

State Council Full Minutes 6 December 2024

Ordinary meeting no. 5 of 2024 of the Western Australian Local Government Association State Council held at the Undalup Room, City of Busselton at 11:00am.

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1 OPENING, ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

1.1 OPENING

The Chair declared the meeting open at 11:04am.

1.2 ATTENDANCE

Members	WALGA President	President Cr Karen Chappel AM JP
	WALGA Deputy President	
	Central Metropolitan Zone	Cr Paul Kelly
	Avon-Midland Country Zone	President Chris Antonio
	Central Metropolitan Zone	Cr Helen Sadler
	East Metropolitan Zone	President Paige McNeil
	East Metropolitan Zone	Cr Haeden Miles
	Gascoyne Country Zone	President Eddie Smith
	Goldfields Esperance Country Zone	President Cr Laurene Bonza
	Great Eastern Country Zone	Cr Stephen Strange
	Kimberley Country Zone	President Chris Mitchell JP
	Murchison Country Zone	President Cr Les Price
	North Metropolitan Zone	Cr Michael Dudek
	North Metropolitan Zone	Cr John Raftis (Deputy)
	North Metropolitan Zone	Cr Bronwyn Smith
	Peel Country Zone	President Cr Mike Walmsley (Deputy)
	Pilbara Country Zone	Cr Wendy McWhirter-Brooks
	South East Metropolitan Zone	Mayor Patrick Hall
	South East Metropolitan Zone	Mayor Terresa Lynes
	South Metropolitan Zone	Cr Cliff Collinson (Deputy)
	South West Country Zone	President Cr Tony Dean
Secretariat	Chief Executive Officer	Mr Nick Sloan
	Executive Director Member Services	Mr Tony Brown
	Executive Manager Infrastructure	Mr Ian Duncan
	Executive Manger Advocacy	Ms Rachel Horton
	Chief Financial Officer	Mr Rick Murray
	Manager Governance and Procurement	Mr James McGovern
	Manager Association and Corporate Governance	Ms Kathy Robertson
	Policy Manager Emergency Management	Ms Rachel Armstrong
	Policy Manager Community	Ms Hannah Godsave
	Policy Manager Planning and Building	Mr Chris Hossen
	South West Country Zone Executive Officer	
	Executive Officer Governance	Ms Meghan Dwyer

1.3 APOLOGIES

Members	Central Country Zone Central Country Zone Great Southern Country Zone Great Southern Country Zone North Metropolitan Zone Northern Country Zone Northern Country Zone Peel Country Zone South Metropolitan Zone South Metropolitan Zone South Metropolitan Zone South Metropolitan Zone	President Cr Phillip Blight President Leigh Ballard (Deputy) Cr Scott Crosby Mayor Greg Stocks (Deputy) Cr Lewis Hutton President Cr Kirrilee Warr President Cr Liz Sudlow (Deputy) Mayor Rhys Williams Mayor Logan Howlett JP Cr Karen Wheatland Cr Barry Winmar Cr Tony Natale (Deputy) Cr Chontelle Stone (Deputy)
Ex Officio	The Rt. Hon. Lord Mayor – City of Perth Local Government Professionals WA President	Lord Mayor Basil Zempilas Mr Anthony Vuleta
Secretariat	Executive Manager Policy	Ms Nicole Matthews

2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

WALGA acknowledges the continuing connection of Aboriginal people to Country, culture and community. We embrace the vast Aboriginal cultural diversity throughout Western Australia, including Undalup (Busselton), on the land of the Wadandi People, where we meet today and we acknowledge and pay respect to Elders past and present.

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

3 ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome to Cr Haeden Miles, newly elected State Councillor for the East Metropolitan Zone.

4 MINUTES

4.1 MINUTES OF THE STATE COUNCIL MEETING HELD 4 SEPTEMBER 2024

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: President Chris Mitchell JP
Seconded: Mayor Patrick Hall

That the Minutes of the WALGA State Council meeting held on [4 September 2024](#) be confirmed as a true and correct record of proceedings.

RESOLUTION 087.5/2024

CARRIED

4.1.1 BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE STATE COUNCIL MEETING HELD 4 SEPTEMBER 2024

Nil

4.2 FLYING MINUTE - SUBMISSION TO MAIN ROADS WA ON THE REVISED WESTERN AUSTRALIA TRAFFIC SIGNALS APPROVAL POLICY AND PROCESS

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: President Chris Antonio
Seconded: President Eddie Smith

That the [Flying Minute - Submission to Main Roads WA on the Revised Western Australia Traffic Signals Approval Policy and Process](#) be confirmed as a true and correct record of proceedings.

RESOLUTION 088.5/2024

CARRIED

4.2.1 BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE FLYING MINUTE- SUBMISSION TO MAIN ROADS WA ON THE REVISED WESTERN AUSTRALIA TRAFFIC SIGNALS APPROVAL POLICY AND PROCESS

Nil

4.3 FLYING MINUTE - SUBMISSION ON DRAFT OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES FOR THE UPCOMING STATE PUBLIC HEALTH PLAN

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: President Chris Antonio
Seconded: President Eddie Smith

That the [Flying Minute - Submission on Draft Objectives and Priorities for the Upcoming State Public Health Plan](#) be confirmed as a true and correct record of proceedings.

RESOLUTION 088.5/2024

CARRIED

4.3.1 BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE FLYING MINUTE- SUBMISSION ON DRAFT OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES FOR THE UPCOMING STATE PUBLIC HEALTH PLAN

Nil

4.4 FLYING MINUTE - SUBMISSION ON THE REGIONAL EDUCATION STRATEGY

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: President Chris Antonio
Seconded: President Eddie Smith

That the [Flying Minute - Submission on the Regional Education Strategy](#) be confirmed as a true and correct record of proceedings.

RESOLUTION 088.5/2024

CARRIED

4.4.1 BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE FLYING MINUTE - SUBMISSION ON THE REGIONAL EDUCATION STRATEGY

Nil

4.5 FLYING MINUTE - SUBMISSION ON THE DERBAL YIRAGAN (SWAN) DJARLGARRO (CANNING) DRAFT RIVER PROTECTION STRATEGY

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: President Chris Antonio
Seconded: President Eddie Smith

That the [Flying Minute - Submission on the Derbal Yiragan \(Swan\) Djarlgarro \(Canning\) Draft River Protection Strategy](#) be confirmed as a true and correct record of proceedings.

RESOLUTION 088.5/2024

CARRIED

4.5.1 BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE FLYING MINUTE- SUBMISSION ON THE DERBAL YIRAGAN (SWAN) DJARLGARRO (CANNING) DRAFT RIVER PROTECTION STRATEGY

Nil

4.6 FLYING MINUTE - SUBMISSION ON THE STATE HAZARD PLAN – HUMAN BIOSECURITY

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: President Chris Antonio
Seconded: President Eddie Smith

That the [Flying Minute - Submission on the State Hazard Plan - Human Biosecurity](#) be confirmed as a true and correct record of proceedings.

RESOLUTION 088.5/2024

CARRIED

4.6.1 BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE FLYING MINUTE - SUBMISSION ON THE STATE HAZARD PLAN – HUMAN BIOSECURITY

Nil

5 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

- President Chris Antonio, President Cr Laurene Bonza, Cr Wendy McWhirter-Brooks and Cr Stephen Strange declared an interest in Item 8.11 LGIS Board Appointments and item 8.15 Selection Committee Minutes – 13 November 2024
- Cr Helen Sadler declared an impartiality interest in Item 8.3 Aboriginal Communities Advocacy Positions.

6 EX OFFICIO REPORTS

6.1 CITY OF PERTH REPORT

The Rt. Hon. Lord Mayor Basil Zempilas was an apology for the meeting.

6.2 LG PROFESSIONALS REPORT

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

7 EMERGING ISSUES

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

8 MATTERS FOR DECISION

8.1 2024 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING RESOLUTIONS

By Meghan Dwyer, Executive Officer Governance

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That:

- 1. the item 71 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.

ATTACHMENT

- [WALGA 2024 Annual General Meeting Minutes](#)

BACKGROUND

The 2024 AGM was held on 9 October. 225 Voting Delegates were in attendance, with 128 Local Governments represented.

Six Member Motions, as follows, were considered and supported by Members at the AGM.

7.1 Amendments to *Cat Act 2011* - Allow Local Governments to Make Local Laws to Contain Cats to the Owner's Property

That WALGA:

1. *Advocate to the State Government to make changes to the Cat Act 2011 to permit local laws to be made to the following effect:*
 - a. *Cats are to be confined to the cat owner's residence premises;*
 - b. *Cats within public places are to be under effective control and not to create a nuisance;*
 - c. *Cats are not allowed on other private properties where the cat does not have the expressed permission of the occupier of that premises, and are not to create a nuisance;*
 - d. *Cats are prohibited from ecologically sensitive areas designated as Cat Prohibited Areas by Absolute majority of Council, and clearly demarcated as such on a sign displayed at the area, without the need to modify the local law.*
2. *Subject to Part 1, Develop a model Cat Local Law in consultation with and agreement with the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries, The Joint Standing Committee on Delegated Legislation, and the WA Feral Cat Working Group that provides for the following:*
 - a. *Cats are to be confined to the cat owner's residence premises, unless under effective control;*
 - b. *Cats within public places are to be under effective control and not to create a nuisance at all times;*
 - c. *Cats are not allowed on other private properties where the cat does not have the expressed permission of the occupier of that premises, and are not to create a nuisance; and*
 - d. *Cats are prohibited from ecologically sensitive areas designated as Cat Prohibited Areas by Absolute Majority of Council, and clearly demarcated as such on a sign displayed at the area, without the need to modify the local law.*

7.2 Advocacy for Legislative Reforms to Counter Land-Banking

That WALGA:

1. *In line with its 2020-2025 Strategic Plan to provide a Sector Vision that enables Local Governments to be agile enhancing community wellbeing and economic prosperity, develops a draft Advocacy Position for Legislative Reforms to address Land-Banking practices including, but not limited to consideration of the following:*
 - a. *Prohibiting demolition of habitable housing until a Development Application (DA) has been approved;*
 - b. *development applications that result in the demolition of existing habitable housing be time limited so that reasonable time periods for project commencement and project completion are conditions of the development application.*
 - c. *provide Local Authorities with the ability to apply a "penalty fee" over and above any differential rating on vacant land, where the time conditions on the development application in (b) have not been met.*
 - d. *Development of a mandatory register of unoccupied residential properties, with the ability of Local Governments to apply rates or levies on long term unoccupied residential properties, which could increase incrementally over time.*

2. *Distributes the draft "WALGA Advocacy Position for Legislative Reforms to counter Land-Banking" to all West Australian Local Authorities for comment, and that a subsequent report be provided for consideration by WALGA Zones.*

7.3 Advocacy for Expansion of Differential Rating to Include Long Term Unoccupied Commercial Buildings (Property Activation Levy)

That WALGA:

1. *Explores expanding Item 2.1.8 Differential Rates of its Advocacy Position Statement to consider inclusion of the following:*
 - a. *Advocating for Local Authorities to have the ability to apply a differential rate to long term unoccupied commercial buildings; and*
 - b. *Developing legislation that requires commercial property owners to demonstrate that in order to avoid the imposition of a differential rate on unoccupied commercial property the property;*
 - i. *is commercially habitable with annual investment in maintenance*
 - ii. *remains connected to essential services*
 - iii. *is undergoing periodic compliance checks and,*
 - iv. *has a plan in place to redevelop or make operational.*
 - c. *Develop legislation that enables Local Government to provide exemptions to the above differential rating based on an approved periodic activation program for the vacant commercial property by the Local Government.*
2. *Distributes the draft expanded WALGA Advocacy Position for Differential Rates to counter long term unoccupied commercial buildings to all West Australian Local Authorities for comment, and that a subsequent report be made available for consideration by WALGA Zones.*

7.4 Action on Asbestos for Western Australia

That WALGA advocates for the state and federal governments to take urgent action to assist Local Governments and their communities in safely removing asbestos, including providing targeting funding programs.

7.5 Addressing the Impracticality of Local Governments Funding Department of Communities and GROH Houses

That WALGA advocates to the State Government for the State Government to fully fund construction and maintenance of Department of Communities (Social) and Government Regional Officer Housing.

7.6 Advocacy for Accessibility

That WALGA develops an Advocacy Position calling for the WA Government to adopt the Liveable Housing Design Standards for accessibility as part of the National Construction Code, consistent with WALGA's 2020-2025 Strategic Plan Sector Vision to enable inclusive Local Governments enhancing community wellbeing and economic prosperity.

COMMENT

Comment on the 2024 AGM resolutions is below:

7.1 Amendments to *Cat Act 2011* - Allow Local Governments to Make Local Laws to Contain Cats to the Owner's Property

The AGM resolution – ‘Amendments to *Cat Act 2011*: Allow Local Governments to Make Local Laws to Contain Cats to the Owner's Property’ – aligns with current WALGA advocacy that the *Cat Act* be reviewed as a matter of priority.

WALGA is currently developing a template Cat Local Law to assist Local Governments to make local laws to the extent of the local law-making powers of section 83 of the *Cat Act 2011*.

It is recommended that this resolution be endorsed.

7.2 Advocacy for Legislative Reforms to Counter Land-Banking

It is recommended that this resolution be referred to the Environment Policy Team and the Governance Policy Team.

7.3 Advocacy for Expansion of Differential Rating to Include Long Term Unoccupied Commercial Buildings (Property Activation Levy)

It is recommended that this resolution be referred to the Governance Policy Team.

7.4 Action on Asbestos for Western Australia

It is recommended that this resolution be referred to the Environment Policy Team.

7.5 Addressing the Impracticality of Local Governments Funding Department of Communities and GROH Houses

It is recommended that this resolution be referred to the People and Place Policy Team.

7.6 Advocacy for Accessibility

It is recommended that this resolution be referred to the Environment Policy Team.

In considering these resolutions from the AGM, State Council and State Council Policy Teams are guided by Clause 22(7) of the [WALGA Constitution](#), as follows:

Where the State Council considers that a direction or decision from an Annual General Meeting has been made without information or a material nature or in circumstances which have materially altered and such direction or decision is not in the best interests of the Association, the State Council may decline to follow that direction or decision and, in that event, the Chief Executive Officer by notice shall advise the Ordinary Members of the decision of the State Council and the reasons for that decision.

Members will be informed of progress on the above issues through Policy Team Reports in future State Council Agendas and through the AGM Status Report in next year's AGM Agenda.

ZONE CONSIDERATION

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

EAST METROPOLITAN ZONE

The East Metropolitan Zone recommends that:

1. State Council do not endorse item 71 Amendments to *Cat Act 2011* - Allow Local Governments to Make Local Laws to Contain Cats to the Owner's Property.
2. State Council endorse that WALGA develop a model Cat Local Law in consultation with and agreement with the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries, The Joint Standing Committee on Delegated Legislation, and the WA Feral Cat Working Group that provides for the following:
 - a. Cats are to be confined to the cat owner's residence premises, unless under effective control;
 - b. Cats within public places are to be under effective control and not to create a nuisance at all times;
 - c. Cats are not allowed on other private properties where the cat does not have the expressed permission of the occupier of that premises, and are not to create a nuisance; and
 - d. Cats are prohibited from ecologically sensitive areas designated as Cat Prohibited Areas by Absolute Majority of Council, and clearly demarcated as such on a sign displayed at the area, without the need to modify the local law.

SECRETARIAT COMMENT

It is established that a Cat Local Law cannot be made under the current statutory framework of the *Cat Act 2012* to achieve the outcome requested in this item. In keeping with the AGM resolution, the development of a Cat Local law for the purposes set out by the East Metropolitan Zone can only occur subject to a review of the *Cat Act 2012*.

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: President Cr Laurene Bonza
Seconded: Cr Helen Sadler

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 Meeting 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.**

RESOLUTION 089.5/2024

CARRIED

8.2 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS ADVOCACY POSITIONS

By Tony Brown, Executive Director Member Services & 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.**
- 4. First-Past-The-Post (FPTP) voting system for internal Council elections.**
- 5. Councils holding elections by means of in-person, postal and/or electronic voting.**
- 6. 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.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The recommendation is to review and adopt policy statements as WALGA's Elections Advocacy Position, supported by sector-wide consultation. Current advocacy states:

2.5.15 Elections

The Local Government sector supports:

- 1. Four year terms with a two year spill**
- 2. Greater participation in Local Government elections**
- 3. The option to hold elections through:**
 - *Online voting*
 - *Postal voting, and*
 - *In-person voting*
- 4. Voting at Local Government elections to be voluntary**

5. *The first past the post method of counting votes*

The Local Government sector opposes the introduction of preferential voting, however if 'first past the post' voting is not retained then optional preferential voting is preferred.

2.5.16 Method of Election of Mayor or President

Local Governments should determine whether their Mayor or President will be elected by the Council or elected by the community.

BACKGROUND

In August, State Council's Governance Policy Team deferred consideration of WALGA's Local Government Advocacy Position until sector-wide consultation was undertaken.

WALGA requested each Local Government provide a decision on the Election Advocacy Positions to see if they accurately reflect the sector's contemporary view. All Local Governments were contacted on 13 September with a request for a Council endorsed response by 28 October. 92 Local Government provided a response which were collated and analysed, with the results informing this report. The respondent Local Governments comprised:

- 16 x Class 1
- 16 x Class 2
- 25 x Class 3
- 35 x Class 4

One Local Government responded advising that they would not be responding to the questions as the State Government has just implemented its electoral reforms and in their opinion, this consultation process is unnecessary.

The following are the results of the consultation on the questions asked.

Question 1 – Participation

- (a) The sector continues to support voluntary voting at Local Government elections.*
OR
(b) The sector supports compulsory voting at Local Governments elections.

Voluntary voting results

68 respondent Local Governments (74%) support voting remain voluntary for Local Government elections. Respondent Local Governments comprised:

- 7 x Class 1
- 5 x Class 2
- 22 x Class 3
- 34 x Class 4

Voluntary Voting			
	Metro	Regional	Total
Class 1	4	3	7
Class 2	1	4	5
Class 3	3	19	22
Class 4	1	33	34
Total	9	59	68

Compulsory voting results

22 respondent Local Governments (24%) support the introduction of compulsory voting. Respondent Local Governments comprised:

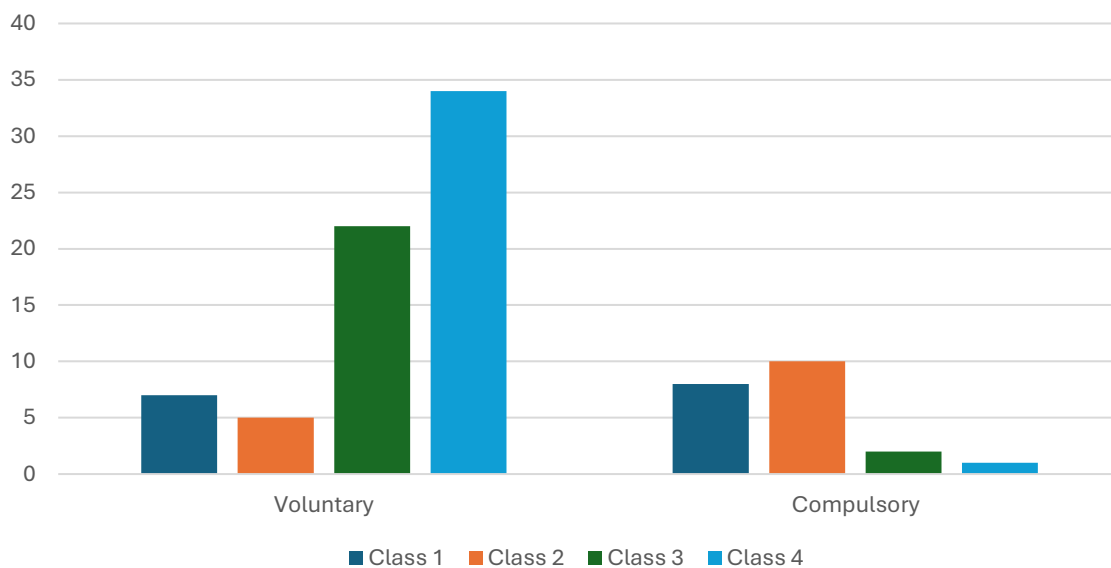
- 9 x Class 1
- 10 x Class 2
- 2 x Class 3
- 1 x Class 4

Compulsory Voting			
	Metro	Regional	Total
Class 1	8	1	9
Class 2	7	3	10
Class 3	1	1	2
Class 4	0	1	1
Total	16	6	22

1 x Class 1 Local Government supported compulsory voting if the voting method was first-past-the-post, therefore it has not been included as being in favour of compulsory voting.

1 x Class 2 Local Government did not take a position on this question.

Voting Participation Preference



WALGA Recommendation:

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

Question 2 – Terms of Office

- (a) *The sector continues to support four-year terms with a two year spill;*
OR
(b) *The sector supports four-year terms on an all in/all out basis.*

98% of respondent Local Governments support four-year terms with a spill of half the Council every 2 years.

WALGA Recommendation:

The Local Government sector supports Councillors serve four-year terms with elections every two years and half of the Council positions spilled at each election.

Question 3 – Voting Methods

- (a) *The sector supports First Past the Post (FPTP) as the preferred voting method for general 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*
OR
(b) *The sector supports Optional Preferential Voting (OPV) as the preferred voting method for general elections.*

59 Local Governments (64%) support WALGA's current advocacy position, as stated directly above as option (a). Respondent Local Governments comprised:

- 9 x Class 1
- 8 x Class 2
- 20 x Class 3
- 22 x Class 4

Supports Current Advocacy			
	Metro	Regional	Total
Class 1	7	2	9
Class 2	4	4	8
Class 3	3	17	20
Class 4	1	21	22
Total	15	44	59

16 Local Governments (17%) support FPTP as the preferred voting method. Respondent Local Governments comprised:

- 4 x Class 1
- 2 x Class 2
- 3 x Class 3
- 7 x Class 4

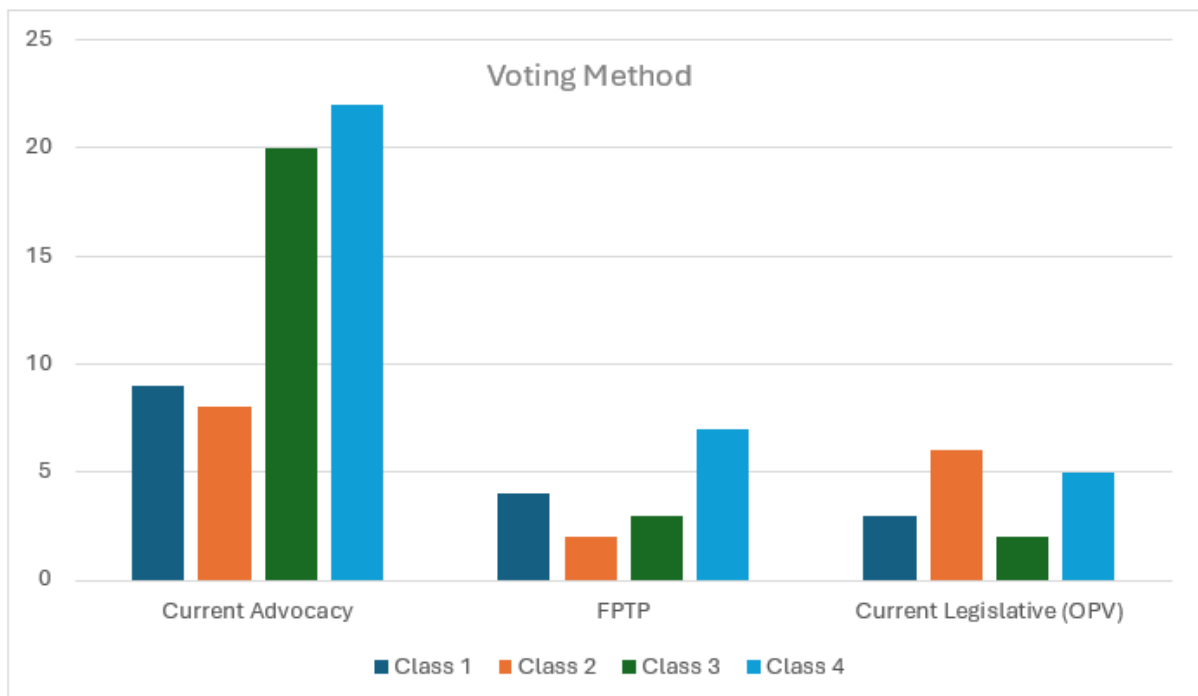
Supports FPTP			
	Metro	Regional	Total
Class 1	3	1	4
Class 2	1	1	2
Class 3	0	3	3
Class 4	0	7	7
Total	4	12	16

16 Local Governments (17%) support Optional Preferential Voting as the preferred voting method. Respondent Local Governments comprised:

- 3 x Class 1
- 6 x Class 2
- 2 x Class 3
- 5 x Class 4

Supports OPV			
	Metro	Regional	Total
Class 1	2	1	3
Class 2	3	3	6
Class 3	1	1	2
Class 4	0	5	5
Total	6	10	16

One Class 4 Local Government supported 'Preferential Voting' over OPV with the inclusion of randomised ballot order.



