guide and feedback survey](#) are available on the DoH website.

The Guide is being developed to assist Local Governments with public health planning and developing Local Public Health Plans by June 2026 as required under Stage 5 of the *Public Health Act 2016*.

The DoH consultation period is open until Friday, 29 November.

WALGA strongly encourages Local Governments to provide feedback on the draft guide.

WALGA will also be preparing a submission on behalf of the sector.

**Noted**

## 10. ZONE REPORTS

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### 10.1. CHAIR REPORT

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*President Cr Tony Sachse*

The Zone Executive met on Tuesday, 5 November 2024. The minutes of the meeting are attached. Today we have four guest speakers including the Wheatbelt Development Commission, Ms Shelby Robinson District Emergency Manager Advisory Wheatbelt and Goldfields-Esperance Regions - Department of Fire and Emergency Services, Western Power and Mr Neil Savage from the Western Roads Federation. All four speakers are considered important to present at our last meeting for the 2024 Calander year. Unfortunately, due to time constraints our agency representatives will not be able to speak to their reports at this meeting. However, we also put high value on the agency reports and will allow sufficient time for agency verbal reports and questions in February 2025 where

one guest speaker is anticipated. Hopefully the Minister for Local Government the Hon Hannah Beazley can attend.

The WALGA Conference in Perth in October was well received as was the follow up meeting for Band 4 Councils. Some members also attended the Sustainable Economic Growth for Regional Australia (SEGRA) Foundation conference in Busselton recently. It was very well run with a variety of speakers and tours which made for an innovative and thought-provoking conference. Of note is the continuing “top down” approach of Federal and State Governments which can mean LGAs’ that are some distance from the capital cities tend to be left out.

The Great Eastern Country Zone Conference 2025 planning is progressing well. Thanks to all those on the Zone Conference Planning Subcommittee and WALGA staff for their support. Thanks also to the Shire of Bruce Rock for offering to host the conference. Thank you to our visiting politicians and all the Agency representatives for sending in their respective reports.

Thanks also to the Shire of Merredin for hosting us today.

I would like to thank Mr James McGovern for his outstanding contribution as Executive Officer to the Great Eastern Country Zone. We have all enjoyed working constructively with James on our Zone priorities and Agenda, our meetings and Executive meetings, WALGA business and of course Governance and Procurement. James has also provided valuable assistance to individual Local Governments during his time at WALGA. It has been a pleasure working with you James and we wish you all the very best in your future endeavours. Thank you.

Finally, as we approach Christmas and New Year can I thank everyone for their effort and support for the GECZ in 2024. We look forward to 2025 and continuing our good work for the region and our communities.

## **RESOLUTION**

**Mover:** Shire of Westonia  
**Seconder:** Shire of Bruce Rock

**That the Zone Chair's report be received.**

**CARRIED**

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## **10.2. WHEATBELT DISTRICT EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (DEMC)**

*President Cr Tony Sachse*

The last meeting of the Wheatbelt DEMC was on 4 September 2024. At the time of writing the minutes are not yet available. There were Guest presentations from Gianni Colangelo – Pre-Season Weather Briefing and Councillor Lincoln Stewart – Ethical Protection of Australian Animals and Wildlife (EPAAW).

Other business included - Overdue LEMA. DEMA to follow up with LGs, Superintendents of Police and DFES to meet with LGs as required. DEMC executive Ongoing. Also, LEMAs' due for review in 2024. Letters to be written with reminder of review date and offers of advice and assistance as required. Executive Officer Ongoing.

Correspondence included

- State Hazard Plan Review – Human Biosecurity
- DEMC Annual Report – SEMC
- LEMC Annual Report - SEMC
- Correspondence Out
- DEMC Strategic Business Plan
- State Hazard Plan Review – Human Biosecurity

6 DEMC membership

6.1. Review and circulate list

6.2. Discussion – who is missing in the room?

6.2.1. Reviewing State Agency and other important stakeholders' membership

6.2.2. Reviewing LG/LEMC membership

7. Agenda items

7.1. Wheatbelt DEMC Strategic Planning

7.1.1. Endorsement of Strategic Business Plan

7.2. Pre-Season Preparedness Activities

7.2.1. DEMC

7.2.2. LEMC/LG

8. District Emergency Management

8.1. Meeting and exercise schedule

Membership to advise of any planned exercises or subcommittee meetings.

8.2. OASG activations

Nil Reported.

9 District Updates

9.1. Local EM committee reports / updates – using reporting template

9.1.1. Any preset LGs

9.1.2. WALGA Zone Reps

9.2. Agency reports / updates – using reporting template

The Wheatbelt DEMC Pre-Season Forum was held in Northam on 22 October 2024. The purpose of that forum was to provide the membership with a greater understanding of:

- Agency preparedness activities
- Agency plans and responsibilities – including State Hazard Plans and State Support Plans
- Vulnerabilities and resource deficiencies expected over the season
- Engagement methods during the season.

The Wheatbelt Operational Area Support Group (OASG)/ISG is now meeting on an as needed basis. Recent meetings included the Pre-emptive OASG – Adverse Fire Weather DFES Wheatbelt Region on 30/10/2024 and 1/11/2024.

## RESOLUTION

**Mover:** Shire of Yilgarn  
**Seconded:** Shire of Trayning

**That the Wheatbelt District Emergency Management Committee Report be received.**

**CARRIED**

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### 10.3. REGIONAL HEALTH ADVOCACY GROUP

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*President Cr Alison Harris*

- Cr Harris advised there was nothing to report from the Group for this meeting as the final meeting occurred in June. The Wheatbelt Community Needs Assessment 2023-2024 Final Draft (which contributed to the development of the Living Well in the Wheatbelt Plan) was provided to the August Zone meeting.
- Request direction from Zone and the next steps, via the Executive Committee.

## RESOLUTION

**Mover:** Shire of Trayning  
**Seconded:** Shire of Tammin

**That the Regional Health Advocacy Report be received and the GECZ Executive Committee provide a recommendation to the Zone on the next steps.**

**CARRIED**

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### 10.4. WALGA ROADWISE

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*Tracey Peacock, Regional Road Safety Advisor is an apology for the meeting.*

The WALGA RoadWise report was provided as an attachment to the Agenda.

## 11. WALGA STATE COUNCIL EXECUTIVE REPORTS

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### 11.1. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

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*President Cr Karen Chappel AM JP, WALGA President*

The President's Report is attached (Attachment 10)

## RESOLUTION

**Mover:** Shire of Bruce Rock  
**Seconded:** Shire of Tammin

**That the WALGA President's Report be received.**

**CARRIED**

## 11.2. STATE COUNCILLOR REPORT

*Cr Stephen Strange*

### RESOLUTION

**Mover:** Shire of Nungarin

**Seconder:** Shire of Trayning

**That the State Councillor Report be received.**

**CARRIED**

## 11.3. STATUS REPORT

Agenda Item	Zone Resolution	WALGA Response	WALGA Contact
11 April 2024 Zone Agenda Item <b>9.1.2 Agricultural Land Use</b>	<p>That the Great Eastern Country Zone recommend that WALGA</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In considering Agricultural Land Use, establishes and promotes policy templates to guide Local Governments for their individual adoption to protect and prioritise the preservation of agricultural land against its displacement by non-agricultural activities that lead to a net reduction of the State's productive agricultural land.</li> <li>2. Within the Policy includes such uses but not limited to tree planting for offsets or carbon, renewable energy generation and transmission.</li> <li>3. Investigates potential impacts to local government rates on rural land, that has approved long term tree planting for different purposes, for example but not limited to planting for carbon offsets, planting for clearing offsets, or planting for renewable fuels; and renewable energy investments.</li> <li>4. Provides advice to local government on what Policies or Special Area Rates should be considered for the land affected.</li> </ol>	<p>State Council endorsed the Renewable Energy Facilities Advocacy Position at its meeting of 4 September, 2024. This position calls for the State Government to develop a renewable energy facility state planning policy that would provide greater guidance to applicants and decision makers.</p>	<p>Nicole Matthews Executive Manager Policy nmatthews@walga.asn.au 9213 2039</p>
11 April 2024 Zone Agenda Item <b>9.1.1 Enhanced and Alternative</b>	<p>That the Great Eastern Country Zone:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Supports the call to action to reduce regional disadvantage in educational opportunities;</li> </ol>	<p>WALGA notes that the Great Eastern Country Zone supports the call to action raised by the Great Southern Zone to reduce regional disadvantage in</p>	<p>Nicole Matthews Executive Manager Policy nmatthews@walga.asn.au 9213 2039</p>