WALGA Recommendation:

The Local Government sector supports 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.

Question 4 – Internal Elections

(a) The sector supports First Past the Post (FPTP) as the preferred voting method for all internal elections.

OR

(b) The sector supports Optional Preferential Voting (OPV) as the preferred voting method for all internal elections.

86 respondents (93%) favoured FPTP for internal Local Government elections.

WALGA Recommendation:

The Local Government sector supports First-Past-The-Post (FPTP) voting system for internal Council elections.

Question 5 – Voting Accessibility

The sector supports the option to hold general elections through:

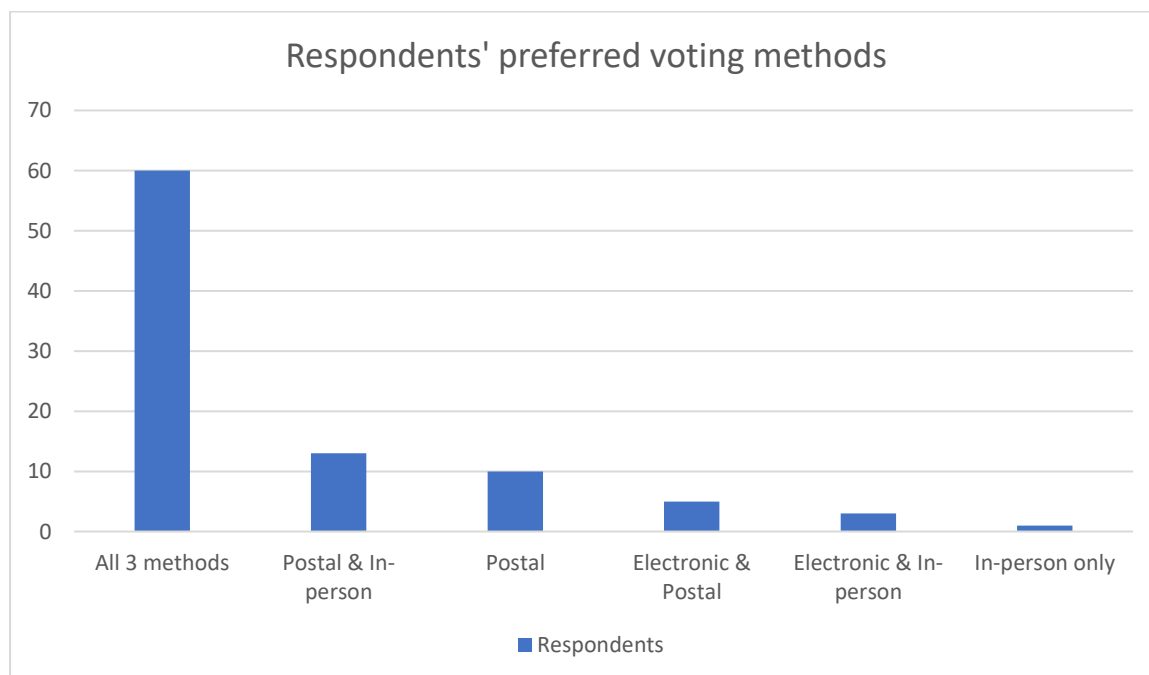
(a) Electronic voting; and/or

(b) Postal voting; and/or

(c) In-Person voting.

60 Local Governments (67%) support elections being held by one of three methods: postal, in-person and/or electronic voting. The remaining 32 respondents favoured a mix of two methods, or by one method only. These methods include:

- electronic or postal voting (13)
- electronic or in-person voting (10)
- postal or in-person voting (5)
- postal voting only (3)
- in-person voting only (1)



WALGA Recommendation:

The Local Government sector supports Councils holding elections by means of in-person, postal and/or electronic voting.

Question 6 – Method of Election of Mayor/President

The sector supports:

- (a) As per the current legislation with no change – Class 1 and 2 local governments directly elect the Mayor or President (election by electors method), with regulations preventing a change in this method.*
- (b) Return to previous legislated provisions – all classes of local governments can decide, by absolute majority, the method for electing their Mayor or President.*
- (c) Apply current provisions to all Bands of Local Governments – apply the election by electors method to all classes of local governments.*

Local Government decides the method of voting results

55 Local Governments (60%) supported the current advocacy in favour of returning to the previous legislative position i.e. that a Local Government decides the method for electing their Mayor/President. Respondent Local Governments comprised:

- 3 x Class 1
- 8 x Class 2
- 19 x Class 3
- 25 x Class 4

Support Current Advocacy - Choice			
	Metro	Regional	Total
Class 1	2	1	3
Class 2	2	6	8
Class 3	4	15	19
Class 4	1	24	25
Total	9	46	55

Mandatory direct election for Class 1 and 2 Local Governments results

33 Local Governments (36%) supported the current legislative position that requires direct election of Mayor/President in Class 1 and Class 2 Local Governments. Respondent Local Governments comprised:

- 12 x Class 1
- 6 x Class 2
- 5 x Class 3
- 10 x Class 4

Support Current Legislation – Direct Election Class 1 & 2			
	Metro	Regional	Total
Class 1	9	3	12
Class 2	4	2	6
Class 3	0	5	5
Class 4	0	10	10
Total	13	20	33

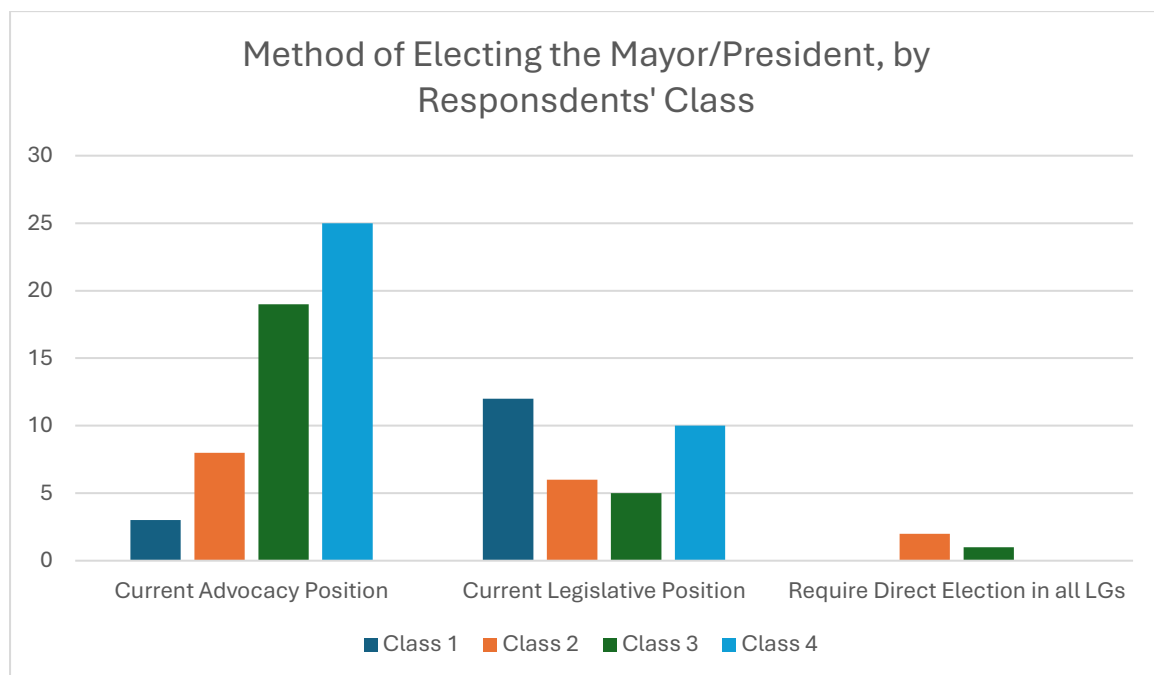
3 Local Governments (3%) supported extending the current legislative position to all Local Governments. Respondent Local Governments comprised:

- 2 x Class 2
- 1 x Class 3

Of the respondent 32 Class 1 and Class 2 Local Governments, affected by the direct election of a Mayor or President:

- 20 support (62%) direct election, and
- 11 support (34%) a return to choice of method of election.

1 Band 1 Council did not respond to this question.



Of the Class 1 and 2 Local Governments, who are the affected Local Governments, 62% support the current provisions. Therefore, the recommendation is as follows:

WALGA Recommendation:

The Local Government sector supports 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.

COMMENT

Feedback from the sector was generally consistent with WALGA's current Elections Advocacy Positions. The WALGA Recommendation has therefore been drafted based on a consensus of submissions from 92 member Local Governments.

ZONE CONSIDERATION

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

CENTRAL METROPOLITAN ZONE

Item 1 - Voluntary participation in non-metropolitan Local Government elections.

An additional Point 2 be added that reads: Mandatory participation in metropolitan Local Government elections.

Item 6 – be amended to read:

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 may elect the President or can choose to have them popularly elected.

SECRETARIAT COMMENT

Item 1: Compulsory Voting - Voluntary Voting

Please refer to the secretariat comment at the end of this item, where all Zones positions are captured.

Item 6: Election of Mayor/President

The Zone is correct, the incorrect wording has been used in the recommendation. The correct wording is:

The Local Government sector supports:

- 6. Current legislative provisions of Mayor/President of Class 1 and Class 2 Local Governments being directly elected by the community and Class 3 and Class 4 Local Governments determining whether its Mayor or President is elected by the Council or by the community.*

NORTH METROPOLITAN ZONE

Item 1 - That the North Metropolitan Zone supports compulsory participation in Local Government elections.

Item 3 - That the North Metropolitan Zone:

1. supports Optional Preferential Voting (OPV) voting system for Local Government elections; and
2. supports the removal of the 'proportional' part of the voting method for general elections.

Item 5 - That the North Metropolitan Zone supports point 5 subject to the removal of the reference to "electronic voting" in point 5.

SECRETARIAT COMMENT

Item 1: Compulsory Voting - Voluntary Voting

Please refer to the secretariat comment at the end of this item, where all Zones positions are captured.

Item 3: First Past the Post - Optional Preferential Voting

The majority of Zones support the First Past the Post voting system for Local Government elections. If Optional Preferential Voting remains as the primary method of voting, the sector supports the removal of the 'proportional' part of the voting method for general elections.

Item 5: Voting Accessibility

The majority of Zones support holding elections by means of in-person, postal and/or electronic voting.

SOUTH METROPOLITAN ZONE

Item 2 - Compulsory participation for Class 1 and 2 Local Governments and voluntary participation for Class 3 and 4 Local Governments in Local Government elections.

Item 3 - Remove Part 3.

SECRETARIAT COMMENT

Item 1: Compulsory Voting - Voluntary Voting

Please refer to the secretariat comment at the end of this item, where all Zones positions are captured.

Item 3: First Past the Post - Optional Preferential Voting

The majority of Zone support the First Past the Post voting system for Local Government elections. If Optional Preferential Voting remains as the primary method of voting, the sector supports the removal of the 'proportional' part of the voting method for general elections.

SOUTH EAST METROPOLITAN ZONE

Item 1 - Compulsory participation for Metropolitan Local Government elections.

Item 6 - Return to previous legislated provisions – all classes of Local Governments can decide, by absolute majority, the method for electing their Mayor or President.

SECRETARIAT COMMENT

Item 1: Compulsory Voting - Voluntary Voting

Please refer to the secretariat comment at the end of this item, where all Zones positions are captured.

Item 6: Election of Mayor/President

The majority of Zones support the current legislative provisions of Mayor/President of Class 1 and Class 2 Local Governments being directly elected by the community and Class 3 and Class 4 Local Governments, determining whether its Mayor or President is elected by the Council or by the community.

GREAT SOUTHERN COUNTRY ZONE

That the Great Southern Country Zone supports the recommendation, subject to WALGA's advocacy addressing the declining service levels and cost increases associated with Local Government elections conducted by the WA Electoral Commission, in particular the time taken to declare the October 2023 Election Results.

SECRETARIAT COMMENT

WALGA State Council and the Zones considered this matter at the September 2024 State Council meeting with State Council resolving as follows:

That WALGA advocate to the State Government:

1. *For an independent Local Government election audit, focusing on the Western Australia Electoral Commission's (WAEC) service delivery and cost allocation methods and costing applications used, to confirm that marginal cost recovery principles are applied and that the costing program is being effectively managed.*
2. *For the requirement for the WAEC to develop and implement Service Level Agreements with Local Governments, similar to those agreements currently used in New South Wales and Victorian Local Government elections and that includes:*
 - a. *transparency of costing methodology,*
 - b. *direct engagement with Local Governments pre and post elections, and*
 - c. *the roles and responsibilities of the WAEC and Local Governments in the conduct of elections.*
3. *For a review of the legislative framework that would allow for more than one election services provider to conduct Local Government elections.*
4. *For a mandated WAEC Report to Parliament specific to Local Government elections post each election cycle, outlining costs, results, voter turnout and matters for improvement both in the conduct of elections and the legislation, if relevant.*

Item 1: Compulsory Voting - Voluntary Voting

The following is a summary of the Zones consideration of this item in the recommendation:

- All Country Zones and the East Metropolitan Zone supported voluntary voting (13 Zones)
- The following Zones supported compulsory voting in the metropolitan region and voluntary voting in the country region:
 - Central Metropolitan Zone
 - South East Metropolitan Zone
- The South Metropolitan Zone supported compulsory voting for Class 1 and 2 Local Governments and Voluntary voting for Class 3 and 4 Local Governments.
- The North Metropolitan Zone supported compulsory voting for all Local Governments.

SECRETARIAT COMMENT

The Zone feedback shows that all Country Zones support voluntary voting and the majority of Metropolitan Zones support compulsory voting.

It would be impractical to have compulsory voting for Class 1 and 2 Local Governments and voluntary voting for Class 3 and 4 Local Governments, as neighbouring Local Governments would have different requirements.

The composite recommendation on this item is to support compulsory voting in the metropolitan area and voluntary voting in the country.

COMPOSITE RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Mayor Patrick Hall
Seconded: President Chris Antonio

That WALGA adopt the following Elections Advocacy Positions:

The Local Government sector supports:

- 1. Compulsory participation in metropolitan Local Government elections and voluntary participation in country 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.*
- 4. First-Past-The-Post (FPTP) voting system for internal Council elections.*
- 5. Councils holding elections by means of in-person, postal and/or electronic voting.*
- 6. Current legislative provisions of Mayor/President of Class 1 and Class 2 Local Governments being directly elected by the community and Class 3 and Class 4 Local Governments determining whether its Mayor or President is elected by the Council or by the community.*

The motion was divided, with item 1 to be voted on, followed by items 2-6 en bloc.

Item 1

The Local Government sector supports:

- 1. Compulsory participation in metropolitan Local Government elections and voluntary participation in country Local Government elections.*

LOST

ALTERNATE MOTION

Moved: President Cr Les Price
Seconded: President Eddie Smith

That item 1 be deferred, and the Secretariat further investigate implications of compulsory and voluntary participation in Local Government elections and report back to State Council.

President Cr Karen Chappel AM JP left the meeting at 11:43am and did not return. Cr Paul Kelly assumed the position of Chair.

RESOLUTION 090.5/2024

CARRIED

Items 2-6

Moved: President Chris Antonio
Seconded: Cr Helen Sadler

That WALGA adopt the following Elections Advocacy Positions:

The Local Government sector supports:

- 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.***
- 4. First-Past-The-Post (FPTP) voting system for internal Council elections.***
- 5. Councils holding elections by means of in-person, postal and/or electronic voting.***
- 6. Current legislative provisions of Mayor/President of Class 1 and Class 2 Local Governments being directly elected by the community and Class 3 and Class 4 Local Governments determining whether its Mayor or President is elected by the Council or by the community.***

AMENDMENT

Moved: Cr Michael Dudek
Seconded: Cr John Raftis

Remove the words "and/or electronic" from item 5.

LOST

THE SUBSTANTIVE MOTION WAS PUT

RESOLUTION 091.5/2024

CARRIED

8.3 ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES ADVOCACY POSITIONS

By Rebecca Hicks, Policy Officer Community

Cr Helen Sadler declared an impartiality interest in this item.

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.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- The replacement of Advocacy Position 3.1.2 Reconciliation with an updated position.
- The removal of Advocacy Position 3.1.3 Constitutional Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.
- The replacement of 3.1.4 *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2021* and South West Native Title Settlement with a new Aboriginal Heritage Protection Advocacy Position.

BACKGROUND

WALGA has reviewed its Aboriginal Community positions to ensure they remain representative and reflect contemporary approaches to key issues in Aboriginal Affairs policy and legislation as they relate to Local Government.

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 positions and that 3.1.3 Constitutional Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People be removed.

The People and Place Policy Team considered and endorsed the proposed advocacy position changes at its meeting on 25 October.

3.1.2 Reconciliation

It is proposed that WALGA's **current** position:

The Association supports the efforts of the Local Government sector to recognise and respect Aboriginal cultural practices and places of meaning, through the development of Reconciliation Action Plans.

be **replaced** with:

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.*

3.1.3 Constitutional Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People

In 2022 the Australian Government announced a referendum seeking support for a constitutional amendment to establish an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice to Parliament. In March 2023 State Council endorsed the **current** position:

WALGA:

1. *Supports respectful conversations about constitutional recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and the Voice to Parliament.*
2. *Requests that the Commonwealth Government ensure that Local Governments and communities are kept informed on the proposal.*

The referendum was held on 14 October 2023. The proposal was not carried.

It is proposed that this position be **removed**.

3.1.4 Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2021 and South West Native Title Settlement

It is proposed that WALGA's **current** position:

WALGA acknowledges Noongar people as the traditional owners of the South West Region. Local Government is supportive of conserving and protecting the State's Aboriginal cultural heritage.

WALGA supports the introduction of the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2021 which will provide a modern framework for the recognition, protection, conservation and preservation of Aboriginal cultural heritage and recognises the fundamental importance of Aboriginal cultural heritage to Aboriginal people. The State Government must ensure that:

- 1. The legislation balances the need to protect Aboriginal cultural heritage with the requirement for Local Government to undertake activities in a timely and affordable manner;*
- 2. The implementation and ongoing operation of the legislative system for the protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage is adequately resourced to ensure that all parties have the capacity, capability and resources to discharge their statutory obligations;*
- 3. Support is provided to Local Governments to ensure that they have the resources, capacity and capability to comply with a complex legislative framework; and*
- 4. Local Governments have the ability to deliver essential infrastructure works and emergency activities efficiently and effectively in order to maintain public safety.*
- 5. Regional local Aboriginal people are actively engaged in the Local Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Services (LACHS) groups; and*
- 6. The various Prescribed Body Corporates (PBCs) be required to actively seek out local regional members to be included in the consultation and decision making process.*

be **replaced** with:

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.*

COMMENT

Reconciliation

The revised position focuses on WALGA's role in supporting members in reconciliation matters without making reference to specific tools and frameworks. This reflects that reconciliation can be progressed in many different ways, including but not limited to, RAPs, and is best progressed in a way that responds and reflects local context and needs.

Constitutional Recognition

WALGA State Council endorsed Advocacy Position 3.1.3 Constitutional Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People in March 2023 ahead of the referendum, held on 14 October 2023. The referendum, which proposed an alteration to the Constitution to recognise the First Peoples of Australia by establishing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice, was defeated.

Aboriginal Cultural Heritage and South West Native Title Settlement

The *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2021* commenced on 1 July 2023 and was repealed on 15 November 2023, replaced by an amended *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972*. WALGA has prioritised working with State Government to ensure the voice of Local Government is represented throughout these legislation changes. This work is ongoing. The proposed revised position reflects the sectors priorities in the implementation of this legislation.

WALGA's current position on the South West Native Title Settlement (SWNTS) was endorsed by State Council in July 2019, ahead of the Agreement commencement in February 2021. The SWNTS is the most comprehensive native title agreement in Australian history, reaching across 101 Western Australian Local Governments. Local Governments are not a signatory to the Settlement. Since its commencement, the Settlement has become established, including the appointment of six Noongar Regional Corporations that are increasingly managing Noongar peoples' affairs under the Settlement's six Indigenous Land Use Agreements. In this context, it is no longer considered necessary to have an advocacy position that makes specific reference to the SWNTS.

ZONE CONSIDERATION

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

GASCOYNE COUNTRY ZONE

That a new point d. be inserted as follows:

- d. Local Governments are exempt from the financial burden of Traditional Owner engagement*

SECRETARIAT COMMENT

WALGA has prioritised working with State Government to ensure the voice of Local Government is represented throughout the heritage legislation changes over the last 18 months. Advocacy is centred on the need to ensure processes and requirements on Local Governments to protect Aboriginal cultural heritage are balanced with the need to undertake activities in a timely and affordable manner. This work is ongoing and captured in sections 2b and 2c of the revised Advocacy Position. The Gascoyne Country Zone amendment has therefore not been included in the recommendation.