<p><b>Education Opportunities for Regional WA</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Agrees to write to the Minister for Education requesting action; and</li> <li>3. Requests the WALGA Secretariat to advocate to State Government on this matter.</li> </ol>	<p>educational opportunities and that the Zone will write to the Minister for Education on the matter.</p> <p>WALGA understands that the Great Southern Zone received a response to their letter to the Minister of Education on this issue on 24 April 2024. The letter references a number of initiatives including a \$71 million funding boost for the School of Isolated and Distance Education, a proposed expansion of VET certificates in the coming years, Education and Training Participation Plans, the support provided by the School of Special Educational Needs: Behaviour and Engagement located in Albany, the recently announced federally funded two new Regional University Study Hubs, further financial investment in the attraction and retention payments/packages, and a developing Regional Education Strategy.</p> <p>WALGA is also aware that the Great Southern Zone has raised these issues directly with Department of Education representatives at recent Zone meetings.</p> <p>WALGA notes that 2024-25 State Budget included an additional \$10 million for the School of Isolated and Distance Education.</p> <p>WALGA is continuing to advocate broadly on issues that intersect with regional education such as Government Regional Officer Housing (GROH). WALGA has written to the Department of Communities Deputy Director General, Housing and Assets on this matter. Department of Communities officials will present on the GROH program at the July Strategic Forum.</p> <p>On the 22 July, the Department of Education released a draft <a href="#">Regional Education Strategy</a>. The Strategy aims to provide a framework to guide more effective</p>	
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		<p>delivery of regional education, focusing on improved educational and wellbeing opportunities across four pillars:  Pillar 1: Build the capability of our regional workforce  Pillar 2: Expand curriculum delivery  Pillar 3: Strengthen support for student wellbeing  Pillar 4: Develop partnerships to create opportunity</p> <p>Country zones and Local Governments are strongly encouraged to provide feedback on the strategy, particularly given the relevance of the Strategy to matters raised by the Great Southern Zone with support from other country zones.</p> <p>The consultation period closes on Friday 20 September 2024. <a href="#">More information is available here.</a></p> <p>WALGA has partnered with the Department of Education to facilitate an information and feedback session on the Strategy priority pillars. The session will be held online on Wednesday 21 August 2:30 -3.:30pm. A registration link will be sent via LG Direct.</p> <p>WALGA provided a <a href="#">submission</a> on the Draft Education Strategy on 4 October 2024, provided as an item for noting at the December 2024 State Council meeting.</p> <p>COMPLETE</p>	
<p>13 June 2024  Zone Agenda Item  <b>7.2 Wheatbelt Development Commission (Housing Needs within the Wheatbelt Region)</b></p>	<p>The Great Eastern Country Zone request that WALGA lobby the State Government to fund the Wheatbelt Development Commission to conduct feasibility studies for programs (including Government Regional Officer Housing) to meet housing needs within the Wheatbelt region (including Great Eastern Country Zone Local Governments).</p>	<p>The Deputy Director General, Housing and Assets presented at the 10 July 2024 State Council Strategic Forum. The presentation included an offer to Local Governments to submit expressions of interest for partnership on social and affordable housing as well the Government Regional Officer Housing program, including those that request variations to the current program parameters – such as rent returns or interest free loans.</p>	<p>Nicole Matthews  Executive Manager Policy  nmatthews@walga.asn.au  9213 2039</p>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WALGA hosted a GROH workshop on 8 November to consider current and future Government Regional Officer Housing program build to lease model in the context of the current WA construction market with a view to policy changes. The workshop was led by the Department of Communities with senior representatives from Treasury and the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage. The Shire of Tranying attending.</li> </ul> <p>The Wheatbelt Regional Development Commission advises it has facilitated 3 sub-regional housing investigations in collaboration with 16 Shires which has involved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- demand analysis (showing current unmet demand for &gt;1500 worker houses).</li> <li>- feasibility testing of costed housing options (and servicing/infrastructure) on priority LG land.</li> <li>- detailed planning analysis and development capacity assessments for each townsite.</li> <li>- cost-benefit analysis and business cases prepared for each sub-region housing proposal.</li> </ul> <p>From this work, WDC has coordinated applications from 10 Shires to the Commonwealth's Housing Support Program (Stream 2) for Community Enabling Infrastructure. This sub-regional proposal involves approx. 28 projects across 10 Shires expected to yield &gt;200 lots with financial commitments in place to deliver 181 houses to 2031, and &gt;400 houses in the longer term.</p> <p>Additionally, 8 Shires have submitted applications to the State Governments Infrastructure Development Fund which could see</p>	
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		<p>more than 500 houses enabled (in addition to the above).</p> <p>The WDC is now liaising with approximately 11 Shire's across the WEROC and NEWROC sub-regions to progress similar work which will ensure that these local governments are well placed with the evidence base and costed project options needed to inform future funding applications.</p>	
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## 12. WALGA STATE COUNCIL AGENDA