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: President Chris Antonio

Seconded: Cr Haeden Miles

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.*

RESOLUTION 092.5/2024

CARRIED

8.4 FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ADVOCACY POSITION

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.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

It is proposed that the **existing** Advocacy Position **3.10.1 Family Domestic Violence:**

1. *WA Local Governments recognise the prevalence, seriousness and preventable nature of family and domestic violence and the roles that Local Governments can play in addressing gender equity and promoting respectful relationships in their local community.*
2. *WALGA advocates to the State Government:*
 - a. *to work with Local Government in defining the role and responsibilities and expectations of Local Governments in family and domestic violence.*
 - b. *for adequate funding for family and domestic violence programs and services, particularly in regional areas.*

- c. *for appropriate resources and funding be allocated to Local Governments to implement any particular roles and actions addressing family and domestic violence as defined in the State Strategy.*
 - d. *to provide support to Local Government in the broader rollout of the Prevention Toolkit for Local Government.*
 - e. *To continue advocacy to the Commonwealth Government for additional funding and support.*
3. *WALGA organises presentations for Local Governments that address family and domestic violence, as part of relevant events or webinars.*

be **replaced** with:

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.*

BACKGROUND

The current family and domestic and violence (FDV) Advocacy Position was endorsed in 2020 following a sector survey and WALGA [Discussion Paper](#).

Reviewing the FDV Advocacy Position was identified as a priority for 2024 in the WALGA community portfolio Advocacy Position Review Plan. This reflects the prioritisation of the issue by both the Australian and State Governments, developments within the policy environment since the last WALGA Advocacy Position review and recent/continuing high-profile incidents that have again shone a spotlight on this issue.

COMMENT

The Family and Domestic Violence Advocacy Position has been updated to:

- make a stronger public statement on the Local Government sector's collective condemnation of Family Domestic Violence;
- provide a framework for WALGA advocacy to the Australian and State Government, without impinging on member organisations; and
- call for funding and integrated approaches to address family and domestic violence without identifying which organisations are based placed to implement primary prevention approaches.

While there is commonly held support for the reduction and ultimate end of FDV, there is no uniform sector approach to, or view on, the role or responsibility of Local Government. Some WA Local Governments have acted through policy development and community initiatives aimed towards the primary prevention of family and domestic violence. It is also acknowledged there are some Local Governments involved with the direct delivery of family domestic violence prevention services and interconnecting services such as homelessness support.

The revised position provides an appropriate 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.

Almost all State and Commonwealth documents reference the role Local Government can play in primary prevention through its existing partnerships, networks, and community reach. Primary prevention seeks to address family and domestic violence by identifying and challenging the social norms, practices and attitudes that drive violence against women.

The proposed Advocacy Position calls for funding and integrated approaches to address family and domestic violence without identifying which organisations are best placed to implement. This approach uses the language of key strategic documents around approaches to primary prevention and the reduction of family and domestic violence.

GOLDFIELDS ESPERANCE COUNTRY ZONE

The GVROC would like the wording changed in the paragraph to remove the words "against women" at the end as the violence can be against all genders and ages. Thus, paragraph should read:

Almost all State and Commonwealth documents reference the role Local Government can play in primary prevention through its existing partnerships, networks, and community reach. Primary prevention seeks to address family and domestic violence by identifying and challenging the social norms, practices and attitudes that drive violence.

SECRETARIAT COMMENT

WALGA acknowledges that the wording "against women" at the end of the paragraph in the body of the paper only reflects a proportion of victim-survivors. The wording in the recommended Advocacy Position revision only makes refer to the term "family and domestic violence" as the most inclusive definition and therefore provides for the full intent.

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: President Chris Antonio
Seconded: President Chris Mitchell JP

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.***

RESOLUTION 093.5/2024

CARRIED

8.5 CONTAINER DEPOSIT SYSTEM POLICY STATEMENT AND ADVOCACY POSITION

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.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

It is proposed that the **existing** [Policy Statement](#) and [Advocacy Position](#):

7.6 Container Deposit Systems

Local Government supports the immediate introduction of a Container Deposit Scheme in Western Australia.

be **replaced** with:

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.*
 - 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.*

BACKGROUND

WALGA's Container Deposit Systems (CDS) Policy Statement and Advocacy Position were first endorsed in 2006 and reviewed and amended in 2008. WALGA has used the CDS Policy Statement to inform national and state-based advocacy, including significant input into the development of the WA Scheme. The current Advocacy Position ([7.6 Container Deposit Systems](#)) and many of the elements in the Policy Statement have been achieved.

The State Government undertook consultation on the expansion of the material accepted by the Scheme in early 2023. WALGA's [Submission](#), and subsequent advocacy, has focused on the inclusion of wine and spirit bottles as a minimum.

The Municipal Waste Advisory Council (MWAC) endorsed the new Advocacy Position at its meeting on 23 October.

COMMENT

Since its introduction in October 2020, the WA CDS, Containers for Change, has reduced litter, significantly increased material recovery across the state and generated more than 820 jobs, with upwards of 32 per cent of these being people with disabilities, Aboriginal people and/or the long-term unemployed. The Scheme supports State Waste Strategy objectives by promoting the recovery of more, and higher quality resources, from waste.

Local Government acknowledges the accomplishments of the WA Containers for Change Scheme and the associated benefits delivered in its initial years of operation. However ongoing assessment and development is required for the Scheme to continue to deliver and expand on these outcomes into the future.

An updated CDS position is proposed to provide a basis for WALGA's continuing advocacy to address the following Scheme issues and priorities identified by the Local Government Sector:

a. Maintain a resource recovery target of 85% for eligible containers and a focus on litter reduction

Local Government supports a CDS that maximises resource recovery a key objective, supported by legislation to redeem 85% of eligible containers from the Western Australian marketplace.

Local Government considers the initial success of the CDS in reducing litter should be built upon through expansion of the Scheme to include a wider range of materials, and further community engagement to incentivise involvement.

b. Expand the range of containers accepted in the Scheme

Local Government considers that a CDS should be based on the recovery of given material types and therefore be able to encompass, but not be limited to, all metals, glass, liquid paper board, plastic (PET, HDPE and LDPE) and composite containers. Expanding the range of containers currently accepted in the Scheme would contribute to the recovery of higher rates of quality materials and provide further incentive for householders to divert these materials from landfill, particularly in areas where kerbside recycling may not be accessible.

c. Ensure national alignment of the materials covered by the Scheme and consistent messaging

Given the national nature of product distribution, and various Schemes in place nationally, it is important that where possible consideration is given to national norms in key areas such as system objectives, deposit amounts, labelling and material and container types covered.

d. Maintain a State-based and managed Scheme

In the absence of a consistent national scheme, individual jurisdictions have successfully developed and implemented State or Territory based schemes. Considering this, Local Government does not support moving to a nationally managed scheme at this current time.

- e. *Review of deposit amount to appropriately incentivise community involvement*
Local Government supports ongoing assessment and review of the Scheme's ability to incentivise involvement, including deposit amount and Scheme accessibility. Comparison of container deposit schemes worldwide shows higher overall return rates for schemes offering higher deposit values, coupled with a convenient and accessible return network.
- f. *Increase the number of refund and donation points to ensure community access, including in public places and at events*
Local Government considers an effective Scheme should have refund points that meet community need, are conveniently located and accessible to people of all abilities. The ability to access refund or donation points in public places and at events is essential to a high return rate.
- g. *Ensure refund points are financially sustainable*
Refund points must be adequately resourced by the Scheme Coordinator to ensure they are financially sustainable.
- h. *Leverage the refund point collection network to provide drop off points for other materials covered by effective product stewardship schemes*
The majority of the State's population has access to, and awareness of, the CDS refund point network. This could be leveraged to provide collection options for material which cannot be processed through kerbside bins and is covered by effective product stewardship schemes. Local Government supports leveraging the existing network and associated economies of scale to further improve material recovery rates across the State.

ZONE CONSIDERATION

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

GOLDFIELDS ESPERANCE COUNTRY ZONE

In relation to this item GVROC requests:

1. WALGA to advocate for the range of containers accepted, particularly wine bottles and spirit bottles, to be brought forward prior to the existing planned date of 2027, as there are ongoing issues in the Goldfields Towns with anti-social street drinking and the resultant broken glass from wine bottles and spirits that impact the local communities. Including these bottles sooner than later may assist in getting these bottles deposited for a refund rather than smashed on the ground.
2. Consideration by Government to subsidise industry to cover the flow on costs of this program from being passed on to the end consumer, particularly with consideration to the current cost of living issues faced by people.

SECRETARIAT COMMENT

Comments from the Goldfields Esperance Country Zone are appreciated. The timeframe for the inclusion of wine and spirit bottles have been brought forward to 2026, as incorporated in the composite recommendation below. Some lead time will be needed for these products to be included in the Scheme as there are a range of operational considerations which need to be worked through, including the storage space at refund points, upgrading of relevant equipment and transport logistics for products.

The concern regarding cost of living is understood however, the principle of product stewardship is that the producer and consumer directly pays for end-of-life management rather than the costs being borne by society at large as is currently the case. Implementing these Schemes will help to reduce costs across many different areas of impact and expense for Local Government, which is currently being covered by all ratepayers.

COMPOSITE RECOMMENDATION

Moved: President Cr Les Price
Seconded: President Paige McNeil

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. 2026: 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.*

RESOLUTION 094.5/2024

CARRIED

8.6 BUS STOP INFRASTRUCTURE AGREEMENT

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.

ATTACHMENT

- Partnership Agreement between WALGA and the Public Transport Authority: Defining the Roles and Responsibilities for the Planning, Installation and Maintenance of Bus Stop Infrastructure- 2024/25 to 2028/29

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

[Advocacy Position](#) 5.9 Bus Stop Infrastructure:

The Local Government sector supports the Partnership Agreement between the Public Transport Authority (PTA) and Local Governments that clarifies the roles and responsibilities for the installation and maintenance of bus stop infrastructure in the Perth and Peel region.

BACKGROUND

The Partnership Agreement (the Agreement) defines the roles and responsibilities of the Public Transport Authority (PTA) and Local Governments for planning, installation and maintenance of bus stop infrastructure in areas with regular public transport SmartRider ticketed services. Previous Agreements have successfully guided the management of bus stop infrastructure and provided funding to Local Governments for the installation and maintenance of bus shelters. The first Partnership Agreement between WALGA and the PTA was signed in 2015 and a second Agreement was in place from 2018/19 to 2022/23. WALGA, in consultation with Local Governments and the PTA has drafted a new Agreement for the period 2024/25 to 2028/29.

The main items that are covered in the Agreement include:

- Co-funding scheme for new bus shelters
- Contribution to bus shelter maintenance costs
- Principles of agreement
- Roles and responsibilities clarification
- Adding, removing, upgrading or modifying bus stop infrastructure

COMMENT

WALGA has drafted a new Agreement in consultation with the PTA based on input from Local Governments.

To inform the negotiations for a new Agreement, consultations were held with eighteen participating Local Governments from Perth metropolitan and regional areas, conducted both in person and online. Discussions focused on functionality of the existing agreement and local requirements. Feedback from these sessions informed the drafting of a revised Agreement and after further consultation with the PTA a final draft was prepared.

The new Agreement includes the following significant revisions:

- Increased funding to a total of \$550,000 per year for each of the Bus Shelter Subsidy Program (BSSP) and the Bus Shelter Maintenance Assistance Scheme (BSMAS).
- The PTA retains responsibility for upgrading all bus stops to meet the *Commonwealth Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport*.
- Commitment to sharing information that will assist the parties to fulfill their obligations.
- Increased flexibility, under the Bus Stop Accessibility Works Program for the PTA to provide pedestrian connectivity to existing footpaths including the construction of required pram ramps where the footpath is on the other side of the road.
- In some circumstances, the Local Government may be required to contribute to the PTA's cost of constructing the pathway connection or other pedestrian infrastructure improvements.
- Where new land developments are planned, Local Governments commit to ensuring developers liaise with the PTA and the Local Government regarding the proposed location of bus stops and terminus before commencing construction works. This ensures that bus stop locations are strategically planned to effectively serve the needs of future residents.
- Where the PTA proposes the installation of bus stop infrastructure at a location with decorative paving or non-standard kerbing, the PTA will liaise with the Local Government and endeavour to match the style of the surrounding paving and kerbs. Similar eligibility criteria apply to upgrading Core Bus Stop Infrastructure.

- Road resurfacing works can reduce kerb heights resulting in the bus stop no longer meeting the *Commonwealth Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002* leading to the need for costly rectification works. Schedule 4 has been added detailing arrangements that are to apply when Local Government intends to undertake road resurfacing works that may affect kerb heights. Minimum kerb heights are specified in the Schedule.
- Local Governments agree to require that proponents of private works impacting bus stops have consulted with the PTA before approval.
- Local Government verge policies are required to consider bus stops, and the impact verge treatments may have on a passenger boarding area. Landscaping must not be allowed to render an existing or planned bus stop non-compliant with Disability Standards.
- Installing new Ancillary Bus Stop Infrastructure, such as shelters and seats may make a compliant bus stop non-compliant, so it is the responsibility of Local Governments to consult with PTA to ensure planned works do not impact bus stop compliance with Disability Standards. If PTA becomes aware of Ancillary Bus Stop Infrastructure obstructing a bus stop area and causing non-compliance, it will notify the relevant Local Government. Should adjustments not be made within two weeks, PTA will arrange modifications, with all associated costs recouped from the Local Government.
- Where a Local Government prefers to retain a bus shelter at a location that does not meet BSSP criteria, the PTA will fund 50% of the cost of a new bus shelter, up to the maximum as per this Agreement, subject to available funding within the BSSP. Alternatively, the Local Government may choose to fund the full cost of a replacement bus shelter if the PTA does not have sufficient funding available.
- The parties will endeavour to share their annual works programs where such works may impact the operations of the other party. The PTA will provide affected Local Governments with their proposed annual Bus Stop Accessibility Works Program (BSAWP) by March each year so that Local Governments can budget and plan any associated works.
- In circumstances where urgent bus shelter maintenance is required, the PTA will make the bus stop location safe at its own cost.

The Infrastructure Policy Team endorsed the draft Agreement for consideration by State Council.

ZONE CONSIDERATION

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

CENTRAL METROPOLITAN ZONE

1. That WALGA seek to negotiate with the PTA to:
 - a. Remove the word "typically" from clauses describing PTA's activities;
 - b. Seek indexation of funding provided under the Bus Shelter Subsidy Program (BSSP) and Bus Shelter Maintenance Assistance Scheme (BSMAS) during or at the end of the Agreement;
 - c. Request the PTA to expand the range of shelter designs to offer shade when installed in different orientations.
2. That the Central Metropolitan Zone endorse the proposed Bus Stop Infrastructure Partnership Agreement between WALGA and the Public Transport Authority 2024/25 to 2028/29 following conclusion of the above negotiations.
3. That WALGA develop an advocacy position that Commonwealth Disability Standards have a provision for minimum standards of public transport shelter.

SECRETARIAT COMMENT

This Agreement is intended to clearly communicate expectations regarding the actions and activities of each party. The clarity and intent would be improved by the proposed changes to the text. In previous discussions, PTA officers have highlighted that at times they are directed by Executive Government regarding particular actions in relation to bus stops, and in these cases may not follow their normal processes.

The BSSP and BSMAS are funded from the Consolidated Account so will be subject to annual budget allocations. However, the principle of indexation may be able to be included in the document, to improve certainty.

The ability to orientate a shelter to provide shelter and shade without compromising access to the boarding area can be challenging, particularly in confined road reserves. Although likely to be the most cost-effective option, there is no obligation on a Local Government to choose a shelter from the standard PTA range. Expansion of the range of shelter designs risks increasing costs overall.

GOLDFIELDS ESPERANCE COUNTRY ZONE

The GVROC believes that the requirement for Local Government to contribute to the PTA's cost of constructing pathway connection or other infrastructure improvements is another example of State Government cost shifting to Local Government. While State Government funding is made available to assist, the pool of funds is not adequate to cover all costs across the State and should be increased substantially so that there is no cost or burden placed on Local Government.

SECRETARIAT COMMENT

Local Governments may choose to provide paths within the road reserve but are not required to do so.

Under this proposed Agreement, the PTA accepts responsibility for (ultimately) upgrading all bus stops to achieve compliance to the Disability Standards. This is ambiguous or a Local Government responsibility in other Australian jurisdictions.

The proposed Agreement seeks to clarify the extent of the work that PTA will undertake as part of the Bus Stop Accessibility works program. The previous agreement defined the extent of this work to be "up to three metres of connecting pathway."

Recognising that in a small number of circumstances a more flexible approach is required, the proposed new Agreement adds, “or a distance otherwise agreed between the parties.” In some situations, the nearest path may be hundreds of metres or even kilometres away. PTA has not accepted responsibility for funding and building new paths, and this Agreement does not place any obligation on a Local Government to build a new path. There are many bus stops that have been upgraded by the PTA to be compliant to the Disability Standards that are not connected to any footpath.

Similarly, if the Local Government requires the use of a particular decorative paving, subject to negotiation, the PTA and Local Government may agree to sharing that additional cost.

COMPOSITE RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Cr Helen Sadler
Seconded: Cr Stephen Strange

That State Council:

1. **Provides in principle support for the proposed Bus Stop Infrastructure Partnership Agreement between WALGA and the Public Transport Authority 2024/25 to 2028/29.**
2. **Request the WALGA Secretariat negotiate with the Public Transport Authority seeking:**
 - a. **Deletion of the word “typically” from Clauses 6.2, 8.1 (ii) and 8.6 (i)**
 - b. **Indexation of funding provided under the Bus Shelter Subsidy Program (BSSP) and Bus Shelter Maintenance Assistance Scheme (BSMAS) during or at the end of the Agreement**
3. **Authorise the WALGA President to sign the Bus Stop Infrastructure Partnership Agreement, on the completion of best endeavours to negotiate with the Public Transport Authority.**
4. **Refer the request for WALGA develop an advocacy position that Commonwealth Disability Standards have a provision for minimum standards of public transport shelter to the Infrastructure Policy Team.**

RESOLUTION 095.5/2024

CARRIED

Partnership Agreement between WALGA and the Public Transport Authority:

**Defining the Roles and Responsibilities for the
Planning, Installation and Maintenance of Bus
Stop Infrastructure – 2024/25 to 2028/29**

Version	Revision Date	Author	Summary of changes
V.1	January- February 2024	N.Nili	Add/Revise content for new Agreement 2024/25 to 2029/30

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1. Preliminaries

The Public Transport Authority (PTA) and Local Governments in Western Australia recognise the importance of public transport in achieving efficient personal mobility and the importance of making public transport an attractive option for West Australians. This Agreement will assist in ensuring that investments by the PTA and Local Government in bus stop infrastructure deliver good value to the community. This Agreement is made subject to the provisions of the *Local Government Act 1995*; the *Public Transport Act 2003* and the *Land Administration Act 1997*.

2. Parties to this Agreement

In entering this Partnership Agreement both State and Local Government recognise that they have an interest and role in the provision and improving bus stop infrastructure, and pathways to bus stops for the people of Western Australia.

The signatories to this Partnership Agreement are:

- Public Transport Authority of Western Australia: Managing Director; and
- Local Government: President, Western Australian Local Government Association (WALGA).

3. Definitions

Ancillary Bus Stop Infrastructure means fixtures and fittings which are erected or installed immediately adjacent to Core Bus Stop Infrastructure, including (without limitation) bus shelters, bins, seats, and footpaths.

Consultation means seeking and providing information to/from the other party regarding plans that may affect the other party's current or proposed infrastructure; for each party to have regard for advice provided and offer feedback concerning the final decision.

Core Bus Stop Infrastructure means a bus stop pole, a level concrete hard-stand passenger boarding area, which if compliant with current Disability Standards would include a kerb at the approved height (typically between 170mm and 190mm), tactile ground surface indicators and approximately three metres of connecting concrete

pathway (or a distance otherwise agreed between the parties), in a form consistent with the Public Transport Bus Stop Design Guidelines specified in Schedule 1.

Disability Standards means the Commonwealth Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport ('Disability Standards') 15 August 2002 which created a legal duty under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (DDA) to construct all new bus stops to this standard and to progressively upgrade all existing bus stops to achieve full compliance to the Disability Standards.

Infrastructure Commercial Agreement means a legally binding contractual agreement between Local Government and another commercial entity that places an obligation upon that entity to provide, design, construct, install, and maintain infrastructure such as bus shelters, seats and rubbish bins (and may include payment obligations) for a fixed period of time in return for receiving the advertising rights on the relevant infrastructure.

Local Government means a local government established under section 2.5 of the *Local Government Act 1995*.

Maintenance means all activities undertaken to preserve infrastructure in serviceable condition, including restoration of existing items which have been damaged but can be repaired without replacement with entirely new infrastructure (e.g. painting, replacing broken, damaged or scratched panels/glass etc).

Partnership Agreement means this agreement.

PTA means the Public Transport Authority of Western Australia, a body corporate established under section 5 of the PTA Act.

PTA Act means the *Public Transport Authority Act 2003* (WA).

Road Reserve means the area of land provided under section 55(1)(a) of the *Land Administration Act 1997* typically from the property boundary on one side to the property boundary on the other side provided for public travel, including roads, lanes, car parks, footpaths, bridges, reserves, and nature strips.

Upkeep means updating timetable and signage information at bus stops which is undertaken by the PTA.

4. Preamble

This Partnership Agreement provides the general framework through which the planning, installation, and maintenance of bus stop infrastructure on Road Reserves will operate throughout Western Australia. The Partnership Agreement is based on negotiations and discussions between the parties and the general template for State/Local Government Partnership Agreements. This Agreement applies to Local Governments with regular public transport SmartRider ticketed services operating in its boundaries.

This Partnership Agreement is predicated on PTA and Local Governments mutual understanding of their legislated functions and histories of collaboration (including financial collaboration) with respect to bus stop infrastructure in the Road Reserve.

4.1. Road Reserve

Responsibility for assets and infrastructure located in the Road Reserve is complicated in nature making the issue of responsibility for bus stop infrastructure similarly complicated. Most suburban bus stops are located in the Road Reserve which is provided under Section 55 (1)(a) of the *Land Administration Act 1997*.

Under section 16 of the *Main Roads Act 1930*, the Commissioner of Main Roads is responsible for care, control and management of land over which a main road or highway is declared (that is the area incorporating the Road Reserve).

Under Sections 3.53(2) and 3.1 of the *Local Government Act 1995*, the relevant Local Government is responsible for controlling and managing roads that do not fall within the control of the Commissioner of Main Roads (that is all other roads).

Complicating the circumstance is the fact that various Government Agencies access the Road Reserve for the purpose of providing services for the benefit of the whole community. Common examples include infrastructure required for the provision of water, electricity, gas, and telecommunications where the entity installing the infrastructure in the Road Reserve is responsible for its ongoing maintenance. Similarly, for any bus stop infrastructure located in the Road Reserve, the owner of the asset is responsible for its ongoing care and maintenance.

4.2. History of Bus Stop Infrastructure

Historically, the PTA (and its predecessors such as the Metropolitan (Perth) Passenger Transport Trust and the Department of Transport) has been responsible for determining the locations of bus stops in the Road Reserve and for installing and maintaining them. Local Government has traditionally taken responsibility for the installation and maintenance of Ancillary Bus Stop Infrastructure located in the Road Reserve.

However, in recognition of the particular enhanced amenity derived from bus shelters for intending passengers and the general community, the State Government has traditionally provided funding support (using various funding support arrangements) for Local Governments to provide bus shelter infrastructure located in the Road Reserve.

4.3. Disability Standards

The PTA has undertaken extensive community consultation with various groups representing people with disabilities to establish a set of standard bus stop layouts applicable to a variety of circumstances typically encountered, as detailed in the PTA Bus Stop Design Guidelines in Schedule 1.