WALGA State Council meets five times each year and as part of the consultation process with Member Councils circulates the State Council Agenda for input through the Zone structure.

Zone delegates to consider the Matters for Decision contained in the WA Local Government Association State Council Agenda and put forward resolutions to Zone Representatives on State Council.

The full [State Council Agenda can be found on the WALGA website](#).

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### 12.1. MATTERS FOR DECISION

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#### 12.1.1. 2024 Annual General Meeting Resolutions (State Council Agenda item 8.1)

*By Meghan Dwyer, Executive Officer Governance*

#### WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That:

1. the item 7.1 Amendments to *Cat Act 2011*- Allow Local Governments to Make Local Laws to Contain Cats to the Owner's Property be endorsed.
2. the following resolutions from the 2024 WALGA Annual General be referred to the Environment Policy Team for further work to be undertaken:
  - 7.2 Advocacy for Legislative Reforms to Counter Land-Banking
  - 7.4 Action on Asbestos for Western Australia
  - 7.6 Advocacy for Accessibility.
3. the following resolutions from the 2024 WALGA Annual General be referred to the Governance Policy Team for further work to be undertaken:
  - 7.2 Advocacy for Legislative Reforms to Counter Land-Banking
  - 7.3 Advocacy for Expansion of Differential Rating to Include Long Term Unoccupied Commercial Buildings (Property Activation Levy).

4. the following resolution from the 2024 WALGA Annual General be referred to the People and Place Policy Team for further work to be undertaken:
- 7.5 Addressing the Impracticality of Local Governments Funding Department of Communities and GROH Houses.

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- WALGA's 2024 Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held on 9 October.
- The meeting resolved for WALGA to act in relation to six Member Motions:
  - Amendments to the *Cat Act 2011*- Allow Local Governments to Make Local Laws to Contain Cats to the Owner's Property
  - Advocacy for Legislative Reforms to Counter Land-banking
  - Advocacy for Expansion of Differential Rating to Include Long Term Unoccupied Commercial Buildings (Property Activation Levy)
  - Action on Asbestos for Western Australia
  - Addressing the Impracticality of Local Governments Funding Department of Communities and Government Regional Officer Housing
  - Advocacy for Accessibility
- The action proposed to be taken in relation to each of the resolutions has been summarised for State Council's information.