In December 2009, the State Government formally recognised its obligations under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and the Disability Standards by providing funding to the PTA to progressively upgrade Core Bus Stop Infrastructure at all bus stops across the State to achieve compliance to the Disability Standards.

The parties acknowledge that there are compounding legislative uncertainties with respect to the interaction between the *PTA Act 2003*, the *Land Administration Act 1997* and the *Local Government Act 1995*. This Partnership Agreement provides a framework for each party to work collaboratively.

5. Principles

The following principles will be achieved through open and honest consultation, engagement, communication, participation, cooperation and collaboration between the parties at both the strategic and operational levels.

All parties are committed to a partnership approach in delivering Disability Standards-compliant bus stop infrastructure that connects with the local footpath network wherever possible.

The parties recognise that a partnership approach between State and Local Government:

- is essential for the continued delivery of Core Bus Stop Infrastructure and Ancillary Bus Stop Infrastructure for the Western Australian community;
- will provide a high level operational framework for the parties to follow; and
- will be sensitive and responsive to the functions, needs and constraints of both spheres of government.

The parties involved will:

- identify and understand the roles and responsibilities of both spheres of government within this Partnership Agreement;
- ensure that these roles are considered and respected in the decision making process;
- commit to open and timely communication on all aspects of this Partnership Agreement;
- undertake purposeful consultation at mutually agreed stages to facilitate understanding and agreement;
- recognise that new partnership agreements can be initiated by either State or Local Government;
- promote a realistic approach to funding and resource issues;
- commit to sharing information that will assist the parties to fulfil their obligations;
- utilise a transparent approach where changes to roles, responsibilities and budgets are negotiated and agreed and resources necessary to implement changes are identified; and
- adopt clearly defined reporting, dispute resolution, and review mechanisms.

6. PTA programs and subsidy arrangements

6.1. Bus Stop Accessibility Works Program

In January 2010, the PTA formally commenced its Bus Stop Accessibility Works Program (BSAWP) which aims to upgrade a minimum of 600 bus stops each year to achieve compliance to the Disability Standards. The BSAWP is a long-term program to upgrade all public bus stops in the State to comply with Disability Standards, costing the State in the order of \$100 million.

Works under the BSAWP requires considerable effort in planning and design before site works commence and the PTA will:

- consult and work with the relevant Local Government about the planned works with the intention of minimising any adverse impacts from these works (as far as reasonably practicable); and
- notify nearby residents about any planned works prior to commencement.

Any issues or complaints about these works received by Local Government from the public or affected residents should be directed as soon as reasonably practicable to the PTA for resolution by the PTA.

BSAWP works typically include:

- installation of a bus stop pole or information module in correct position;
- construction of a level concrete passenger boarding area with associated approved kerb height;
- installation of tactile ground surface indicators in the approved layout;
- construction of approximately three metres of connecting concrete pathway (or a distance otherwise agreed between the parties); and
- where the existing local footpath is located on the other side of the road, construction of required pram ramps and pedestrian connections (pedestrian improvements).

Note: In some circumstances, the Local Government may be required to contribute to the PTA's cost of constructing the pathway connection or the other pedestrian improvements.

Bus stop upgrades are planned and managed by the PTA with external contractors undertaking all site works. Prior to undertaking any works, the PTA will firstly

validate that the existing bus stop location meets all of its safety, operational and community requirements and that it can be physically upgraded to comply with the Disability Standards. If these requirements cannot be met, the PTA will typically select an alternative suitable bus stop location and consult with the relevant Local Government about that location.

Further details and typical bus stop design scenarios are detailed in Schedule 1 – PTA Bus Stop Design Guidelines.

6.2. Bus Shelter Subsidy Program

The Bus Shelter Subsidy Program (BSSP) is administered by the PTA and provides funding in approved circumstances for Local Governments (and other entities) for the purpose of installing bus shelters.

Annual funding for the BSSP is currently limited to \$550,000 per annum and applications are considered by the PTA on an ongoing basis using criteria detailed in Schedule 2. The allocation of BSSP funds is a transparent process and a list of approved project applications will be maintained by the PTA and be made available to WALGA on request. School bus stops that are operated exclusively for students are not eligible for BSSP funding.

Under the BSSP, the PTA typically takes responsibility for arranging and undertaking all physical works to install bus shelters and Local Governments are responsible for undertaking any required community consultation before work proceeds. In limited circumstances (typically for bus shelters located in regional areas), it may be more practical for Local Governments to purchase and install a bus shelter. In this circumstance, the PTA may agree to provide an equivalent amount of BSSP funding for this purpose.

The PTA maintains a bus shelter panel contract arrangement that provides a suite of standard bus shelter designs that can be selected by Local Governments under the BSSP. The PTA regularly reviews its panel contract arrangements for the purpose of ensuring a reasonable suite of bus shelter options are available at competitive prices.

Under BSSP funding arrangements, the relevant Local Government must pay to the PTA the required financial contribution and accept ownership and ongoing maintenance responsibility of the bus shelter to function in a safe and serviceable condition. The PTA will construct a compliant passenger boarding area and contribute 50% of the supply and installation cost of a bus shelter to a maximum amount of \$8,500 (i.e. total bus shelter cost of \$17,000). If a higher cost bus shelter is selected, the applicant will be required to pay for the balance of funds. The intent of this arrangement is to encourage the selection of value for money bus shelter options to maximise the overall community benefit provided through the BSSP. The PTA's maximum bus shelter financial contribution amount of \$8,500 will be indexed annually by movements in the Perth (All Groups) Consumer Price Index.

Where a Local Government seeks to install a bus shelter at a bus stop location that is not eligible for BSSP funding support from PTA the Local Government should consult with the PTA not less than 12 months in advance of intended shelter installation to ascertain the bus stop location's status in PTA's BSAWP forward works schedule. If the bus stop location has not been upgraded this consultation may provide opportunities for the Local Government to mitigate obligations arising from section 32.1 of the Disability Standards whereby the Local Government would otherwise become responsible for making the bus stop boarding area compliant with the Disability Standards due to the shelter installation. In the case of non-upgraded locations, the PTA may, subject to BSAWP priorities and program flexibility, be able to schedule the upgrade of Core Bus Stop Infrastructure concurrent with shelter installation.

Should a Local Government elect to install a bus shelter outside of the PTA's BSSP general arrangements at a bus stop location that is non-compliant to the Disability Standards, the Local Government must assume obligations arising under the Disability Standards to make the passenger boarding area compliant. In cases where the proposed location of a bus shelter is at a bus stop location that is already compliant to Disability Standards, a structural assessment of the existing concrete passenger boarding area is to be provided by the Local Government to establish its suitability for this revised purpose and any required upgrade costs will be borne by the Local Government (unless the PTA agrees otherwise).

To ensure compliance to the Disability Standards, a detailed drawing of the planned work must be submitted to the PTA for its approval, noting that PTA's review will

include an assessment of whether the proposed bus stop location is suitable for its ongoing bus operations.

6.3. Bus Shelter Maintenance Assistance Scheme

In recognition of the costs incurred by Local Governments to maintain bus shelters, the PTA agrees to provide funding support to participating Local Governments under the Bus Shelter Maintenance Assistance Scheme (BSMAS). Total funding for the BSMAS will be capped to a total of \$550,000 per annum, with any increase in the annual funding cap being the subject of review and agreement by the State Government. Total funding cap reviews for the PTA's BSMAS will be undertaken at the discretion of the State Government but will occur no less than every five years.

BSMAS payments to Local Governments will be made on a per shelter basis and total payments will be capped to the total funding made available under the BSMAS. Bus shelters provided to Local Governments under Infrastructure Commercial Agreements will be excluded from receipt of BSMAS payments. Bus shelters at school bus stops that are operated exclusively for students are not eligible for BSMAS funding.

Local Governments are to keep accurate and up to date data, including asset condition information, on all bus shelters provided under these arrangements and to make this information available to the PTA in a timely manner upon its reasonable request.

In consultation with WALGA, the PTA will undertake an annual review of the BSMAS rates taking into consideration; the number of eligible shelters and the overall fairness/equity of the BSMAS payment arrangements to the participants.

The PTA will make BSMAS payments annually in March. Payment will only be made to formal participants in the scheme and funds are not able to be carried forward to future financial years. To qualify, each Local Government must follow the spirit and intent of this Partnership Agreement. Where the PTA has determined that a participant has not complied with the spirit and intent of this Funding Agreement, the PTA may elect to not fund or reduce the level of BSMAS funding to that participant in that financial year.

7. Roles and responsibilities

7.1. General

The PTA is responsible for the planning and delivery of public bus services for the benefit of the local community which includes; selection of bus routes, setting of service frequencies, selection of bus stop locations and the operation of bus services. Local Government is responsible for the care and maintenance of its assets located within Road Reserve for the benefit of the local community. Whilst each party will remain ultimately responsible for the delivery and performance of its responsibilities, both parties agree to work collaboratively with the stated aim of minimising resultant issues for the other party as a consequence of any decisions made.

Where new land developments are planned, developers are required to liaise with PTA and the Local Government regarding the proposed location of bus stops and terminus before commencing construction works. This ensures that bus stop locations are strategically planned to effectively serve the needs of future residents and commuters.

7.2. Core Bus Stop Infrastructure

The PTA is responsible for:

- ensuring bus stops are positioned in the Road Reserve in safe locations for pedestrians and road users in compliance with the *Road Traffic Code 2000*;
- ensuring bus stops are positioned at locations that best serve the public transport needs of the community;
- the installation of all Core Bus Stop Infrastructure at bus stops;
- the upkeep and maintenance of all Core Bus Stop Infrastructure;
- ensuring that all of its bus stops eventually comply, and continue to comply, with the access requirements of the Disability Standards; and
- providing patronage data for specific bus stops to Local Government when requested so that they can make informed decisions about bus shelters and other Ancillary Bus Stop Infrastructure.

7.3. Ancillary Bus Stop Infrastructure

Local Government may, at its discretion, install Ancillary Bus Stop Infrastructure (including bus shelters) in the Road Reserve and will be responsible for its ongoing care and maintenance unless the PTA has specifically agreed to take responsibility as detailed in section 7.4. To assist Local Government deliver these responsibilities the PTA provides funding through the following arrangements; the Bus Shelter Subsidy Program (BSSP) and the Bus Shelter Maintenance Assistance Scheme (BSMAS).

7.4. PTA owned Ancillary Bus Stop Infrastructure

- (i) The PTA may at its discretion, install Ancillary Bus Stop Infrastructure at bus stops located in the Road Reserve which it will own and be responsible for, including ongoing care and maintenance.
- (ii) The PTA recognises the growing importance of public transport services to the community and in the future it is likely that for some priority bus routes (and light rail), it may install bus shelters and other Ancillary Bus Stop Infrastructure in the Road Reserve for the benefit of public transport patrons. In this circumstance, the PTA will:
 - consult with the relevant Local Government prior to its installation or construction;
 - be the owner of the Ancillary Bus Stop Infrastructure; and
 - be responsible for its ongoing maintenance.
- (iii) All Ancillary Bus Stop Infrastructure in the Road Reserve currently owned and maintained by the PTA is detailed in Schedule 3. The PTA will update Schedule 3 and advise affected Local Governments if it installs additional items of Ancillary Bus Stop Infrastructure in the Road Reserve.

7.5. Responsibilities for compliance to Disability Standards

All Core Bus Stop Infrastructure and Ancillary Bus Stop Infrastructure installed or constructed by Local Government or the PTA, must eventually be compliant to the requirements of the Disability Standards and the PTA Bus Stop Design Guidelines as detailed in Schedule 1. The PTA is responsible for ensuring that public bus stops comply with the requirements of the Disability Standards and Local Government should consult with the PTA to ensure this is achieved before proceeding with any

planned works (including Infrastructure Commercial Agreement arrangements) that may render a compliant bus stop non-compliant. Simple repositioning/replacement of existing or the installation of new Ancillary Bus Stop Infrastructure can have unintended consequences by blocking required access ways/clearances and render a compliant bus stop non-compliant to the Disability Standards which will need to be rectified.

8. Adding, removing, upgrading or modifying bus stop infrastructure

8.1. New Core Bus Stop Infrastructure

- (i) Before creating a new bus stop for a new or existing bus route and installing Core Bus Stop Infrastructure in the Road Reserve the PTA will consult with the relevant Local Government and invite comment for its consideration. The purpose of this consultation is to determine the suitability of each proposed bus stop location from a functional/operational perspective; this information is specifically not provided for the purpose of Local Government undertaking public consultation with nearby households, or for dissemination to elected members or officials that may attempt to exercise undue influence over the result – the PTA’s decision making process for selecting bus stop locations is strictly limited to functional and operational matters and will not be influenced by extraneous issues. The PTA will, wherever possible, aim to produce mutually acceptable outcomes and provide feedback to Local Governments about its decisions if required.
- (ii) Before introducing a new bus route (that will ultimately require new bus stops as outlined above), the PTA typically undertakes a community consultation process, where Transperth patrons and relevant entities like Local Government are invited to make comment for its consideration. The PTA commits to taking into consideration issues raised by affected participants, including Local Governments and, wherever possible, producing mutually acceptable outcomes.
- (iii) Where the PTA proposes the installation of bus stop infrastructure at a location with decorative paving or non-standard kerbing, the PTA will liaise with the Local Government and endeavour to match the style of the surrounding paving and kerbs.

8.2. Upgrading Core Bus Stop Infrastructure

- (i) Before undertaking BSAWP bus stop upgrade works to Core Bus Stop Infrastructure, at an existing bus stop located in the Road Reserve, the PTA will consult with the relevant Local Government and invite comment for its consideration. The PTA will, wherever possible, aim to produce a mutually acceptable outcome and provide feedback if required.
- (ii) Where the PTA proposes the installation of bus stop infrastructure at a location with decorative paving or non-standard kerbing, the PTA will liaise with the Local Government and endeavour to match the style of the surrounding paving and kerbs.
- (iii) PTA's BSAWP funding is limited and if a Local Government requires Core Bus Stop Infrastructure to be constructed with more expensive materials or construction techniques not typically used by the PTA (for example, paving, coloured/patterned concrete, pre-cast kerbing or in-situ concrete tactile pavers), the Local Government may be asked to fund the PTA's resultant additional costs of meeting such requirements.
- (iv) Where a Local Government nominates products not typically used by the PTA, the PTA will only consider use of those products if the Local Government agrees to accept responsibility for ongoing maintenance and any liability claims that may arise from those products.
- (v) Once the PTA has upgraded a bus stop to achieve compliance to the Disability Standards, the relevant Local Government must not undertake or approve any activity or action at that bus stop location which will render the bus stop non-compliant. For example, undertaking road resurfacing works, which if not managed appropriately, can inadvertently reduce the kerb height, making the bus stop non-compliant to the Disability Standards (Refer to Schedule 4).
- (vi) The party responsible for rendering a compliant bus stop non-compliant will be responsible for resolving the issue to the reasonable satisfaction of the PTA, or for reimbursing the PTA's reasonable cost of resolving the issue (including the cost of installing a new bus stop with Core Bus Stop Infrastructure and any Ancillary Bus Stop Infrastructure, if applicable, at an alternative location if the original site is rendered unusable). Affected Local Governments should consult with the PTA to ensure proposed actions or approvals will not adversely impact upon a bus stop and the PTA commits to achieving mutually acceptable solutions.

8.3. Local Government works/approvals near Core Bus Stop Infrastructure

- (i) Local Government should consult with the PTA before undertaking any works or approvals near a bus stop which may impact on the functionality or safety of a bus stop location. Installations of additional traffic lanes, turn-pockets, roundabouts, pram ramps, pedestrian refuges, new or replacement kerbing, road resurfacing, pedestrian crossings, crossovers, property development approvals, new footpaths or footpath upgrades can adversely impact upon the functionality or safety of nearby bus stop locations on a temporary or permanent basis.
- (ii) Road resurfacing works can inadvertently reduce kerb heights, reducing their community utility and potentially making compliant bus stops non-compliant. Importantly, this circumstance can subsequently lead to costly rectification works. Schedule 4 details arrangements that are to apply when Local Government intends to undertake road resurfacing works.
- (iii) If the works or approvals of a Local Government renders a nearby compliant bus stop non-compliant or unusable for bus operations, it will be responsible for resolving the issue, or for reimbursing the PTA's reasonable cost of resolving the issue (which may include the cost of installing a new permanent or temporary bus stop at an alternative location if the original site is rendered unusable). Local Governments should consult with the PTA to ensure that any proposed works near a bus stop will not adversely impact upon it and the PTA commits to achieving mutually acceptable solutions.
- (iv) In the case where private works in the Road Reserve is likely to impact Bus Stop Infrastructure or the functionality of bus operations, a Local Government will only grant approval for such works after viewing evidence that the applicant has consulted with the PTA.
- (v) Local Government verge policies are required to consider bus stops and the impact verge treatments may have on a passenger boarding area. Landscaping must not be allowed to render an existing or planned bus stop non-compliant.

8.4. New Ancillary Bus Stop Infrastructure

- (i) New Ancillary Bus Stop Infrastructure or other incidental infrastructure installed by Local Governments (including bus shelters, seats and bins or any

infrastructure provided under Infrastructure Commercial Agreements) can inadvertently render a compliant bus stop non-compliant. Before proceeding with the installation of any infrastructure or footpath modifications at or near to a bus stop (which may then become Ancillary Bus Stop Infrastructure or Core Bus Stop Infrastructure), the relevant Local Government should consult with the PTA to ensure the planned works do not adversely impact upon a bus stops compliance to the Disability Standards.

- (ii) When the PTA becomes aware of Ancillary Bus Stop Infrastructure obstructing the bus stop area and making it non-compliant, it will consult with the relevant Local Government with the intent of modifying the positioning or removing the Ancillary Bus Stop Infrastructure so that compliance can be restored as a matter of priority. If after a reasonable period of time (2 weeks) the item has not been moved or relocated, the PTA will arrange for this to occur with all costs being recouped from the relevant Local Government.
- (iii) As detailed in Section 7.4, the PTA may install Ancillary Bus Stop Infrastructure at bus stops located in the Road Reserve and be responsible for its maintenance.

8.5. Bus Stop Accessibility Works Program (BSAWP) and bus shelter impacts

Where the BSAWP affects an existing bus shelter that is not the subject of an Infrastructure Commercial Agreement the following applies:

(i) Retaining existing bus shelters

If the required upgrade works to the passenger boarding area does not necessitate the relocation of an existing bus shelter, and the existing bus shelter is serviceable but non-compliant to the Disability Standards, the relevant Local Government may elect to keep the bus shelter or make application to the PTA for a replacement bus shelter under the BSSP, subject to the requirements of the BSSP; or

(ii.) Repositioning or relocation of existing bus shelters

If the required upgrade works to the passenger boarding area necessitates the repositioning or relocation of the existing bus stop passenger boarding area inclusive of a bus shelter, the PTA will either:

- Fund the cost of relocating the bus shelter to the revised/replacement bus stop location, if the existing bus shelter is compliant to the Disability Standards and capable of being safely relocated; or
- Remove the old bus shelter and fund the purchase and installation of a new bus shelter of its choosing at the new bus stop location from the PTA's bus shelter panel contract, if the existing bus shelter is not compliant to the Disability Standards and cannot be economically repaired or safely relocated, subject to the bus stop location satisfying the BSSP criteria. If a Local Government requires a higher cost bus shelter, it will be required to fund the PTA's additional cost. If the bus stop location does not satisfy the requirements of the BSSP criteria, in consultation with the relevant Local Government, the PTA will remove the existing bus shelter and undertake the required passenger boarding area upgrade works. Where the Local Government wishes to maintain a bus shelter at such a location, the PTA will consider funding 50% of the cost of the new bus shelter or to the maximum as per this agreement if funding is available within the BSSP. Alternatively, the Local Government may choose to fund the full cost of a replacement bus shelter if the PTA does not have sufficient funding available.

8.6. Planning for bus stop removals

- (i) Before making the decision to cancel or significantly modify an existing bus route which may result in existing bus stops being moved or deleted, the PTA typically undertakes a community consultation process and relevant entities such as affected Local Governments will be invited to make comment for its consideration. The PTA commits to taking into consideration issues raised by all participants, including affected Local Governments and, wherever possible, producing mutually acceptable outcomes.
- (ii) Local Government decisions restricting road utilisation, such as alterations to traffic flows or introduction of traffic calming measures can adversely impact on bus operations and the utility of existing bus stop infrastructure resulting in the need to remove a bus stop or change a bus route. Where a decision of Local Government could possibly render existing bus stops unusable and therefore require removal, the relevant Local Government should consult with the PTA to determine alternative solutions or the likely cost implication to the

PTA of making this decision (which may ultimately be borne by that Local Government).

8.7. Cost implications of changes to bus routes and bus stop locations

As a general principle, it is agreed that whichever party makes a change (to the bus route or the road) which subsequently requires a bus stop to be moved then the party (PTA or Local Government) causing the change will be responsible for the resultant reasonable additional bus stop infrastructure costs incurred by the other party. In all bus stop relocation circumstances, both parties commit to working in partnership with each other to minimise the cost implications for the party meeting the costs.

8.7.1. Cost implications for bus stop changes caused by Local Government

If the affected bus stop(s) has not been upgraded to Disability Standards, the PTA's cost of removing Core Bus Stop Infrastructure is typically minimal and it will likely move the bus stop at no cost to Local Government as part of its normal operations, subject to PTA review and acceptance of the proposed location. However, where a bus stop has been upgraded by the PTA to Disability Standards and/or there is PTA owned Ancillary Bus Stop Infrastructure in place, there will likely be significant cost implications to the PTA. Therefore, in this circumstance, if the bus stop needs to be moved due to the requirements of Local Government, the resultant reasonable costs of the PTA will be met by the relevant Local Government. Typical costs would likely include, but are not limited to, the removal of existing bus stop infrastructure and its relocation or the installation of new replacement infrastructure (inclusive of survey, design and approval costs).

8.7.2. Cost implications for bus stop changes caused by the PTA

If the PTA alters a bus route as part of its performance of its responsibilities and functions, the PTA will meet the cost of removing and relocating its bus stops and all reasonable costs incurred by Local Government to relocate and/or remove its Ancillary Bus Stop Infrastructure (including bus shelters) and making the redundant bus stop sites good (to a standard similar/acceptable to the immediate surrounding area), inclusive of

remediating damaged kerbs and footpaths or the removal of unnecessary pram ramps.

The PTA will not be liable for claims from Local Government made with respect to moving Ancillary Bus Stop Infrastructure (including bus shelters) provided to Local Government under Infrastructure Commercial Arrangements. In limited and exceptional circumstances, the PTA will consider providing funding assistance.

8.7.3. Bus embayments no longer utilised

If a bus embayment is no longer required by the PTA for use as a bus stop, the PTA agrees to liaise with the relevant Local Government (or Main Roads Western Australia), to determine the required level of rectification that will be undertaken at the cost of the PTA.

8.8. Utility provider works impacting bus stop infrastructure

If a Local Government becomes aware of any utility works that will likely, or will, adversely impact upon a bus stop, the PTA should be advised as soon as practicable. Following Local Government advice of utility works, the PTA will liaise directly with the relevant utility regarding impacts upon bus stop locations.

8.9. Annual Work Programs

The parties will endeavour to share their annual works programs where such works may impact the operations of the other party. The PTA will provide affected Local Governments with their proposed annual BSAWP program by March each year so that Local Governments can budget for associated works.

9. Maintenance of bus stop infrastructure

9.1. Maintenance of Core Bus Stop Infrastructure

The PTA is responsible for maintaining and updating all of its Core Bus Stop Infrastructure to standards required by State Government. Any maintenance issues identified by Local Governments for Core Bus Stop Infrastructure should be reported to the PTA as soon as reasonably practicable for resolution by the PTA.

9.2. Maintenance of Ancillary Bus Stop Infrastructure

Maintenance of Ancillary Bus Stop Infrastructure provided by Local Government is the responsibility of the relevant Local Government. In recognition of the benefit derived by its patrons from the provision of bus shelters by Local Government, the PTA agrees to provide funding support to participating Local Governments under the “Bus Shelter Maintenance Assistance Scheme” (BSMAS) described in section 6.3.

Maintenance of Ancillary Bus Stop Infrastructure provided by the PTA is the responsibility of the PTA.

9.3. Bus Shelter Database

The PTA will maintain the primary bus stop and bus shelter database used to make BSMAS payments. Local Governments agree to provide the PTA with updated/revised bus shelter information on a regular basis; but no less than annually, so that the accuracy of PTA’s database is maintained. In undertaking its duties, if the PTA becomes aware of discrepancies in the bus shelter database it will consult directly with the relevant Local Government to clarify and update the primary database. Bus shelters provided under Commercial Infrastructure Agreements must be included in the bus shelter listing and be appropriately identified so that the PTA may exclude them from BSMAS payment arrangements.

9.4 Identification of Damage to Bus Shelters

Local Governments will use their own resources to identify damage to bus shelters and respond with maintenance as soon as reasonably practicable. Any bus shelter maintenance issues identified by the PTA through its staff, bus drivers or the public will be reported to the relevant Local Government as soon as reasonably practicable for its resolution. In circumstances where urgent maintenance issues are identified, the PTA will make the bus stop location safe at its own cost.

10. Governance

10.1. Modification and review process

This Partnership Agreement is to apply from the date of both parties' signatures until 30 June 2029, with a formal evaluation commencing in January 2029. The formal evaluation process will be initiated and managed jointly by PTA and WALGA officers who will report with recommendations to the Managing Director, PTA and the WALGA State Council. This Partnership Agreement may be modified during the life of the agreement with the written consent of both parties.

10.2. Dispute resolution process

In relation to any matter that may be in dispute between the parties in relation to this Partnership Agreement, the dispute is to be resolved by the Chief Executive Officer of WALGA and the Director General of Transport working in good faith to achieve agreeable outcomes.

10.3. Break clause

This Partnership Agreement may be terminated at any time by the mutual agreement of the WALGA State Council and the Managing Director, PTA. Prior to terminating this Partnership Agreement it is intended that wherever possible and appropriate the parties use all available mechanisms to keep the Partnership Agreement alive and active.

10.4. Application of GST

- (i.) All monetary references in this Partnership Agreement are exclusive of GST.
- (ii.) Any monetary remittance by PTA to a Local Government under the BSMAS or BSSP will include GST.

10.5. Agreement in good faith

This is an agreement made in good faith based on the commitment of the parties to an effective and sustainable partnership. It does not seek to establish a legal relationship between the parties.

SIGNED on behalf of the PUBLIC TRANSPORT AUTHORITY by

Elwyn Gearon

Acting Managing Director, Public Transport Authority

On ____ / ____ / ____ (date)

SIGNED on behalf of the WESTERN AUSTRALIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION by

President, Cr Karen Chappel AM JP

President, Western Australian Local Government Association

On ____ / ____ / ____ (date)

PTA Bus Stop Design Guidelines

Please use the following link to access PTA's controlled copy of the Bus Stop Design Guidelines:

<https://www.pta.wa.gov.au/projects/current-projects/bus-stop-accessibility-works-program>

Bus Shelter Subsidy Program

In recognition of the significant benefit derived by PTA patrons from the provision of bus shelters by Local Government (and other entities), the PTA subsidises the cost of providing this infrastructure through the Bus Shelter Subsidy Program (BSSP).

The BSSP is administered by the PTA and to access the funds and services provided by the PTA under this program, Local Governments are required to make a brief submission to the PTA simply detailing the stop location for the PTA's consideration. In general terms, the PTA will support approval for a bus shelter under this program if:

1. the bus stop has consistent passenger boardings over fifteen people (average weekday basis) or qualifies as special case application;
2. the applicant agrees to pay to the PTA the required financial contribution toward the cost of purchasing and installing the bus shelter; and
3. the applicant agrees to own and accept ongoing maintenance responsibility for the bus shelter.

The PTA's minimum passenger boarding requirements will be reduced for applications received from regional areas and a greater emphasis will be placed on supporting the provision of bus shelters at key community centres.

To encourage ongoing Local Government participation, applications may be submitted to the PTA at any time. The PTA commits to undertaking assessments and providing an initial response within two weeks. Approvals will be made on a first come, first served basis.

Funding for the program is currently limited to \$550,000 each financial year and the PTA will proactively endeavour to ensure that all funds are spent each year. The PTA agrees to manage the funds being made available under the BSSP in an open and transparent manner, noting that the decisions of the PTA are final. Upon request, the PTA will provide a schedule to WALGA of all project applications and funds approved after the conclusion of each financial year. To facilitate a fair distribution of funds, the following aspects will also be taken into consideration by the PTA if required:

- if high volumes of applications are received resulting in the likely consumption of all funds early in the financial year - the PTA reserves the right to increase the passenger boarding requirement in criterion 1.

- if funding for the program is exhausted for the current financial year - applications may be automatically carried forward to the next financial year (if the applicant is agreeable).
- if a single Local Government submits an excessively high number of applications – the PTA will scale-back the number of applications it will approve in that year.
- if a Local Government has demonstrated a strong commitment to funding the provision of Ancillary Bus Stop Infrastructure (particularly non-qualifying BSSP bus shelters) - the passenger boarding requirement under criterion1 may be reduced (if BSSP funding is available).
- special case applications (e.g. universities, health campuses, shopping centres) - the passenger boarding requirement under criterion 1 may be reduced (if BSSP funding is available).

Submissions are to be sent to transperthsignage@pta.wa.gov.au, or call 9326 2922 for assistance.

Schedule 3

Ancillary Bus Stop Infrastructure Owned and Maintained by the PTA

Stop Number	Road	Suburb	Local Government	Stop Name
10091	ST GEORGES TCE	PERTH	City of Perth	Mill Street CAT ID 21
10094	KINGS PARK RD	WEST PERTH	City of Perth	Dumas House CAT ID 32
10095	KINGS PARK RD	WEST PERTH	City of Perth	Colin Street CAT ID 106
10096	KINGS PARK RD	WEST PERTH	City of Perth	Outram Street CAT ID 107
10098	KINGS PARK RD	WEST PERTH	City of Perth	Thomas Street CAT ID 108
10108	KINGS PARK RD	WEST PERTH	City of Perth	Thomas Street CAT ID 140
10110	KINGS PARK RD	WEST PERTH	City of Perth	Outram Street CAT ID 141
10111	KINGS PARK RD	WEST PERTH	City of Perth	Colin Street CAT ID 142
10113	KINGS PARK RD	WEST PERTH	City of Perth	Dumas House CAT ID 44
10114	MALCOLM ST	WEST PERTH	City of Perth	Harvest Terrace CAT ID 29
10115	ST GEORGES TCE	PERTH	City of Perth	Mount Street CAT ID 30
10117	ST GEORGES TCE	PERTH	City of Perth	Mill Street CAT ID 31
12819	FITZGERALD ST	NORTHBRIDGE	City of Perth	Fitzgerald Street CAT ID 13
12900	WELLINGTON ST	PERTH	City of Perth	Yagan Square CAT ID 66
12901	WELLINGTON ST	PERTH	City of Perth	Stand 5 - CAT ID 67
12902	WELLINGTON ST	PERTH	City of Perth	Stand 6
12906	WELLINGTON ST	PERTH	City of Perth	Royal Perth Hospital CAT ID 69
12911	WELLINGTON ST	EAST PERTH	City of Perth	Wellington Square CAT ID 71
12914	WELLINGTON ST	EAST PERTH	City of Perth	Old Girls School CAT ID 52
12915	WELLINGTON ST	EAST PERTH	City of Perth	Bennett Street CAT ID 53
12917	WELLINGTON ST	EAST PERTH	City of Perth	Wellington Square CAT ID 54
12920	WELLINGTON ST	PERTH	City of Perth	Royal Perth Hospital CAT ID 56
12924	WELLINGTON ST	PERTH	City of Perth	Stand 8 - CAT ID 58
12931	RAILWAY ST	WEST PERTH	City of Perth	City West Station CAT ID 39
12932	RAILWAY ST	WEST PERTH	City of Perth	City West Station CAT ID 37
12936	ABERDEEN ST	PERTH	City of Perth	TAFE East CAT ID 6
12937	ABERDEEN ST	PERTH	City of Perth	TAFE West CAT ID 7
12938	ABERDEEN ST	NORTHBRIDGE	City of Perth	Aberdeen Street CAT ID 8
12939	ABERDEEN ST	NORTHBRIDGE	City of Perth	Aberdeen Street Car Park CAT ID 9
13060	RAILWAY AV	ARMADALE	City of Armadale	Sherwood Stn
13545	SEVENOAKS ST	CANNINGTON	City of Canning	after Mallard Wy
13589	SEVENOAKS ST	BECKENHAM	City of Gosnells	Beckenham Stn
13592	SEVENOAKS ST	BECKENHAM	City of Gosnells	Beckenham Stn
16906	HAY ST	EAST PERTH	City of Perth	Plain Street CAT ID 81
16910	HAY ST	PERTH	City of Perth	Victoria Avenue CAT ID 84
16912	HAY ST	PERTH	City of Perth	Central Park CAT ID 87
16916	HAY ST	WEST PERTH	City of Perth	Parliament House CAT ID 90
16937	HAY ST	EAST PERTH	City of Perth	Plain Street CAT ID 104
16949	TRAFALGAR RD	EAST PERTH	City of Perth	Nile Street CAT ID 50
16951	WATERLOO CR	EAST PERTH	City of Perth	Main Roads CAT ID 51

16958	ROYAL ST	EAST PERTH	City of Perth	Education Department CAT ID 47
16968	MURRAY ST	PERTH	City of Perth	Royal Perth Hospital CAT ID 101
16969	GODERICH ST	PERTH	City of Perth	Mercedes College CAT ID 102
16974	BARRACK SQ	PERTH	City of Perth	Barrack Square CAT ID 2
17390	HAMPDEN RD	NEDLANDS	City of Perth	Hampden Road North CAT ID 118
17497	MURRAY ST	WEST PERTH	City of Perth	Gordon Street CAT ID 96
17509	ORD ST	WEST PERTH	City of Perth	Ord Street CAT ID 94
17510	ORD ST	WEST PERTH	City of Perth	Havelock Street CAT ID 95
17511	OUTRAM ST	WEST PERTH	City of Perth	Outram Street CAT ID 93
17591	BROADWAY	NEDLANDS	City of Nedlands	Cooper Street CAT ID 127
19083	SEAFORTH AV	GOSNELLS	City of Gosnells	Seaforth Stn
19084	SEAFORTH AV	GOSNELLS	City of Gosnells	Seaforth Stn
23088	MURRAY ST	WEST PERTH	City of Perth	Perth Modern CAT ID 63
26623	BEAUFORT ST	PERTH	City of Perth	WA Museum Boola Bardip CAT ID 19
26650	COLIN ST	WEST PERTH	City of Perth	Colin Street South CAT ID 33
26651	COLIN ST	WEST PERTH	City of Perth	Colin Street South CAT ID 43
26653	COLIN ST	WEST PERTH	City of Perth	Colin Street North CAT ID 42
26788	WELLINGTON ST	PERTH	City of Perth	Stand 1
27751	SAILANI AV	EAST PERTH	City of Perth	Matagarup Bridge CAT ID 79
28502	HACKETT DR	CRAWLEY	City of Perth	UWA Business School CAT ID 123
28507	BRAITHWAITE ST	EAST PERTH	City of Perth	Trinity College CAT ID 80
28508	HALE ST	EAST PERTH	City of Perth	WACA CAT ID 105
28511	ABERDEEN ST	PERTH	City of Perth	TAFE West CAT ID 17
28512	ABERDEEN ST	NORTHBRIDGE	City of Perth	Aberdeen Street CAT ID 16
28513	ABERDEEN ST	NORTHBRIDGE	City of Perth	Aberdeen Street Car Park CAT ID 15
28514	ABERDEEN ST	NORTHBRIDGE	City of Perth	Russell Square CAT ID 14
28515	ABERDEEN ST	NORTHBRIDGE	City of Perth	Russell Square CAT ID 10
28518	FITZGERALD ST	NORTHBRIDGE	City of Perth	Fitzgerald Street CAT ID 11
28521	WADJUK WAY	KINGS PARK	City of Perth	Kings Park CAT ID 26
28807	WELLINGTON ST	PERTH	City of Perth	Stand 2
28818	WELLINGTON ST	PERTH	City of Perth	Stand 3
28819	WELLINGTON ST	PERTH	City of Perth	Stand 4
28874	KITCHENER AV	VIC PARK	Town of Vic Park	Stand 3

Procedure for Undertaking Road Resurfacing Works Impacting Compliant Bus Stops

The following arrangements are to apply:

- a. Local Government is responsible for ensuring its road resurfacing works do not inappropriately reduce kerb heights beyond tolerances acceptable to the PTA, particularly when the works are subcontracted to third parties that may not be aware of this issue.
- b. Current PTA Bus Stop Design Guidelines require bus stop kerb heights to be a minimum of 170mm above the finished road surface, noting that some historical bus stop upgrade works have resulted in bus stop kerb heights ranging between 150mm and 190mm.
- c. Prior to undertaking any road resurfacing works, Local Government must liaise with the PTA to determine if any existing compliant bus stops are impacted – in this circumstance, the PTA will provide records of the current kerb heights of each bus stop so that the works can be appropriately managed to minimise any reduction in kerb height.
- d. Upon completion of the road resurfacing works, the kerb heights will be remeasured to ensure that they are within the PTA's acceptable tolerances, as follows:
 - i. where the existing bus stop had a measured kerb height of 150mm, this is the absolute minimum acceptable standard and must be maintained (no reduction/degradation allowed);
 - ii. where the existing bus stop had a measured kerb height between 150mm and 160mm, the PTA will accept a general deterioration of the kerb height of no more than 10mm such that a minimum kerb height of 150mm or better is achieved;
 - iii. where the existing bus stop had a measured kerb height in excess of 160mm and less than 190mm, the PTA will accept a general deterioration of the kerb height no greater than 10mm, or as otherwise agreed by the PTA in extenuating circumstances; and
 - iv. no kerb height shall ever exceed 190mm.

8.7 2025 SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES TRIBUNAL REMUNERATION INQUIRY FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS AND ELECTED MEMBERS

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.

ATTACHMENT

- Draft WALGA submission to the 2025 Salaries and Allowances Tribunal Remuneration Inquiry – Local Government Chief Executive Officers and Elected Members

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The current Advocacy Positions relating to this submission are [Position 2.10 Elected Member Remuneration](#) and [Position 2.2.3 Accountability and Audit](#).

2.10 Elected Member Remuneration

The Local Government sector supports appropriate remuneration of Local Government Elected Members on the basis of:

- 1. Vibrant democracy and good governance: fees and allowances payable to Elected Members should be sufficient to ensure that a diversity of candidates from a range of backgrounds seek election to local Government leadership positions. Further, corporate governance literature suggests that diverse leadership groups make better decisions;*
- 2. Demands of the role: as the complexity of Local Government increases, and the demands placed upon Elected Members grow in the social media age, the remuneration paid to Elected Members for their significant time commitment must compensate them for the personal and opportunity costs of taking on significant community leadership positions;*
- 3. Skills and training: as Elected Members continue to undertake training – and with the implementation of the State Government’s universal Elected Member training policy likely to occur in the near future – the time that Elected Members spend on professional development should be recognised by the fees and allowances framework; and,*
- 4. Economic erosion: in recent years there have been a number of ‘no increase’ determinations in relation to Elected Member fees and allowances, which means that the relative value of Elected Member fees and allowances have eroded over time. WALGA contends that this trend should be arrested and fees and allowances should be increased.*

2.2.3 Accountability and Audit

That:

- 1. audit committees of Local Government, led and overseen by the Council, have a clearly defined role with an Elected Member majority;*
- 2. shared regional Audit Committees may be established;*
- 3. independent members may be appointed as Chair, at the discretion of the Local Government;*
- 4. independent Audit Committee members are to be paid meeting fees or defined reimbursements.*

BACKGROUND

The Salaries and Allowances Tribunal (SAT) conduct an annual Inquiry into Local Government Chief Executive Officers’ and Elected Members’ Remuneration. SAT invites submissions from Local Governments and other stakeholders.

SAT are yet to invite submissions for the 2025 Inquiry, however in anticipation of the upcoming end of year closure period and noting that the next ordinary meeting of State Council will be in March, the submission has been drafted early for consideration by Zones and State Council.

Local Governments are also encouraged to make their own submission to SAT, particularly in relation to their individual circumstances including requests to be classified in a different Band.

The content and recommendations in this submission were shaped by existing advocacy positions, previous submissions and input from individual Members.

WALGA was successful in most of our advocacy efforts in relation to the 2024 Determination. Our recommendations for 4% increases to both Elected Member allowances and CEO salaries were included in the Tribunal's final Determination. There was mixed success in relation to our recommendation for the maximum payable Regional/Isolation Allowance to be increased for Local Governments that are particularly isolated, long distances from population centres and lacking in amenities. Although the Regional/Isolation Allowance was not increased, the Tribunal did increase CEO remuneration for Band 4 Local Governments by an additional 7.8% which assisted many of those small, remote Local Governments who were seeking an increase to the Regional/Isolation Allowance. The Tribunal also determined to continue monitoring and reviewing the Regional/Isolation Allowance over the 2024-2025 year.

COMMENT

The submission makes six recommendations:

1. That Elected Member Fees and Allowances (including maximum reimbursable expenses) are increased by 4%.
2. That the Chief Executive Officer remuneration bands are increased by 4%.
3. That the maximum payable Regional/Isolation Allowance be increased for Local Governments that are particularly isolated, long distances from population centres, and lacking in amenities.
4. That clear guidance be published to the Local Government sector outlining how the Regional/Isolation Allowance is applied in terms of methodology, criteria and weightings.
5. That a new fee category for independent audit, risk and improvement committee members be created without bands, and the fee be set at a suitable level to recognise the skills and knowledge required for such a role.
6. That the new category provides for a fee for the independent chair position and as well as an independent member position.

In relation to Recommendation 1: Elected Member Fees and Allowances, the submission:

- Argues that the remuneration framework should not be a barrier to prospective community leaders from diverse backgrounds.
- Highlights the increasing responsibilities and challenges inherent to the role of Elected Member in Local Government, particularly in light of recent amendments to the Local Government Act 1995 which has effectively reduced the number of Elected Member positions on some Councils.
- Points to the increasing requirements and expectations of Elected Members to undertake training and continual professional development, and the common occurrence of Elected Member responsibilities falling outside of usual hours of work.
- Notes the economic conditions in the current cost of living crisis, and the pressure on households, including those of Elected Members and potential candidates.

In relation to Recommendation 2: Chief Executive Officer Remuneration, the submission:

- Highlights the current economic conditions that warrant an increase to the Chief Executive Officer remuneration bands, namely the tight labour market, to ensure Local Governments can continue to attract and retain suitably qualified candidates to Chief Executive Officer positions.
- Notes the skills and expertise required for the role, and that there is a regular requirement for Chief Executive Officers to attend meetings and work commitments outside of usual working hours.

In relation to Recommendations 3 and 4: Regional/Isolation Allowance, the submission:

- Underlines the importance of the Regional/Isolation Allowance for attracting and retaining quality Chief Executive Officers to some Local Governments that are particularly isolated or remote.
- Highlights the confusion and uncertainty in the Local Government sector regarding the methodology for calculating the Regional/Isolation Allowance.
- Recommends both a review of, and publication of guidance about, the methodology, criteria and weightings for the Allowance to provide clarity for the sector.

In relation to Recommendations 5 and 6: Independent Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee Member Fees, the submission:

- Points to the new, widened scope of audit, risk and improvement committees and the new statutory requirement for an independent member on the committee as likely to cause challenges for some Local Governments under the current independent member fee structure.
- Argues that, given the above, a new category specifically for independent audit, risk and improvement committee members be created, and that the category does not differentiate fees by bands given that the requirement and scope is the same for all Local Governments.
- The new category would cover fees for both the independent chair and independent member positions.

At a meeting on 4 November, the Governance Policy Team endorsed the submission for consideration by State Council.

ZONE CONSIDERATION

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

NORTH METROPOLITAN ZONE

That the North Metropolitan Zone supports the WALGA recommendation in State Council Agenda item 8.7 as listed above, subject to the following changes to the submission:

1. amend recommendations 1 and 2 in the submission from "4%" to "at CPI"; and
2. include a new recommendation for the Tribunal to undertake a review of the current number of Local Government Bands.

SECRETARIAT COMMENT

1. In respect to the requested increase for Elected Members and CEO's, the 4% was based on the current economic data. All other Zones have supported the requested 4% increase.
2. The Salaries and Allowances Tribunal first determined CEO remuneration in 2006 and commenced with a nine Band model. In 2012, the Tribunal amended the model to provide a four band model, that is still in place today.

Annually the tribunal reviews the band model. At the last determination of 5 April 2024, the Tribunal advised as follows:

"The Tribunal is satisfied that the current four band model is appropriate for the Local Government sector"

As the North Metropolitan Zone is the only Zone to raise this issue, it is recommended that the Local Governments in the Zone be encouraged to provide submissions direct to the Tribunal.

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: President Paige McNeil
Seconded: President Chris Antonio

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

RESOLUTION 096.5/2024

CARRIED

Submission

Salaries and Allowances Tribunal

Remuneration Inquiry: Local Government Chief Executive Officers and Elected Members

December 2024

About WALGA

The Western Australian Local Government Association (WALGA) is an independent, member-based, not-for-profit organisation representing and supporting the WA Local Government sector.

Our membership includes all 139 Local Governments in the State. WALGA uses its influence, support and expertise to deliver better outcomes for WA Local Governments and their communities. We do this through effective advocacy to all levels of Government on behalf of our Members, and by the provision of expert advice, services and support to Local Governments.

WALGA's vision is for agile and inclusive Local Governments enhancing community wellbeing and enabling economic prosperity.

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Background

WALGA appreciates the opportunity to make a submission on behalf of its Local Government Members to inform the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal's Inquiry into Local Government Chief Executive Officer and Elected Member Remuneration for 2025-26.

The remuneration framework is respected and supported by the Local Government sector and provides assurance to the community that Elected Members and Chief Executive Officers are being remunerated appropriately in accordance with their skills, expertise, and contribution.

To keep pace with the increasing responsibilities and challenges of the role of Elected Members, and to ensure Local Governments can continue to attract quality Chief Executive Officers to the sector, WALGA recommends an increase to both Elected Member fees and allowances and Chief Executive Officer remuneration bands.