#### **12.1.2. Local Government Elections Advocacy Positions (State Council Agenda item 8.2)**

*By Tony Brown, Executive Director Member Services and Jason Russell, Senior Governance Specialist*

#### WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That WALGA adopt the following Elections Advocacy Positions:

*The Local Government sector supports:*

- 1. Voluntary participation in Local Government elections.*
- 2. Councillors serve four-year terms with elections every two years and half of the Council positions spilled at each election.*
- 3. 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.*
- 2. First-Past-The-Post (FPTP) voting system for internal Council elections.*
- 3. Councils holding elections by means of in-person, postal and/or electronic voting.*
- 4. Current legislative provision of Mayor/President of Class 1 and Class 2 Local Governments being directly elected by the community and Class 3 and Class 4 Local Government Councils electing the President.*

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- This report presents the findings of sector-wide consultation on WALGA's Elections Advocacy Positions.
- Consultation addressed key areas elements of the current Advocacy Positions:
  1. Voluntary participation,
  2. Terms on Council and election cycles,
  3. Voting systems for public elections,
  4. Voting systems for internal elections,
  5. Methods for holding elections,
  6. Ability to choose how Mayors/Presidents are elected.

### **12.1.3. Aboriginal Communities Advocacy Positions (State Council Agenda item 8.3)**

*By Rebecca Hicks, Policy Officer Community*

#### WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council:

1. Replace Advocacy Position 3.1.2 Reconciliation with the following:

*WALGA:*

1. *Acknowledges the continuing connection of Aboriginal people to Country, culture and community and embraces the vast Aboriginal cultural diversity throughout Western Australia.*
2. *Supports the efforts of Local Governments to progress reconciliation at the local level.*

2. Remove Advocacy Position 3.1.3 Constitutional Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.

3. Replace Advocacy Position 3.1.4 *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2021* and South West Native Title Settlement with the following:

#### *3.1.4 Aboriginal Heritage Protection*

1. *WALGA supports the recognition, protection, conservation and preservation of Aboriginal cultural heritage and recognises the fundamental importance of Aboriginal cultural heritage to Aboriginal people and the State.*
2. *The State Government must:*
  - a. *Ensure that legislative requirements balance the need to protect Aboriginal heritage with the need for Local Government to undertake activities in a timely and affordable manner.*
  - b. *Provide adequate resourcing to ensure all parties have the capacity, capability and resources to discharge their statutory obligations.*
  - c. *Provide support and guidance to Local Governments to ensure that they have the resources, capacity and capability to effectively and efficiently deliver essential services to community while protecting Aboriginal heritage.*

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Following a review of WALGA's Aboriginal Community advocacy positions it is proposed that Advocacy Positions 3.1.2 Reconciliation and 3.1.4 *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2021* and South West Native Title Settlement be updated and that Advocacy Position 3.1.3 Constitutional Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People be removed.
- The intent of the proposed revisions is to reflect contemporary approaches to key issues in Aboriginal Affairs policy and legislation as they relate to Local Government.
- The People and Place Policy Team considered and endorsed the proposed advocacy position changes at its meeting on 25 October.

### **12.1.4. Family and Domestic Violence Advocacy Position (State Council Agenda item 8.4)**

*By Rebecca Hicks, Policy Officer Community*

#### WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council replace Advocacy Position 3.10.1 Family and Domestic Violence with the following:

##### *3.10.1 Family and Domestic Violence*

- 1. Family and domestic violence is unacceptable and has devastating and long-term impacts on individuals, families and communities.*
- 2. Preventing family and domestic violence requires commitment from all levels of government, different sectors, and members of the community.*
- 3. WALGA calls on the State and Australian governments to provide adequate funding and support for family and domestic violence programs and services, in particular:*
  - a. Funding for collaborative and connected family and domestic violence programs and services that are place-based and people-centred; and*
  - b. Better integration of family and domestic violence initiatives, including capacity building across all tiers of government and community services.*

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- It is proposed that Advocacy Position 3.10.1 Family and Domestic Violence be updated.
- The revised position makes a clear statement on the Local Government sector's condemnation of family and domestic violence and the collective responsibility of governments and the community in prevention.
- The revised position provides a framework for WALGA advocacy to the Australian and State Government, without impinging on individual Local Government's approach to this issue, which will be dependent on their capacity, capability, local context and strategic direction.
- The People and Place Policy Team endorsed the revised Advocacy Position at its meeting on 25 October.