Similarly, whilst the Tribunal in its 2024 Determination undertook to review the Regional/Isolation Allowance, WALGA recommends further transparency around the methodology and criteria for the Allowance by way of publication of guidance by the Tribunal. The Allowance is an important means of supplementing Chief Executive Officer payment for smaller, more remote Local Governments to recruit and retain suitably skilled Chief Executive Officers.

Finally, with the forthcoming tranche 2 amendments to the *Local Government Act 1995* comes an expanded role for audit, risk and improvement committees, as well as a new, statutory requirement for Local Governments to have an independent member (chair) on those committees. To ensure suitable independent members can be attracted to these roles, particularly for those smaller, remote and isolated Local Governments, WALGA recommends a new category of remuneration for independent audit, risk and improvement committee members and chairs which adequately reflects the level of skill, knowledge and time commitment required of the role.

Elected Member Fees and Allowances

WALGA would like to reinforce both the necessary and challenging nature of the role of Elected Members in Local Government. WALGA and its Members support appropriate remuneration of Local Government Elected Members on the basis of:

1. *Vibrant democracy and good governance: fees and allowances payable to Elected Members should be sufficient to ensure that a diversity of candidates from a range of backgrounds seek election to Local Government leadership positions. Further, corporate governance literature suggests that diverse leadership groups make better decisions.*

It is WALGA's view that the remuneration framework for Elected Members can meaningfully contribute to enhancing the diversity of representation on Councils to better reflect community demography. As community representatives, it is important that a Council includes members from a range of backgrounds and life experiences. Despite ongoing advocacy efforts and increases to fees and allowances in recent years, there is still more to be done in this area. The remuneration framework can play a role in these efforts by ensuring that serving on Council is not financially prohibitive to a broad range of prospective community leaders.

The recent changes to superannuation for Elected Members, as part of the tranche 2 reforms to the *Local Government Act 1995*, are welcomed by WALGA and its Members. Whilst this change will go some way towards furthering diversity on Councils, ensuring remuneration payments keep pace with external economic conditions is critical.

- 2. Demands of the role: as the complexity of Local Government increases, and the demands placed upon Elected Members grow in the social media age, the remuneration paid to Elected Members for their significant time commitment must compensate them for the personal and opportunity costs of taking on significant community leadership positions.*

The tranche 1 amendments to the *Local Government Act 1995* introduced in 2023 included an alignment of Council sizes to populations sizes. This has meant a significant reduction in the number of Councillors for some Local Governments around the state. As a result, the community liaison, representation, and leadership responsibilities will be borne by fewer Elected Members at some Local Governments. To this end, remuneration needs to not only keep pace with economic conditions, but also align with the full scope of responsibilities and demands expected of an Elected Member in WA.

It is also worth noting that meetings of Elected Members are predominantly held outside of usual work hours. Many Elected Members have already completed a full day of work before preparing for and attending meetings in the evening to carry out Council business.

- 3. Skills and training: as Elected Members continue to undertake training (including compulsory Council Member Essentials training) the time that Elected Members spend on professional development should be recognised by the fees and allowances framework.*

As a Registered Training Organisation, WALGA has a firm belief in continuous learning and professional development for its Member Local Governments, including Elected Members. Recognising the time and energy expended by Elected Members towards these efforts, in addition to their usual Council workload, is important and will contribute towards ensuring Elected Members have the skills and abilities to best serve their communities.

- 4. Economic conditions: Elected Member fees and allowances must be considered within the surrounding economic environment. Elected Members are not immune from broader economic conditions that may impact their ability to support themselves and their families. The value of fees and allowances paid to Elected Members should keep pace with the increasing costs of living and rates of inflation.*

WALGA and its Members were pleased to see a 4% increase to Elected Member remuneration in the 2024 Determination. However, since that Determination, the economic environment, characterised by soaring living costs and ongoing interest rate rises, is continuing to put pressure on households, including those of Elected Members and potential candidates.

In recent years, the economic environment in Australia has been challenging for households due to high inflation and the rising cost of living. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) for Perth as of the September 2024 quarter is sitting at 3.8%. Over the last three financial years, Perth CPI increased by 17.8%. Whilst the price increases have eased for goods in Perth, services continue to grow at a faster pace over the last 12 months, including rents (+10.0%) and insurance (+16.1%).

Headline CPI figures have been impacted by electricity credits, so it is useful to look at the ABS's series of Perth CPI 'excluding food and energy'. This peaked at 8.2% in December 2022 and is 4.9% in the September quarter. This higher level over the last year implies that inflation isn't slowing as fast as the headline CPI suggests. Perth CPI 'excluding food and energy' has increased 17.1% over the last three financial years.

Nationwide, the Reserve Bank of Australia's (RBA) preferred inflation measure of the Trimmed mean is 3.5%, above their target band of 2% to 3%. At their most recent meeting in September, the RBA held the cash rate target at its current level of 4.35% and emphasised that interest rates

will continue to be restrictive until they are confident that inflation is sustainably returning to the target band.

The value of fees and allowances paid to Elected Members must reflect the broader economic conditions and should keep pace with the increasing cost of living and inflationary pressures to ensure serving on Council is not financially prohibitive for a diverse group of community leaders and potential candidates.

Recommendation

- 1. That Elected Member Fees and Allowances (including maximum reimbursable expenses) are increased by 4%.**

Chief Executive Officer Remuneration Bands

The role of Chief Executive Officer within Local Government is undeniably one of importance. As well as requiring a high level of skill and expertise, the role of Chief Executive Officer often requires attendance at meetings and events outside of usual working hours. The skill, workload and time commitment required from the role must be fairly compensated to both retain existing Chief Executive Officers, as well as attract new, prospective candidates with the requisite qualifications and experience.

The role must compete in the broader labour market, which is continuing to perform strongly with a record 1.62 million people now employed, up 3.1% over the last 12 months.

Job creation in WA has matched the high population growth rate as migrants from overseas and interstate are filling skills gaps. As a result, job vacancies have fallen to 42,000 in June, down from a record 66,500 in March 2022.

The participation rate, which measures the proportion of people of working-age that are in the workforce, continues to sit close to record highs at 68.9% in WA. This is above the national figure of 67.1% and continues to be the highest of all the states. Along with a high employment to population ratio, this demonstrates that there is little slack within the labour market and highlights the importance of migration in filling job vacancies and driving economic growth.

In-line with this, the unemployment rate remains low at 3.9%, the equal lowest of the states and below the Australian figure of 4.2%. It has now been three years since the unemployment rate has exceeded 4.3% and with an average of 3.8% over the last 12 months, the unemployment rate has yet to increase significantly. The state budget forecasts an unemployment rate averaging 4.0% over 2024-25.

As a result of the tight labour market, wages in WA increased 4.2% in 2023-24 which was above the 4.0% that was forecast in the 2023-24 State Budget. Wages growth has eased from 4.7% in the December quarter, suggesting that the peak has been reached. Looking forward, the state budget forecasts wages growth to continue to ease with wages expected to grow 3.75% over 2024-25. This is above the forecast Consumer Price Index of 3.0%, which would result in real wages growth for the first time since 2021-22.

WALGA acknowledges the 2024 Determination that resulted in an increase to Chief Executive Officer remuneration bands by 4%, as well as the increase to Band 4 Total Reward Package range.

Nonetheless, a similar band increase for 2025-26 is necessary to keep pace with the broader economic context, and to ensure that Local Governments can attract the best candidates to fill the essential role of Chief Executive Officer within the current competitive labour market.

Recommendation

2. **That the Chief Executive Officer remuneration bands are increased by 4%.**

Regional/Isolation Allowance

The availability and amount of the Regional/Isolation Allowance payable to Chief Executive Officers remains an issue of importance for the WA Local Government sector. The Allowance is an important means for our Members, particularly the most remote or isolated Local Governments, to supplement remuneration and attract suitably qualified Chief Executive Officers. The shortage of Chief Executive Officers in regional areas of the state has been an ongoing issue for Local Governments in WA. This is having an impact on the sector more broadly, with flow on issues to the efficient operations and accountability of many regional Councils.

WALGA and its Members acknowledge the Tribunals commitment in the 2024 Determination to continue to monitor and review the Allowance. Pending the outcome of this review process, WALGA is again seeking greater flexibility with the upper limit of the Allowance, and greater transparency regarding the methodology of application for the Allowance.

Recommendations

3. **That the maximum payable Regional/Isolation Allowance be increased for Local Governments that are particularly isolated, long distances from population centres, and lacking in amenities.**
4. **That clear guidance be published to the Local Government sector outlining how the Regional/Isolation Allowance is applied in terms of methodology, criteria and weightings.**

Independent Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee Member Fees

The forthcoming tranche 2 amendments to the *Local Government Act WA* (1995) includes a new requirement that audit, risk and improvement committees have an independent chair. The creation of a statutory independent position will put an additional burden on Local Governments in appointing someone to the position, and the difficulty of doing so will only be compounded by the relatively low fees for independent committee members in the current Determination.

The tranche 2 amendments will also effectively widen the scope of audit committees to "audit, risk and improvement committees". This means independent members will be required to have

sufficient experience and knowledge in the areas of audit, risk and the functioning of Local Government to be able to effectively serve in the role.

The current independent member fees are too low to attract qualified candidates to such a skills-based position. This has the potential to cause significant disruptions to the functioning of those Local Governments where there is considerable practical difficulty in finding and retaining a suitable independent member who can effectively chair meetings.

The rates of fees payable to independent members on these committees should more reflect a consultant or hourly rate to better recognise and compensate the considerable time commitment required, and to attract and retain a suitably qualified independent member to the role for all Local Governments.

Any fee payable to an independent audit committee member and chair must take into consideration the breadth of skills and knowledge required, as well as the time commitment needed to fulfil the role. To best achieve this, WALGA recommends that a new category for independent audit, risk and improvement committee member fees be created by the Tribunal. There will be a requirement to have a fee for the independent chair position as well as an independent member position as Local Governments may have more than one independent member, so this will need to be captured in the category. Moreover, given that the statutory requirement and scope of the role of the committee are the same for every Local Government, the new category should not be separated into bands.

Recommendation

5. **That a new fee category for independent audit, risk and improvement committee members be created without bands, and the fee be set at a suitable level to recognise the skills and knowledge required for such a role.**
6. **That the new category provides for a fee for the independent chair position and as well as an independent member position.**

8.8 SUBMISSION ON THE DRAFT STATE HAZARD PLAN - FIRE

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.

ATTACHMENT

- WALGA Draft State Hazard Plan Fire Submission

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This submission is relevant to and aligns with seven of WALGA's Emergency Management Advocacy Positions.

8.1 Emergency Management Principles

- 1. The State Government bears fundamental responsibility for emergency management and has the role of providing strategic guidance, support and services for emergency management activities in Western Australia.*
- 2. The State Government should provide financial and resourcing support as necessary to enable Local Governments to adequately deliver their extensive emergency management roles and responsibilities under the State Emergency Management Framework.*
- 3. The Local Government Sector should be engaged as a partner in policy and legislative reviews that impact Local Government emergency management roles and responsibilities.*

8.2 State Emergency Management Framework

Local Governments are supported to undertake their emergency management responsibilities by a simple and streamlined State Emergency Management Framework with the primary objectives of:

- 1. Protecting people, the economy, and the natural environment from disasters;*
- 2. Supporting communities in preventing, preparing for, responding to and recovering from emergencies;*
- 3. Clearly outlining roles, responsibilities and accountabilities for Local Government and other emergency management stakeholders;*
- 4. Scalability and adaptability that supports Local Governments of varied capacity and capability; and*
- 5. Supporting agency interoperability through common systems and approaches to key activities including data management, communications, and hazard management.*

8.4 Consolidated Emergency Services Act

- 1. The Association advocates for the development of a Consolidated Emergency Services Act to provide a comprehensive and contemporary legislative framework to support the effective delivery of emergency services in Western Australia. The Legislation should clearly define the roles and responsibilities of all emergency management stakeholders including Local Government.*
- 2. The Local Government sector seeks ongoing engagement in the scoping and co-design of the Act and associated Regulations and supporting materials such as Guidelines and fact sheets.*
- 3. The Association advocates for DFES to undertake a full costing analysis of the new Act and to provide to Local Government details of the cost implications prior to the release of any Exposure Draft Bill.*
- 4. Any new or increased responsibilities placed on Local Government by the Consolidated Emergency Services Act must be accompanied by funding and resource support to enable Local Governments to adequately discharge those responsibilities.*
- 5. The Association recognises that in addition to the Consolidated Emergency Services Act, the Regulations and other supporting materials that are developed to support it provide a key resource for Local Governments in understanding and discharging their legislative obligations*

8.7 Emergency Services Levy

- 1. Local Government request the implementation of the recommendations from the 2017 Economic Regulation Authority (ERA) Review of the Emergency Services Levy, which supported increased transparency and accountability in the administration and distribution of the ESL through:*
 - a. Expansion of the ESL to fund Local Government emergency management activities across prevention, preparedness and response;*
 - b. Administration of the ESL by an independent organisation that is funded through consolidated revenue, with regular independent reviews of expenditure and assessment of the effectiveness of ESL funding expenditure to support prevention, preparedness and response activities;*
 - c. The ESL administration fee should recompense Local Governments for the complete cost of administering the ESL;*
 - d. Public disclosure of the allocation and expenditure of the ESL;*
 - e. Public disclosure by the State Government on the progress of implementation of each of the ERA Review recommendations; and*
 - f. A review of the role, responsibilities and reporting arrangements of the Community Emergency Services Manager (CESM) Program.*

2. *Local Government advocates that the ESL should be collected by the State Government, but failing that, the administration fee should recompense Local Governments for the complete cost of administering the ESL.*

8.8 Local Government Grants Scheme Local Government supports:

1. *A full, independent review of the LGGS to investigate and analyse how ESL funds are allocated to Local Government via the LGGS;*
2. *A redesign of the LGGS to remove the ineligible and eligible list and create a sustainable, modern, equitable grants program that funds Local Government emergency management activities across prevention, preparedness and response;*
3. *An audit of existing buildings, facilities, appliances, vehicles, and major items of equipment for both Local Government Volunteer Bushfire Brigades (BFB) and State Emergency Services (SES) to inform the preparation of a Comprehensive Asset Management Plan and to guide future funding requests; and*
4. *in the interim, an immediate increase in the quantum of State Government funding to enable the provision of funding of operating and capital grant applications in full, to provide all resources necessary for the safe and efficient operation of Local Government Bushfire Brigades, in accordance with obligations of the Work Health and Safety 2020 legislation.*

8.9 Expansion of the Community Emergency Services Manager Program

That the Association advocates for an expansion of the Community Emergency Service Manager (CESM) Program, as follows:

1. *All Local Governments should have the option of participating in the CESM Program.*
2. *The full cost of the CESM Program should be funded through the Emergency Services Levy.*

8.10 Management of Bush Fire Brigades

1. *Bush Fire Brigade volunteers play a critical role in helping to protect their local communities. Local knowledge and skills are integral to bushfire management in Western Australia.*
2. *Future management and funding of volunteer Bush Fire Brigades must:*
 - a. *Recognise the changing risk environment, including work health and safety requirements, and the increasing intensity and frequency of bushfires;*
 - b. *Take account of the differing circumstances of Bush Fire Brigade units and regional variations in bush firefighting approaches; and*
 - c. *Be adequately and equitably resourced through the Emergency Services Levy.*
3. *The State Government, through the Consolidated Emergency Services Act and/or other mechanism's must:*
 - a. *Establish a clear framework to enable transfer of Bush Fire Brigades to the State Government if a Local Government decides to do;*
 - b. *Consult on the process, timeline, and implications for transfer of responsibility for Bush Fire Brigades in accordance with 3(a) through the establishment of a working group comprising representatives of Local Government, Bush Fire Brigades, the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (DLGSC) and the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES);*
 - c. *Provide for mandatory and minimum training requirements and recognition of competency and prior learning for Bush Fire Brigade volunteers, supported by locally delivered fit-for-purpose and universally accessible training program, designed in consultation with Bush Fire Brigade representatives, Local Government and LGIS, and managed by DFES; and*

- d. Develop a co-designed suite of relevant management guidelines and materials to assist in the management of Bush Fire Brigades.*
4. *As a matter of priority within the emergency services Acts review, the State Government to consider the most appropriate operational model for management of Bush Fire Brigades, which may include the establishment of an independent Rural Fire Service, as recommended in the 2016 Ferguson Report.*

BACKGROUND

The State Hazard Plan - Fire outlines the arrangements for management of fire in Western Australia (WA), covering prevention, preparedness, response, and initial recovery. The Fire and Emergency Services (FES) Commissioner is the Hazard Management Agency (HMA) for fire, with DFES, the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA), and Local Governments also holding legislative roles. DFES reviews the SHP Fire every five years, and sought initial feedback from relevant stakeholders and agencies, including all Local Governments prior to redrafting the plan.

WALGA has supported DFES' consultation with Local Governments (LGs) throughout the review by:

- Facilitating DFES' request for input from all LG CEOs on the current SHP Fire;
- Providing initial officer-level feedback based on WALGA's advocacy position, the 2023 Emergency Management survey, and initial feedback from LGs;
- Sharing DFES' request for feedback and WALGA's draft submission on the revised SHP Fire with all CEOs and through our Emergency Management Newsletter, Emergency Management Network, LG Direct, and with LGIS; and
- Workshopping the draft submission with WALGA's Local Government Emergency Management Advisory Group.

COMMENT

The draft submission incorporates WALGA's emergency management advocacy positions and State Election Priorities, which underpin Local Government capacity to implement their roles and responsibilities through SHP Fire. Feedback from 33 Local Governments and LGIS has been incorporated. A key proposed change is that personnel, including Incident Management Teams (IMTs), should be trained to a standard accepted by the Hazard Management Agency (HMA), which was conditionally supported by most Local Governments. The recommendations include specific changes to the draft SHP Fire, actions for DFES as the HMA, and suggestions to the State Government for increased funding and legislative reform.

WALGA Recommendations

Emergency Services Funding

The State Hazard Plan Fire should:

1. Clearly outline, in Section 3.2.5, the responsibility of State Government to provide adequate resources to Local Governments to fulfil all the responsibilities delegated to them for the hazard of fire.

As the Hazard Management Agency for the hazard of Fire, DFES should:

2. Provide a single, streamlined process for Local Governments to recoup costs from DFES for bushfire incidents.
3. Provide additional resources and support for Local Governments to engage their communities in bushfire risk reduction, through the Mitigation Activity Fund Grant Program and / or other mechanisms.

The State Government should:

4. Invest in the future sustainability of fire management across the State through the implementation of WALGA's 2025 State Election Priorities for Emergency Services Funding.

Emergency Management Framework and Consolidated Emergency Services Legislation

The State Hazard Plan Fire should:

5. Align the definition of shared responsibility with the definition provided in the Australian Emergency Management Arrangements.
6. Further define responsibilities for prevention and mitigation by highlighting the responsibility of the State to mitigate bushfire risk on State-owned land and for State Government assets.
7. Clearly identify that the State Government is responsible for response on all Forest Products Commission land.
8. Incorporate WALGA's proposed text amendments to the State Hazard Plan Fire, contained in Appendix 1, to improve clarity and consistency with the State Emergency Management Framework.

As the Hazard Management Agency for the hazard of Fire, DFES should:

9. Provide guidance and training on how to manage the requirements of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*, *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* and the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972*, when implementing their roles and responsibilities under the State Hazard Plan Fire.
10. Provide guidance on appropriate bushfire mitigation techniques for different plant communities in Western Australia

The State Government should:

11. Provide clarity on the relationship between the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*, *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972* and bushfire management responsibilities, including situations where emergency responsibilities prevail, through the Consolidated Emergency Services legislation.
12. Bind the 'State and all its Agencies' to the Consolidated Emergency Services legislation in the same way as other landowners, considering prevention, mitigation and response.
13. Improve transparency and accountability in the administration and distribution of the Emergency Services Levy through addressing the issues raised in WALGA's Advocacy Position 8.7 Emergency Services Levy and:
 - a. Provide a mechanism to ensure adequate funding and to safeguard against incremental reductions to the relative portion of the Emergency Services Levy returned to Local Governments is required.
 - b. Outline that the responsible agency should administer funding requirements, with DFES administering funding for the SES.

Bush Fire Brigade Management and Work Health and Safety

The State Hazard Plan Fire should:

14. Defer including any reference in the State Hazard Plan Fire to training standards set by the HMA until such standards have been developed in consultation with Local Governments.

15. Clearly allocate responsibility for providing the training required to meet any minimum training standards, once developed, to DFES as the Hazard Management Agency.
16. Provide a definition and process for managing spontaneous volunteers at bushfire operations, including clear differentiation between spontaneous volunteers and farmer response units.
17. More clearly outline DFES or other incident controller's Work Health and Safety responsibility for Bush Fire Brigade volunteers:
 - a. Where there are arrangements for Bush Fire Brigade management with DFES.
 - b. Where Bush Fire Brigade volunteers are operating under the direction of an incident controller from DFES, DBCA or a neighbouring Local Government.

As the HMA for the hazard of Fire, DFES should

18. Implement a phased approach to the development and introduction of any proposed minimum training standards, including, that DFES, as the lead agency, works with WALGA, Bush Fire Brigades, Local Governments and LGIS prior to the 2025-26 higher threat weather period to:
 - a. Design and implement minimum training requirements, including recognition of competency for Bush Fire Brigade volunteers, supported by a locally delivered fit-for-purpose and universally accessible training program.
 - b. Take account of the differing circumstances of Bush Fire Brigade units and regional variations in risk and bush firefighting approaches.
 - c. Provide an appropriate transition strategy and timeframe to phase in these changes.
 - d. Ensure all Local Governments and Bush Fire Brigades have access to the required amount, type and standard of training required by the Hazard Management Agency.
 - e. Provide a CEO portal with up-to-date access to Bush Fire Brigade volunteer training records, and key updates relevant to CEO responsibilities in Bush Fire Brigade management.
19. Work with WALGA, Bush Fire Brigades, Local Governments and LGIS to develop a co-designed suite of relevant management guidelines and materials to assist in the management of Bush Fire Brigades, incorporating a risk management approach to meeting work health and safety requirements.

The State Government should:

20. Provide a process to transfer Bush Fire Brigades, between State and Local Government through the Consolidated Emergency Services Legislation or other mechanism. In addition to the details outlined in 8.10 Management of Bush Fire Brigades, this process should include uniform principles and criteria for all Local Governments, potentially starting with a binding model agreement that can be customised for individual Local Governments, and:
 - a. Consider all Local Government bushfire management responsibilities under the *Bush Fires Act 1954*.
 - b. Specify the transition arrangements for Bush Fire Brigade volunteers, including membership, training records, insurance, obligations and responsibilities under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2020*.
 - c. Specify transition arrangements for Bush Fire Brigade assets, including appliances, equipment, asset provenance, condition reports, valuations, warranties, and maintenance.
 - d. Address responsibility for Local Government Grant Scheme administration when BFBs are transferred.

ZONE CONSIDERATION

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

PEEL COUNTRY ZONE

The Peel Country Zone supported the WALGA recommendation, subject to the following comments

8.8 Local Government Grants Scheme Local Government supports:

- 3. An audit of existing buildings, facilities, appliances, vehicles, and major items of equipment for both Local Government Volunteer Bushfire Brigades (BFB) and State Emergency Services (SES) to inform the preparation of a Comprehensive Asset Management Plan and to guide future funding requests; and*

An important part for the above statement should reference that DFES take a local emergency risk based approach to undertake a risk assessment (risk to resolution) across the state of each Local Government district to determine the type, capacity, capability and number of vehicles and fire appliances required for each Local Government district and that this be completed as a matter of urgency since this process has not been undertaken by DFES since 2013.

8.9 Expansion of the Community Emergency Services Manager Program

The above section should also make reference to Local Governments being able to also have access to the DFES Bushfire Risk Mitigation Coordinator/Officer Program as well and that the funding for this program be reassessed so that Local Governments don't have to 'double dip' into ratepayers pockets to pay for a CESM or BFRMC/O on top of the Emergency Services Levy (ESL) that ratepayers already pay.

8.10 Management of Bush Fire Brigades

(At point 3C).

Provide for mandatory and minimum training requirements and recognition of competency and prior learning for Bush Fire Brigade volunteers, supported by locally delivered fit-for-purpose and universally accessible training program, designed in consultation with Bush Fire Brigade representatives, Local Government and LGIS, and managed by DFES; and

- The above should make reference to the "Provision by DFES of Nationally Recognised Training course to all volunteers similar as provided to volunteers in other states instead of the DFES type training that is currently provided by DFES that is not Nationally Recognised and therefore is not recognised or transferrable in other states of Australia.
- That DFES provide volunteer Trainers and Assessors with the proper Nationally Recognised Certificate IV Training and Assessment instead of the DFES Workplace Trainer course that is not recognised or transferrable in other states of Australia.
- The ESL funding must be managed by an independent body (not Treasury) and funds only expended on frontline firefighting operations and not on backend DFES public sector staff which is where over 80% of the ESL is currently consumed.

SECRETARIAT COMMENT

The Zone comments relate to State Council-endorsed emergency management Advocacy Positions and are beyond the scope of the State Hazard Plan – Fire. However, these comments will inform any future review of WALGA emergency management Advocacy Positions and submissions relating to the Local Government Grant Scheme, CESM program, and mandatory and minimum training requirements for Bush Fire Brigade volunteers.

SOUTH WEST COUNTRY ZONE

That the South West Country Zone supports the item, subject to the Recommendations 2 and 3 being amended to read:

2. Implement a new, integrated funding model that consolidates various funding streams into a single, transparent, risk based, equitable system which ensures consistent and adequate funding for all aspects of bush fire emergency management responsibilities the State has delegated to local governments including, prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery
3. Provide additional resources, support and education materials specifically for community capacity and resilience building activities, ensuring communities are better prepared and more resilient to preparing, responding and recovering from bushfire disasters.

SECRETARIAT COMMENT

Recommendation 2 was based on feedback from Local Government emergency management personnel that the process to recoup incident costs from DFES, once bushfires had escalated to a level 2 and beyond, was administratively onerous and confusing. This warrants specific mention in the recommendations. However, it is acknowledged that this recommendation could be reworded to include that Local Governments be provided adequate funding for all of their bushfire emergency management responsibilities.

It is a WALGA 2025 Election Priority *that funding for the MAF Program should be increased and the scope expanded to support activities that support physical mitigation works such as educating private property owners about risk and responsibility, building community resilience, developing and implementing BRMPs, and supporting the purchase of assets needed for mitigation works.*

COMPOSITE RECOMMENDATION

Moved: President Cr Tony Dean
Seconded: President Chris Antonio

That State Council endorse the Submission on the State Hazard Plan – Fire with wording amendments to Recommendations 2 and 3 as follows:

- 2. Provide a single, streamlined process for Local Governments to recoup costs for bushfire incidents and adequate funding for all aspects of bushfire emergency management responsibilities the State has delegated to Local Governments across, prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery.**
- 3. Provide additional resources, support, and educational materials for Local Governments to engage their communities in bushfire risk reduction, preparedness, and resilience building through the Mitigation Activity Fund Grant Program and/or other mechanisms.**

RESOLUTION 097.5/2024

CARRIED

State Hazard Plan - Fire Submission

December 2024

About WALGA

The Western Australian Local Government Association (WALGA) is an independent, member-based, not for profit organisation representing and supporting the WA Local Government sector.

Our membership includes all 139 Local Governments in the State. WALGA uses its influence, support and expertise to deliver better outcomes for WA Local Governments and their communities.

We advocate to all levels of Government on behalf of our Members, and provide expert advice, services and support to Local Governments. WALGA's vision is for agile and inclusive Local Governments enhancing community wellbeing and enabling economic prosperity.

Acknowledgement of Country

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

1. Introduction

The State Hazard Plan - Fire (SHP Fire) provides an overview of arrangements for the management of fire in Western Australia (WA) and contains information on fire prevention, preparedness, response and initial recovery. The Fire and Emergency Services (FES) Commissioner is the Hazard Management Agency (HMA) for fire. Additionally, DFES, the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) and Local Governments (LGs) all have legislative roles for the hazard of fire.

A comprehensive review of the SHP Fire is required to be undertaken every five years.

The current review was based on the following objective and principles:

Objective

Develop a Plan designed to inform WA stakeholders of prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery arrangements to limit the impact of the hazard of fire on the community of Western Australia.

Principles

- *Establish a strategic level emergency management plan (not an operational plan)*
 - *Remove agency specific initiatives or procedures*
 - *Remove duplication*
- *Provide clarity of roles and responsibilities across the hazard of fire*
- *Provide stability of arrangements – ability to withstand changes in the legislative & regulatory environment*
- *Identify and address gaps*
- *Align with State Emergency Management Framework*
- *Provide necessary statement of fact changes*

The revised Plan:

- Introduces collective responsibility and roles across sectors of society. The main sectors used throughout the structure of the plan are 'Individuals and Communities', 'Industry and Public Sector', and 'Public Authorities/Agencies';
- Introduces jurisdiction, areas of responsibility and tenure concept to align with current operations, provide clarity and emphasize the State EM principle of shared responsibility; and
- Removes arrangements structured by fire type (bush fire vs. structure fire).

WALGA has supported DFES' consultation with LGs throughout the review, including

- Facilitating DFES' request to all LG CEOs to provide input on the current SHP Fire.
- Providing initial officer level feedback on the current SHP Fire based on information from existing WALGA advocacy position, the 2023 Emergency Management survey and initial feedback received from LGs.
- Sharing DFES request for feedback and WALGA's draft submission on the revised draft SHP Fire with all CEOs via email from WALGA CEO, Nick Sloan and via our Emergency Management Newsletter, Emergency Management Network, LG Direct and with LGIS.
- Workshopping WALGA's draft submission with WALGA's [Local Government Emergency Management Advisory Group](#).

The WALGA submission on the SHP Fire incorporates feedback from 33 LGs (refer Appendix 2), and from LGIS.

Submissions on the SHP Fire can be made via [Engage WA Emergency Management](#) until 9 December 2024.

2. Recommendations

Emergency Services Funding

The State Hazard Plan Fire should:

1. Clearly outline, in Section 3.2.5, the responsibility of State Government to provide adequate resources to Local Governments to fulfil all the responsibilities delegated to them for the hazard of fire.

As the Hazard Management Agency for the hazard of Fire, DFES should:

2. Provide a single, streamlined process for Local Governments to recoup costs from DFES for bushfire incidents.
3. Provide additional resources and support for Local Governments to engage their communities in bushfire risk reduction, through the Mitigation Activity Fund Grant Program and / or other mechanisms.

The State Government should:

4. Invest in the future sustainability of fire management across the State through the implementation of WALGA's [2025 State Election Priorities](#) for Emergency Services Funding.

Emergency Management Framework and Consolidated Emergency Services Legislation

The State Hazard Plan Fire should:

5. Align the definition of shared responsibility with the definition provided in the Australian Emergency Management Arrangements.
6. Further define responsibilities for prevention and mitigation by highlighting the responsibility of the State to mitigate bushfire risk on State-owned land and for State Government assets.
7. Clearly identify that the State Government is responsible for response on all Forest Products Commission land.
8. Incorporate WALGA's proposed text amendments to the State Hazard Plan Fire, contained in Appendix 1, to improve clarity and consistency with the State Emergency Management Framework.

As the Hazard Management Agency for the hazard of Fire, DFES should:

9. Provide guidance and training on how to manage the requirements of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*, *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* and the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972*, when implementing their roles and responsibilities under the State Hazard Plan Fire.
10. Provide guidance on appropriate bushfire mitigation techniques for different plant communities in Western Australia

The State Government should:

11. Provide clarity on the relationship between the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*, *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972* and bushfire management responsibilities, including situations

where emergency responsibilities prevail, through the Consolidated Emergency Services legislation.

12. Bind the 'State and all its Agencies' to the Consolidated Emergency Services legislation in the same way as other landowners, considering prevention, mitigation and response.
13. Improve transparency and accountability in the administration and distribution of the Emergency Services Levy through addressing the issues raised in WALGA's **Advocacy Position 8.7 Emergency Services Levy** and:
 - a. Provide a mechanism to ensure adequate funding and to safeguard against incremental reductions to the relative portion of the Emergency Services Levy returned to Local Governments is required.
 - b. Outline that the responsible agency should administer funding requirements, with DFES administrating funding for the SES.

Bush Fire Brigade Management and Work Health and Safety

The State Hazard Plan Fire should:

14. Defer including any reference in the State Hazard Plan Fire to training standards set by the HMA until such standards have been developed in consultation with Local Governments.
15. Clearly allocate responsibility for providing the training required to meet any minimum training standards, once developed, to DFES as the Hazard Management Agency.
16. Provide a definition and process for managing spontaneous volunteers at bushfire operations, including clear differentiation between spontaneous volunteers and farmer response units.
17. More clearly outline DFES or other incident controller's Work Health and Safety responsibility for Bush Fire Brigade volunteers:
 - a. Where there are arrangements for Bush Fire Brigade management with DFES.
 - b. Where Bush Fire Brigade volunteers are operating under the direction of an incident controller from DFES, DBCA or a neighbouring Local Government.

As the HMA for the hazard of Fire, DFES should

18. Implement a phased approach to the development and introduction of any proposed minimum training standards, including, that DFES, as the lead agency, works with WALGA, Bush Fire Brigades, Local Governments and LGIS prior to the 2025-26 higher threat weather period to:
 - a. Design and implement minimum training requirements, including recognition of competency for Bush Fire Brigade volunteers, supported by a locally delivered

- fit-for-purpose and universally accessible training program.
- b. Take account of the differing circumstances of Bush Fire Brigade units and regional variations in risk and bush firefighting approaches.
 - c. Provide an appropriate transition strategy and timeframe to phase in these changes.
 - d. Ensure all Local Governments and Bush Fire Brigades have access to the required amount, type and standard of training required by the Hazard Management Agency.
 - e. Provide a CEO portal with up-to-date access to Bush Fire Brigade volunteer training records, and key updates relevant to CEO responsibilities in Bush Fire Brigade management.
19. Work with WALGA, Bush Fire Brigades, Local Governments and LGIS to develop a co-designed suite of relevant management guidelines and materials to assist in the management of Bush Fire Brigades, incorporating a risk management approach to meeting WHS requirements.

The State Government should:

20. Provide a process to transfer Bush Fire Brigades, between State and Local Government through the Consolidated Emergency Services Legislation or other mechanism. In addition to the details outlined in **8.10 Management of Bush Fire Brigades**, this process should include uniform principles and criteria for all Local Governments, potentially starting with a binding model agreement that can be customised for individual Local Governments, and:
- a. Consider all Local Government bushfire management responsibilities under the *Bush Fires Act 1954*.
 - b. Specify the transition arrangements for Bush Fire Brigade volunteers, including membership, training records, insurance, obligations and responsibilities under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2020*.
 - c. Specify transition arrangements for Bush Fire Brigade assets, including appliances, equipment, asset provenance, condition reports, valuations, warranties, and maintenance.
 - d. Address responsibility for Local Government Grant Scheme administration when BFBs are transferred.

3. Local Governments and the hazard of fire

WA LGs 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).

LGs are a prescribed Combat Agency for fire suppression for lands vested in the LG and are responsible for initial response covering 91.8% of WA's land area, home to 11.5% of WA's population. When control of a bushfire operation is transferred to the State, LGs continue to assist by providing advice and resources.

111 LGs manage 563 Bush Fire Brigades (BFBs) and 18,054 BFB volunteers and are at the frontline of bushfire response in WA. WA is the only Australian jurisdiction where LGs manage bushfire volunteers and brigades. LGs also administer a range of other legislative requirements under the BF Act and Regulations, relating to the management of bushfire prevention preparedness and response including issuing fire-break notices; fuel load management; issuing permits to burn the bush; declaration and review of restricted and prohibited burning times; and issuing harvest vehicle movement bans (HVMBs). The requirements of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2020* (WHS Act), which commenced in March 2022, have heightened concerns in the sector regarding risk and liability in the management of BFBs.

WALGA's 2023 Emergency Management Survey identified the key emergency management issues for LGs as:

- preparedness of the community for a major emergency,
- capacity of the LG to manage recovery for a significant emergency,
- capacity of the LG to respond to a significant emergency,
- management responsibility for BFBs (For LGs with BFBs), and
- inadequate LGGS funding to maintain BFBs fleet/facilities/operations (For LGs with BFBs).

Each of these key issues critical to understanding LG capacity to implement their roles and responsibilities for the hazard of Fire.

WALGA has eleven [Emergency Management Advocacy Positions](#), with seven positions relevant to the SHP Fire.

- 8.1 Emergency Management Principles
- 8.2 State Emergency Management Framework
- 8.4 Consolidated Emergency Services Act
- 8.7 Emergency Services Levy
- 8.8 Local Government Grants Scheme
- 8.9 Expansion of the Community Emergency Services Manager Program
- 8.10 Management of Bush Fire Brigades

Additionally, WALGA's [2025 State Election Priorities](#) includes several priority areas relevant to fire management. These can be grouped into the focus areas of:

- Emergency Services Funding,
- Emergency Management Framework and Consolidated Emergency Services Legislation, and
- Bush Fire Brigade management and Work Health and Safety.

WALGA's relevant emergency management advocacy positions are provided in full in Appendix 3, and form part of this submission.

WALGA's recommendations on the SHP Fire include specific changes required to the draft SHP Fire, recommendations to DFES as the Hazards Management Agency (HMA) responsible for Fire and to the State Government, considering the funding and legislative requirements for managing the hazard of fire.

4. Emergency Services Funding

Resources and funding arrangements under the SHP Fire

SHP Fire Section 3.2.5 Resourcing Responsibilities outlines the requirement that:

DFES, DBCA and Local Governments maintain firefighting capability to meet anticipated needs, including firefighting appliance, trained personnel for firefighting operations and incident management personnel.

SHP Fire Section 4.5 Funding Arrangements in Response outlines that:

The HMA or Controlling Agency directing an emergency management agency or other agencies or organisations supporting the emergency response, is responsible for payment of costs associated with an emergency response, unless other arrangements are established and as outlined in State Emergency Management Policy 5.12.

Where they are the Controlling Agency, LGs must cover their own costs for emergency response unless other arrangements are made, with operational costs of BFB emergency response eligible operational expenses through the LGGs. The SHP Fire outlines that DFES can provide financial and contractor assistance, however this support is only available once the LG has exhausted its resources. LGs vary significantly in size, resources, risk profiles, and emergency management capabilities and many lack the necessary resources to fully discharge their responsibilities under the SHP Fire.

Several LGs provided feedback that there is a need for a more straight-forward process to recoup eligible costs from the State following incidents, including:

- Early communication and written agreements with DFES for costs associated with response, including where a s13 transfer of control has been implemented
- A streamlined process for recouping costs that avoids confusion and separate record keeping
- Provisions for LGs to charge LG machinery and staff to the incident, not only contractors. Examples were provided where LGs were reluctant to release equipment and staff to an incident due to no provisions to recoup costs.
- Ensuring that costs for damaged equipment (such as a grader tyre) can be

recouped from the incident.

- Streamlining / harmonising the requirements for recouping eligible LGGs costs and those that are charged to the DFES wildfire account in a single process.

State Government to provide adequate resources to LGs for implementing role and responsibilities under the SHP Fire

As outlined in **WALGA advocacy position 8.1 Emergency Management Principles**, the State Government is fundamentally responsible for emergency management, providing strategic, financial, and resourcing support to enable LGs to fulfill their roles. This reflects **Recommendation 11.1** of the [Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements](#):

Responsibility for local government disaster management capability and capacity:

State and territory governments should take responsibility for the capability and capacity of local governments to which they have delegated their responsibilities in preparing for, responding to, and recovering from natural disasters, to ensure local governments are able to effectively discharge the responsibilities devolved to them.

A **Sustainable Grant Funding Model for Emergency Management** (WALGA Advocacy Position 8.3) is required that empowers proactive approaches, supports community resilience, is adaptable to variations in LG resourcing, and is flexible, timely, accessible, scalable, and strategic. As outlined in **WALGA advocacy position 8.10 Management of Bush Fire Brigades**, effective resourcing is particularly important so that LG BFBs can continue to protect their local communities from fire.

Three grant programs support LG capacity to deliver their roles and responsibilities under the SHP Fire, the LGGs, the Community Emergency Services Manager (CESM) Program, and the Mitigation Activity Fund Grants Program (MAFGP). Without substantial increases to these three programs, LGs will be limited in their capacity to meet their obligations under the SHP Fire, which ultimately poses a risk to the State.

Local Government Grants Scheme

The LGGs, funded from Emergency Services Levy (ESL) revenue, provides operating and capital grants for resources, equipment, and facilities for BFBs. LGGs funding has not kept pace with rising operational and capital costs of BFBs, including for:

- Buildings, equipment, materials and labour.
- More stringent Work Health and Safety standards.
- The changing composition of the volunteer workforce.
- Diminishing insurer appetite, leading to higher insurance premiums and imposing exclusions and restrictive conditions.

LG's LGGs capital funding requests have consistently exceeded available funding, and the gap is growing. In 2017-18, the shortfall between total funding requested and funding approved was \$3.4 million. By 2022-23, this gap had grown to \$23.2 million. In 2023-24, the total LGGs budget was \$32.3 million, including fleet, facilities and operating grants. This included funding already committed to the Fleet Assets Annual Build Program. 148 capital grant applications were received totalling \$48.7 million. Only 37 capital applications totalling \$3.9 million were successful, leaving a shortfall of \$45 million. LG feedback has also highlighted that State consolidated revenue once provided a significant proportion of

funding for emergency services however after the introduction of the Emergency Service Levy (ESL) the level of funding from the State has been gradually reduced.

WALGA's advocacy position **8.8 Local Government Grants Scheme** and [2025 State Election Priorities](#) call for:

- a review and redesign the LGGGS to ensure it can meet the current and future needs of LG BFBs,
- an audit of buildings, facilities, appliances, vehicles and major items of equipment to inform the preparation of a Comprehensive Asset Management Plan, and
- an interim increase to the quantum of State Government funding to provide resources necessary for the safe and efficient operation of LG BFBs.

Community Emergency Services Manager (CESM) Program

The CESM Program enhances LG capacity for all-hazard preparedness, prevention, response, and recovery (PPRR). [WALGA's 2023 Emergency Management Survey](#) highlights the value of CESMs, to LGs in fulfilling their responsibilities for the hazard of fire, especially for smaller regional LGs with volunteer BFBs and limited financial resources. LGs with CESMs said their CESM increased their capacity a great deal, particularly in the areas of:

- Bush Fire Brigade management (96%),
- coordination of operational response (92%),
- communication between the LG and DFES (88%),
- training of BFB volunteers (88%), and
- improving outcomes through the LGGGS (95%) and other Emergency management grants (67%).

WALGA's Advocacy Position **8.9 Community Emergency Service Managers** and [2025 State Election Priorities](#) calls for expansion to the CESM Program to bolster the emergency management capability of all LGs, and for this program to be fully funded by the Emergency Services Levy.

Mitigation Activity Fund Grants Program

SHP Fire Section 2.2.1 Bushfire Risk Management Plans (BRMP) outlines the requirement that LGs identified in the SHP as having high or extreme bushfire risk should prepare a BRMP. There are 45 LGs listed in the SHP Fire as requiring a BRMP, however the number of LGs with a BRMP has more than doubled from 35 in 2019 to 89 in October 2024, with 98 LGs currently participating in the BRM program. LG BRMPs must be aligned to the Office of Bushfire Risk Management (OBRM) Guideline.

The MAFGP provides grants to LGs (LGs) with an endorsed Bushfire Risk Mitigation Plan (BRMP) for physical mitigation works on Crown land. This supports LGs in fulfilling some of their responsibilities under SHP Fire Section 2.2 Prevention/Mitigation Strategies. Managing fire breaks and fuel loads is essential to bushfire risk mitigation Feedback from LGs highlighted the high costs of mechanical works for mitigation and the limited funding available to undertake these works,

As the number of eligible LGs increases, the pressure on available funds is growing. There is now insufficient funding to meet the demand for mitigation works on Crown land managed by LGs. One LG was concerned that with the increase in eligible LGs, less funding

was available to the 45 LGs identified as having high or extreme bushfire risk and required to have a BRMP. Recent changes to the BRMP program require LGs to review their BRMP and data in the Bushfire Risk Management System (BRMS) every two years, as a condition of endorsement by the OBRM and to remain eligible for funding. Additionally, the complexity and costs of bushfire mitigation are rising due to limited contractor access, shorter weather windows, and increased demand on volunteer time.

SHP Fire Section 3.2.6 Community Education and Information outlines that the BRM plan must include strategies for community education. However, these strategies are not eligible for funding under the MAFGP due to its focus on physical mitigation works. This presents a significant limitation for LGs where most of the risk lies on private property, and community education and engagement are the primary mechanisms for risk reduction. Funding for the AWARE grants program, which can be used for community engagement, has not changed since 2014, includes a minimal allocation (\$200,000 in 2024-25) across all LGs, and is inadequate to support LGs that have limited capacity to engage their community in preparedness. Support is also required for mitigation of bushfire risk on private property by landowners. Feedback from LGs indicates more resources, and guidance is required to support them with preparedness activities and community engagement and that many WA LGs have dedicated Emergency Management (EM) officers/Community Emergency Services Managers (CESMs) to engage the community.

WALGA's [2025 State Election Priorities](#) call for MAFGP funding to be increased, and the program scope expanded to support physical mitigation works, educate private property owners about risk and responsibility, develop and implement BRMPs, and support the purchase of assets that would enable LGs to complete their own mitigation works. WALGA is also calling for the AWARE program to be reviewed and replaced by a more robust program to increase LG emergency management capabilities.

WALGA Recommendations – Emergency Services Funding

The State Hazard Plan Fire should:

1. Clearly outline, in Section 3.2.5, the responsibility of State Government to provide adequate resources to LGs to fulfil all the responsibilities delegated to them for the hazard of fire.

As the Hazard Management Agency for the hazard of Fire, DFES should

2. Provide a single, streamlined process for LGs to recoup costs from DFES for bushfire incidents.
3. Provide additional resources and support for LGs to engage their communities in bushfire risk reduction, through the Mitigation Activity Fund Grant Program and / or other mechanisms.