## **12.1.5. Container Deposit System Policy Statement and Advocacy Position (State Council Agenda item 8.5)**

*By Rebecca Brown, Policy Manager, Environment and Waste*

### **WALGA RECOMMENDATION**

That State Council replace the existing Container Deposit Systems Policy Statement and Advocacy Position 7.6 Container Deposit Systems with the following:

#### *7.6 Container Deposit Systems*

- 1. Local Government supports the WA Containers for Change Scheme and acknowledges its contribution to reducing litter, increasing material recovery and providing employment opportunities across the state.*
- 2. To maximise the benefits of the WA Scheme, Local Government calls on the State Government to:*
  - a. Maintain a resource recovery target of 85% for eligible containers and a focus on litter reduction.*
  - b. Expand the range of containers accepted in the Scheme, by:*
    - i. 2027: to include wine bottles, spirit bottles and larger sizes of currently eligible containers,*
    - ii. 2030: to include plain milk and milk alternative containers and composite container types, and*
    - iii. 2035: other container types.*
  - c. Ensure national alignment of the materials covered by the Scheme and consistent messaging.*
  - d. Maintain a State-based and managed Scheme.*
  - e. Review the deposit amount to appropriately incentivise community engagement.*
  - f. Increase the number of refund and donation points to ensure community access, including in public places and at events.*
  - g. Ensure refund points are financially sustainable.*
  - h. Leverage the refund point collection network to provide drop off points for other materials covered by effective product stewardship schemes.*

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- WALGA's 2008 Container Deposit Systems (CDS) Policy Statement and Advocacy Position 7.6 Container Deposit Systems, formed the basis of WALGA's advocacy for the introduction and design of a WA CDS, Containers for Change, which commenced on 1 October 2020.
- The current Advocacy Position and many elements of the Policy Statement have been achieved. However, there are aspects of the Scheme that Local Government has identified as important to improve.
- The focus of the updated Advocacy Position is:
  - building on the environmental, social and economic benefits of the current Scheme;
  - expanding the range of containers covered by the Scheme;

- increasing community access and incentives to use the Scheme; and
- leveraging the refund point network to collect other materials covered by effective product stewardship schemes.
- The Municipal Waste Advisory Council (MWAC) endorsed the new Policy Statement and Advocacy Position at its meeting on 23 October.

**12.1.6. Bus Stop Infrastructure Agreement (State Council Agenda item 8.6)**

*By Negar Nili, Policy Officer Transport and Roads*

**WALGA RECOMMENDATION**

That State Council endorse the proposed Bus Stop Infrastructure Partnership Agreement between WALGA and the Public Transport Authority 2024/25 to 2028/29.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- WALGA has negotiated a new Bus Stop Infrastructure Partnership Agreement (Agreement) with the Public Transport Authority (PTA). If agreed this will be the third such Agreement, with validity through to 2028/29.
- The Agreement seeks to provide the foundation for an effective working relationship between the PTA and Local Governments.
- The purpose of the Agreement is to clarify the roles, responsibilities and discretion of PTA and Local Governments in the provision and maintenance of bus stop infrastructure in areas with regular public transport SmartRider ticketed services, including regional cities and towns.
- The Agreement defines the roles and responsibilities of the PTA and Local Governments in various scenarios including when bus routes are changed, bus stops are added or removed, and bus stop infrastructure is upgraded.
- The Agreement provides a funding contribution to Local Governments for the maintenance and installation of bus shelters.

**12.1.7. 2025 Salaries and Allowances Tribunal Remuneration Inquiry for Local Government Chief Executive Officers and Elected Members (State Council Agenda item 8.7)**

*By Kathy Robertson, Manager Association and Corporate Governance*

**WALGA RECOMMENDATION**

That State Council endorse the submission to the 2025 Salaries and Allowances Tribunal Remuneration Inquiry for Local Government Chief Executive Officers and Elected Members.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Salaries and Allowances Tribunal (SAT) conduct an inquiry into Local Government Chief Executive Officer and Elected Member remuneration annually.
- In preparation for the inquiry to be undertaken early next year, WALGA has prepared a draft submission to SAT that makes recommendations in relation to Elected Member fees and allowances, Chief Executive Officer remuneration, the Regional/Isolation Allowance and independent audit, risk and improvement committee member fees.
- The submission recommends:
  - an increase to Elected Member Fees and Allowances (including maximum reimbursable expenses) of 4%;
  - an increase to Chief Executive Officer remuneration bands of 4%;
  - an increase to the Regional/Isolation Allowance payable for Local Governments that are particularly isolated, long distances from population centres, and lacking in amenities;
  - the publication of clear guidance to the Local Government sector outlining how the Regional/Isolation Allowance is applied in terms of methodology, criteria and weightings;
  - the creation of a new fee category for independent audit, risk and improvement committee members without bands, and that the fee be set at a suitable level to recognise the skills and knowledge required for such a role; and
  - that the new category provide a fee for the independent chair position as well as the independent member position.
- SAT will likely publish its determination for 2025-2026 in April 2025.
- The Governance Policy Team endorsed the submission at its meeting on 4 November.

### **12.1.8. Submission on the draft State Hazard Plan - Fire (State Council Agenda item 8.8)**

*By Rachel Armstrong, Policy Manager Emergency Management*

#### WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council endorse the submission on the draft State Hazard Plan - Fire.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The State Hazard Plan - Fire (SHP Fire) outlines the arrangements for the management of fire in Western Australia including fire prevention, preparedness, response and initial recovery.
- Local Governments have a critical role in bushfire management, including statutory responsibilities for mitigation, prevention and response under the *Bush Fires Act 1954* (BF Act) and responsibility for community-led recovery, as provided in the *Emergency Management Act 2005* (EM Act).
- The Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) has undertaken a comprehensive review of the SHP Fire and is seeking comments on the revised draft Plan by 9 December ([Engage WA Emergency Management](#)).
- WALGA's draft submission on the draft SHP Fire incorporates feedback from 33 Local Governments and LGIS.



- The submission focusses on the key issues that underpin Local Government’s capacity to implement their roles and responsibilities for the hazard of fire including:
  - Emergency Services Funding;
  - The State Emergency Management Framework and Consolidated Emergency Services Legislation; and
  - Bush Fire Brigade management and Work Health and Safety (WHS).
- A detailed list of proposed specific changes to plan is also included.

**RESOLUTION**

**Mover: Shire of Bruce Rock**

**Seconder: Shire of Tammin**

**That the Zone supports all WALGA recommendations in the Matters for Decision as contained in the December 2024 State Council Agenda and as listed above.**

**CARRIED**

**12.2. POLICY TEAM AND COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**12.2.1. Infrastructure Policy Team Report (State Council Agenda item 9.1)**

*By Ian Duncan, Executive Manager, Infrastructure*

**WALGA RECOMMENDATION**

That State Council note the report from the Infrastructure Policy Team meeting for the 6 December 2024 meeting.

**12.2.2. People and Place Policy Team Report (State Council Agenda item 9.2)**

*By Nicole Matthews, Executive Manager Policy*

**WALGA RECOMMENDATION**

That State Council note the report from the People and Place Policy Team to the 6 December 2024 meeting.

### **12.2.3. Governance Policy Team Report (State Council Agenda item 9.3)**

*By Tony Brown, Executive Director Member Services*

#### WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council:

1. Note the report from the Governance Policy Team for the 6 December 2024 meeting.
2. Determine to:
  - a. retain the following Advocacy Positions with amendment:
    - i. Advocacy Position 2.8.1 Industry Award Coverage
    - ii. Advocacy Position 2.8.3 Registration of WALGA as an Employer Organisation
  - b. retire Advocacy Position 2.8.2 Local Government Long Service Leave Regulations.

### **12.2.4. Environment Policy Team Report (State Council Agenda item 9.4)**

*By Nicole Matthews, Executive Manager Policy*

#### WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council note the report from the Environment Policy Team to the 6 December 2024 meeting.

### **12.2.5. Municipal Waste Advisory Council (MWAC) Report (State Council Agenda item 9.5)**

*By Rebecca Brown, Policy Manager, Environment and Waste*

#### WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council note the report from the Municipal Waste Advisory Council to the 6 December 2024 meeting.

## RESOLUTION

**Mover:** Shire of Narembeen

**Seconded:** Shire of Cunderdin

**That the Zone:**

1. notes all Policy Team and Committee Reports as contained in the December 2024 State Council Agenda; and
2. supports the WALGA recommendations in the Governance Policy Team Report as contained in the December 2024 State Council Agenda and as listed above.

**CARRIED**

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### 12.3. MATTERS FOR NOTING/INFORMATION

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- WALGA Strategic Planning Update (State Council Agenda item 10.1)
- Submission on Reform of Packaging Regulation (State Council Agenda item 10.2)
- Submission on The Draft State Support Plan – Animal Welfare in Emergencies (State Council Agenda item 10.3)
- Local Government Primary Healthcare Survey Report (State Council Agenda item 10.4)
- Renewable Energy Survey Highlights (State Council Agenda item 10.5)
- Flying Agenda: Submission to Main Roads WA on the Revised Western Australia Traffic Signals Approval Policy and Process (State Council Agenda item 10.6)
- Flying Minute: Submission on the Draft Objectives and Priorities for the Upcoming State Public Health Plan (State Council Agenda item 10.7)
- Flying Minute: Submission On the Draft Regional Education Strategy (State Council Agenda item 10.8)
- Flying Minute: Submission on Derbal Yiragan (Swan) Djarlgarro (Canning) Draft River Protection Strategy (State Council Agenda item 10.9)
- Flying Minute: Submission on the State Hazard Plan - Human Biosecurity (State Council Agenda item 10.10)

The Executive Officer highlighted the Local Government Primary Healthcare Survey Report (State Council Agenda item 10.4) as an item of interest for Local Government's.

## RESOLUTION

**Mover:** Shire of Nungarin

**Seconded:** Shire of Trayning

**That the Zone notes all Matters for Noting/Information as contained in the December 2024 State Council Agenda.**

**CARRIED**

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## 12.4. KEY ACTIVITY REPORTS

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- Report on Key Activities, Advocacy Portfolio (State Council Agenda item 11.1.1)
- Report on Key Activities, Infrastructure Portfolio (State Council Agenda item 11.1.2)
- Report on Key Activities, Member Services Portfolio (State Council Agenda item 11.1.3)
- Report on Key Activities, Policy Portfolio (State Council Agenda item 11.1.4)

### RESOLUTION

**Mover:** Shire of Trayning

**Seconded:** Shire of Koorda

**That the Zone notes all Key Activity Reports as contained in the December 2024 State Council Agenda.**

**CARRIED**

## 13. EMERGING ISSUES

## 14. NEXT MEETING

The next Executive Committee meeting will be held on 4 February 2025 commencing at 8:00am, via MSTeams.

The next Great Eastern Country Zone meeting will be held on Thursday, 13 February 2025 commencing at 9:30am. This meeting will be hosted by the Shire of Kellerberrin.

The Shire of Yilgarn is invited to make a short presentation at the commencement of the meeting.

## 15. CLOSURE

The Chair closed the meeting at 12:45pm.