The State Government should:

4. Invest in the future sustainability of fire management across the State through the implementation of WALGA's [2025 State Election Priorities](#) for Emergency Services Funding.



5. Emergency Management Framework and Consolidated Emergency Services Legislation

WALGA's position **8.2 State Emergency Management Framework** advocates for a simple and streamlined State Emergency Management Framework that supports LGs to undertake their emergency management responsibilities. WALGA supports the SHP Fire review principles, particularly efforts to remove duplication, clarify roles and responsibilities, ensure stability amid legislative and regulatory changes, and align with the State Emergency Management Framework. [Appendix 1](#) includes a table with recommended changes to the wording of the SHP Fire to improve clarity and alignment with the State Emergency Management Framework.

Shared responsibility is a fundamental principle of Emergency management, and WALGA supports its integration as a principle underpinning the revised SHP Fire, however recommends that the definition of shared responsibility is aligned to the definition in the [Australian Emergency Management Arrangements](#):

Everyone understands their own responsibility in an emergency, and the responsibility of others. Communities and individuals understand the risk. This encourages all stakeholders to prevent, prepare for, and plan for how they will safely reduce their risk, respond to and recover from an emergency situation.

Many of the responsibilities for LGs in the SHP Fire are aligned to the BF Act which will be reviewed and incorporated in the development of the Consolidated Emergency Services Legislation (CES Act). An effective CES Act will provide an overarching structure for sustainable and effective future fire management in the State.

WALGA's advocacy position **8.4 Consolidated Emergency Services Act** and [2025 State Election Priorities](#) state the importance of clear roles and responsibilities, LG sector engagement, full costing of the legislation and funding to LGs for implementation and any additional responsibilities. **WALGA's advocacy position 8.7 Emergency Services Levy** outlines the need to reform the administration of the Emergency Services Levy (ESL) in line with the recommendations of the [2017 Economic Regulation Authority Review into the Emergency Services Levy](#). The *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1998*, which WALGA understands is to be revised and incorporated into the CES Act, provides for administration and governance of the ESL. The CES Act provides a critical opportunity to achieve important reforms to the ESL and subsequent improvements to funding of BFBs through the LGGs.

Relationship between bushfire management, cultural heritage and environmental protection

The draft SHP-Fire lists 15 pieces of legislation that should be considered in its implementation, illustrating the large number of legislative intersections for the hazard of fire. LGs have raised questions about the relationship between responsibilities under the BF Act the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972* (ACH Act), *Environmental Protection Act 1986* (EP Act), *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) as well as with the WHS Act, which is discussed further on.

LGs require guidance and training on how to manage the requirements of the EP Act, EPBC Act and the ACH Act when implementing their roles and responsibilities under the SHP Fire. WALGA has received feedback that it is unclear when and if exemptions apply, particularly on lands with threatened ecological communities and Aboriginal Heritage sites. Considering mitigation works, a consensus is required across DBCA, DFES and potentially other agencies/experts on appropriate bushfire mitigation techniques (seasonal and frequency) for the different plant communities across WA. This would provide more certainty for LG's and other agencies relating to mitigation and biodiversity outcomes.

The CES Act provides an opportunity to clarify the relationship between emergency services legislation, the EP Act 1986 the EPCB Act 1999 and the ACH Act 1972 by providing clear guidance on the circumstances, if any, under which implementation of responsibilities under emergency services legislation is prioritised over responsibilities under other legislation and the required process.

Land tenure and responsibilities under the SHP Fire

The SHP Fire requires further clarity with regards to land tenure and responsibility. Section 4.1.4 Jurisdictions and areas of responsibility sets out response responsibilities for controlling agencies, with DFES responsible in Gazetted Fire Districts, DBCA on DBCA managed land outside gazetted fire districts and LGs in Local Government Districts outside of Gazetted Fire Districts and DBCA land. Local Government Districts include a complex mix of land uses, posing different challenges for the hazards of fire. An example from the Shire of Dundas is provided below:

Land use and fire management in the Shire of Dundas

The Shire of Dundas, like many remote regions, manages a complex mix of land types, including with 99% of the land as listed below:

1. Unallocated Crown Land (UCL): These are areas not specifically allocated for any particular use, often including large tracts of land in remote areas. They are typically managed by state authorities but fall within the boundaries of LG responsibilities, particularly regarding fire management and other services.
2. Native Title Areas: These are lands where Indigenous groups have legal recognition of their traditional rights and interests. Managing these areas often involves coordination with Indigenous stakeholders, respecting their land rights while balancing broader community needs.
3. Indigenous Protection Areas (IPA): IPAs are managed in partnership with Indigenous communities for conservation purposes. They require special considerations, especially in fire management, where cultural practices and environmental protection need to align.
4. Pastoral Leases and Reserves: These lands are often used for grazing but still require management in terms of fire control and other public services. Pastoral leases can intersect with Indigenous land rights, further complicating management.

Other LGs experience challenges where land use transition, such as towards conservation, carbon storage or forestry has the potential to increase the burden of fire management on the LG. An example from the Shire of Nannup is provided below:

Forest products commission and bushfire response arrangements

The State Government's \$350 million investment to expand Western Australia's softwood plantations has resulted in a significant expansion of the areas of pines that have been planted /planned by the Forest Products Commission (FPC) in the Shire of Nannup. While the need for additional pine is acknowledged by the Shire, the expansion of the FPC pine estate includes areas outside those previously managed by the DBCA. This has led to confusion regarding who will respond to fires within State-owned pine plantations outside the DBCA estate and increasing concerns within the Shire's BFBs that the burden of protecting the State's pine plantation estate is increasingly being left to unpaid volunteers.

There are also challenges with tenure and responsibility in the implementation of BRMPs. The State is not bound by the BF Act and therefore LGs have no mechanism to ensure that mitigation work is undertaken on state government land. Feedback from LGs highlighted the need for agencies, like DBCA and DPLH, to step up and prioritise mitigation work near town sites, where they are the responsible agency. The Draft Plan does not state specifically that State Government departments have a responsibility under the Plan to implement mitigation actions. Many LG's with high bushfire risk contain large areas of State Government land that pose significant risk to life and property. Shared responsibility is essential for effective mitigation and all stakeholders need to work together to build a tenure blind approach to prevention and mitigation. SHP Fire Section 2.2.1 Bushfire Risk Management Plans states that:

A local government may use its Bushfire Advisory Committee (BFAC) or Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC) as a means of negotiating a commitment by all landowners and managers to participate in the BRM planning process and implement risk treatments.

However, this advice does not reflect the true role of these committees and negotiating this commitment can be difficult in practice. BFAC exists primarily to advise Council on a range of bushfire related matters, once Council has that advice the LG does not have any new or extra power to compel a State Government land manager/owner to undertake mitigation works. The situation is similar with LEMC, noting that LEMC's contain a range of stakeholders that, despite what an LEMC resolves, operate within their existing powers. Further, private property owners are not normally representative at the BFAC or LEMC.

WALGA's consultation with LGs for the [Local Emergency Management Arrangements Review](#) identified that LGs should not be responsible for assessing and identifying/implementing treatment options that are beyond their operational remit and the responsibility of the HMA or State agencies.

There is an opportunity to resolve issues of prevention and mitigation on State-owned land through the CES Act by introducing provisions to Bind the Crown, however these matters should also be further clarified through the SHP Fire.



The State Hazard Plan Fire should:

5. Align the definition of shared responsibility with the definition provided in the Australian Emergency Management Arrangements.
6. Further define responsibilities for prevention and mitigation by highlighting the responsibility of the State to mitigate bushfire risk on State-owned land and for State Government assets.
7. Clearly identify that the State Government is responsible for response on all Forest Products Commission (FPC) land.
8. Incorporate WALGA's proposed text amendments to the SHP Fire, contained in Appendix 1, to improve clarity and consistency with the State Emergency Management Framework.

As the Hazard Management Agency for the hazard of Fire, DFES should

9. Provide guidance and training on how to manage the requirements of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*, *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* and the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972*, when implementing their roles and responsibilities under the SHP Fire.
10. Provide guidance on appropriate bushfire mitigation techniques for different plant communities in Western Australia

The State Government should

11. Provide clarity on the relationship between the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* (EP Act 1986) *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act 1999), the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972* (ACH Act 1972) and bushfire management responsibilities, including situations where emergency responsibilities prevail, through the CES Act.
12. Bind the 'State and all its Agencies' to the CES Act in the same way as other landowners, considering prevention, mitigation and response.
13. Improve transparency and accountability in the administration and distribution of the Emergency Services Levy (ESL) through addressing the issues raised in WALGA's Advocacy Position 8.7 Emergency Services Levy and:
 - a. Provide a mechanism to ensure adequate funding and to safeguard against incremental reductions to the relative portion of the ESL returned to LGs is required.
 - b. Outline that the responsible agency should administer funding requirements, with DFES administrating funding for the SES.

6. Local Governments, BFB management, Work Health and Safety and liability

The requirements of the WHS Act have heightened concerns in the LG sector regarding risk and liability in the management of BFBs and volunteers, including resourcing requirements, training and competency to meet obligations. The LGIS' document [Understanding WHS Obligations for Bushfire Volunteers](#) provides guidance for LGs in this



area. LGs are a Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBU) under the WHS Act and have a duty of care to keep workers and others safe “as far as reasonably practicable”.

LGIS has also advised that its re-insurers are concerned with bushfire risk from both an injury perspective and liability. This is leading to changes in the requirements for maintaining LGIS insurance coverage for BFBs.

Funding for BFB operations, including personal protective equipment (PPE) and capital equipment through the LGGS, as well as standards for training and procedures, all impact the capacity of LGs to achieve WHS objectives for their BFB volunteers. This is influenced by the history and culture of volunteering in some places, where BFB volunteers may be reluctant to undertake WHS inductions or attend regular training nights. For example, in their feedback to this submission one LG both recognised the high importance of basic safety training for burn over protection during bushfire operations, and that they were unable to ensure all BFB members had done that training.

When control of a bushfire operation is transferred under sections 13 or 45 of the BF Act, or when BFB volunteers are deployed outside their area and come under the direction of an incident controller from the State Government or another LG, responsibilities under the WHS Act become more complex and challenging to fulfill. In some cases LGs, DFES and DBCA may share a duty of care to BFB volunteers depending on who the Controlling Agency is for a bushfire operation. Feedback from LGs to this submission has further emphasised the lack of clarity regarding duty of care and liability when BFB volunteers are deployed across various locations and incident management agencies.

Concerns regarding the management of spontaneous volunteers, community members not associated with an existing BFB who offer assistance during an event, have also increased with introduction of the WHS Act. These individuals may not have been screened or trained according to procedures, posing additional risks and WHS considerations during bushfire operations. There are mixed understandings of the term spontaneous volunteers, which should be clearly defined in the SHP Fire including differentiating spontaneous volunteers from farmer response units.

LGIS has raised concerns regarding the use of vehicles that are not formally part of the BFB fleet, which may not be fit-for-purpose for firefighting, creating further safety risks. LGs require better protection from civil prosecutions and prosecution under the WHS Act, which would be supported by a mandatory guide on the use of personal plant and equipment on a fire ground.

WALGA advocacy position 8.8 Local Government Grants Scheme highlights the need for, an immediate increase in the quantum of State Government funding to enable the provision of funding of operating and capital grant applications in full, *and in the interim to provide all resources necessary for the safe and efficient operation of Local Government Bushfire Brigades, in accordance with obligations of the Work Health and Safety 2020 legislation.*

Transfer of Bushfire Brigades to the State Government

WALGA advocacy position 8.10 Management of Bush Fire Brigades outlines that the *CES Act* or another appropriate mechanism must:

- provide a process to transfer BFB management responsibilities from LG to State Government should a LG wish to do so.
- provide for mandatory and minimum training requirements and recognition of competency and prior learning for BFB volunteers, supported by locally delivered



- fit-for-purpose and universally accessible training program, designed in consultation with BFB representatives, LG and LGIS, and managed by DFES.
- develop a co-designed suite of relevant management guidelines and materials to assist in the management of BFBs.

While the reasons that some LGs may want to transfer their responsibility for BFBs to the State are complex, capacity to manage WHS obligations and exposure to liability is a significant factor. Some LGs already have MOUs in place with DFES that outline how the two parties will work together to look after volunteers and respond to bushfires. The content of these MOUs is not publicly available; however, MOUs are not a legally binding instrument, and LGIS has raised concern that while operational control may pass to DFES, legal responsibilities remain with the LG. [LGIS' advice to LGs](#) is that a LG cannot delegate its WHS responsibilities. Their obligations are not altered or affected by the existence of an MOU with any party. Without a clear and transparent process for transfer of responsibilities for BFBs and other related responsibilities under the BF Act, confusion and uncertainty will remain for LGs that lack the resources or capacity to manage BFBs.

There are two references in the draft SHP Fire, that relate to arrangements between DFES and LGs for bushfire operations:

Section 4.1.4 Jurisdictions and areas of responsibility: *With the written approval of the HMA, specific Controlling Agency arrangements may be established in local government areas modified responsibilities; and*

Section 4.3.5 Transfer of Control: *A change in Controlling Agency form is not required when the HMA has approved, in writing, the establishment of specific Controlling Agency arrangements with the local government.*

These sections do not adequately deal with the complex arrangement between LGs and DFES, considering transfer of management responsibilities for BFBs, and where BFB volunteers are deployed outside their LG area or come under the direction of a DFES or DBCA incident controller.

Mandatory and minimum training requirements

Considering WHS, at Section 3.2.5 Resourcing Responsibilities, a new requirement is outlined:

To comply with the obligations of the Work Health and Safety Act 2020, Controlling Agencies responsible for the hazard of Fire should ensure their personnel are trained to a standard accepted by the HMA. Maintaining an accepted training standard across all Controlling Agencies is essential to maintaining the safety of personnel at a Fire incident where there may be a transfer of control and/or the need for interoperability between responders.

New requirements are also set for training of Incident Management Teams (IMT), at 3.4.3 Incident Management Team (IMT) Structures:

IMTs must be trained to a standard as accepted by the HMA and should include personnel with local knowledge where practicable.

While the SHP refers to a standard accepted by the HMA, no standard was provided for reference.

Through position **8.10 Management of Bush Fire Brigades**, WALGA is advocating for the introduction of mandatory and minimum training standards, designed in consultation with LGs, BFBs and LGIS. This should be supported by a system that provides all LG CEOs with up-to-date access to training records held by DFES for BFBs. The approach should be cognisant of the history and ongoing practice of bushfire response in many parts of WA where farmers help farmers, which is likely to continue in some areas regardless of requirements. There is a risk of creating a rift in the community and loss of BFB volunteers if training is forced, and several LGs referenced a high level of concern among their BFB volunteers about minimum training standards, and changes to training pathways. The change in baseline recommended requirements for farmer response brigade volunteers from Rural Fire Awareness to Bushfire Safety Awareness without recognising the crossover in competencies was highlighted as an example of this, leading to distrust of the LG and DFES in some areas.

In consulting with LGs WALGA specifically requested feedback on the incorporation of a training standard as outlined in Section 3.2.5 Resourcing Responsibilities. Twenty-two LGs provided relevant responses. Six fully supported WALGA's draft submission, which included a draft recommendation in support of training standards and an additional eight directly supported the introduction of a Hazard Management Agency (HMA) training standard, with some providing further comment. An additional seven commented on the challenges and requirements for setting and implementing training standards. There were no LGs that stated they did not support the introduction of training standards.

A key theme of the LG feedback was that the SHP Fire should not set the requirement that personnel, including IMTs, be trained to a standard accepted by the HMA in the absence of a standard having been set by the HMA. Some felt that the SHP Fire was not the right place to include training standards.

Feedback from LGs highlights that mandatory and minimum training standards must consider:

- Different types of firefighters (career and volunteer),
- Different types of BFBs, including farmer response brigades,
- An integrated approach underpinned by risk management principles
- Regional variations in risk and firefighting approaches, and the roles strategies and equipment being used,
- Current competencies, and pathways to recognised and build on prior training, with clear criteria for prior learning, considering experience, when the learning took place and demonstration of competency where relevant, and
- Training requirements for incident management teams positions.

A tiered approach is required, allowing volunteers to engage at a level that suits their capacity and the requirements of their role, including options for training that do not exceed a 1-day commitment. State Government leadership and resourcing, and an

appropriate transition strategy is essential, including ensuring that all BFB volunteers have appropriate access to any required training and sufficient budget allocated through the LGGS operational grant to meet training needs.

Consideration of additional controls for WHS

Several LGs highlighted considerations other than training when assessing risk and determining adequate safety control measures for volunteer BFBs. One LG outlined that a unified and standardised approach is required to address risk exposure of BFBs. This should be supported by standardised risk assessment tools to help LGs select appropriate controls. The [hierarchy of control for workplace risk](#) set out by Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety, including 1) Elimination; 2) Substitution; 3) Isolation; 4) Engineering controls; 5) Administrative controls; and 5) Personal Protective Equipment, was highlighted to illustrate that training alone, as an administrative control does not address WHS requirements.

The range of controls applicable to maintaining WHS in addition to minimum training standards that were referred to by LGs in their feedback to WALGA included:

- A suite of relevant baseline guidance documents to support LG management of BFBs,
- Guidance on managing different types of 'spontaneous' volunteers during bushfire operations, including farmer response units,
- Guidance on managing the use of private firefighting vehicles on the fire ground,
- Minimum guidance for the assessment and maintenance of BFB fleet, and
- Guidance on appropriate process for fulfilling key legislative duties, such as fire weather officer authorisation of permits to burn during period, and appropriate risk assessment for road works on days where the fire danger rating (FDR) is high or above.

DFES, as the HMA should provide further guidance to LG to support their management of BFBs, including meeting their obligations as a PCBU for BFB volunteers under the WHS Legislation. WALGA's advocacy position **8.10 Management of Bush Fire Brigades** has identified that the State Government should:

- Develop a co-designed suite of relevant management guidelines and materials to assist in the management of Bush Fire Brigades

WALGA Recommendations – BFB Management and Work Health and Safety

The State Hazard Plan Fire should:

14. Defer including any reference in the SHP Fire to training standards set by the HMA until such standards have been developed in consultation with LGs.
15. Clearly allocate responsibility for providing the training required to meet any minimum training standards, once developed, to DFES as the HMA.
16. Provide a definition and process for managing spontaneous volunteers at bushfire operations, including clear differentiation between spontaneous volunteers and farmer response units.
17. More clearly outline DFES or other incident controller's WHS responsibility for BFB volunteers:

- a. Where there are arrangements for BFB management with DFES.
- b. Where BFB volunteers are operating under the direction of an incident controller from DFES, DBCA or a neighbouring LG.

As the HMA for the hazard of Fire, DFES should:

18. Implement a phased approach to the development and introduction of any proposed minimum training standards, including, that DFES, as the lead agency, works with WALGA, BFBs, LGs and LGIS prior to the 2025-26 higher threat weather period to:
 - a. Design and implement minimum training requirements, including recognition of competency for BFB volunteers, supported by a locally delivered fit-for-purpose and universally accessible training program.
 - b. Take account of the differing circumstances of Bush Fire Brigade units and regional variations in risk and bush firefighting approaches.
 - c. Provide an appropriate transition strategy and timeframe to phase in these changes.
 - d. Ensure all LGs and BFBs have access to the required amount, type and standard of training required by the HMA.
 - e. Provide a CEO portal with up-to-date access to BFB volunteer training records, and key updates relevant to CEO responsibilities in BFB management.
19. As the lead agency, work with WALGA, BFBs, LGs and LGIS to develop a co-designed suite of relevant management guidelines and materials to assist in the management of Bush Fire Brigades, incorporating a risk management approach to meeting WHS requirements.

The State Government should:

20. Provide a process to transfer BFBs between State and LG through the CES Act or other mechanism. In addition to the details outlined in 8.10 Management of Bush Fire Brigades, this process should include uniform principles and criteria for all LGs, potentially starting with a binding model agreement that can be customised for individual LGs, and:
 - a. Considers all LG bushfire management responsibilities under the Bush Fires Act 1954.
 - b. Specifies the transition arrangements for BFB volunteers, including membership, training records, insurance, obligations and responsibilities under the Work Health and Safety Act 2020.
 - c. Specifies transition arrangements for BFB assets, including appliances, equipment, asset provenance, condition reports, valuations, warranties, and maintenance.
 - d. Addresses responsibility for LG Grant Scheme administration when BFBs are transferred.

Appendix 1 – Proposed text amendments to the SHP Fire

Objective	Suggested text changes	Comment
1.2 Hazard Definition	<p><i>Revised text:</i></p> <p>A fire refers to the occurrence or imminent occurrence of fire (including bushfire and structure fire) that impacts and/or is capable of causing or resulting in loss of life, prejudice to safety, health or damage to persons, property or the environment that may require a coordinated response.</p>	The SHP should clearly articulate the application to structure fire and bushfire in hazard definition.
1.3.1 Jurisdiction, tenure and areas of responsibility	<p><i>Add new text:</i></p> <p>Local Governments that are not a Controlling Agency will not have statutory response responsibilities.</p>	Acknowledges that not all WA LGs are a fire response agency.
1.4 Related Documents and Legislation	<p><i>Add new text:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Environmental Protection Act 1986</i> • <i>Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972</i> 	These Acts also have implications for fire management.
1.5 Assurance Activities	<p><i>Add new text;</i></p> <p>The HMA engages with other subject matter experts to ensure an ongoing awareness and a contemporary understanding of the hazard and mitigation strategies and shares this with other emergency management agencies.</p>	The HMA should provide a leadership role; modelling and promoting contemporary and best-practice mitigation to the broader EM sector.
	<p><i>Revised text:</i></p> <p>In accordance with State Emergency Management Policy 5.11 debriefs, reviews and analysis should be conducted by all State agencies following an event and include cross-stakeholder feedback.</p>	To align to the State EM Policy 5.11. WALGA has received feedback that there is a tendency for debriefs to be siloed within agencies and processes not including all / relevant stakeholders.

<p>2.1 Responsibility for Prevention and Mitigation</p>	<p><i>Add new text:</i> As the HMA, the FES Commissioner has overall responsibility for the prevention and mitigation aspects of the hazard of fire. Effective prevention and mitigation is a shared responsibility and requires all stakeholders to work together in a tenure-blind approach</p> <p><i>Add new bullet point:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DFES leads a tenure blind approach to fire prevention and mitigation across all stakeholders. 	<p>Shared responsibility across all tenures is essential to fire prevention and mitigation, needs to be facilitated by DFES as the HMA in addition to LGs through their Bushfire Risk Management Plans. DFES should assist LGs in negotiations with state authorities/land managers that fail to engage with LGs in achieving the objectives of the relevant BRMP by programming mitigation works.</p> <p>Feedback from some LGs suggests that tenure blind mitigation is not practicable or achievable and has largely failed in the BRMP process, further illustrating the need for a changed approach.</p>
<p>2.1.1 Individuals and communities</p>	<p><i>Change title to "Property owner or occupier"</i></p> <p><i>Revised text:</i> The responsibility for property fire prevention and mitigation lies with the property owner and/or occupier of premises.</p>	<p>Change is in keeping with the text in this section, and the wording in Table 2.</p> <p>In keeping with the remainder of the plan, suggest to not differentiate between property and other fires. It is important this statement also covers to bushfire. This will ensure property owners to comply with compliance requirements of the Bush Fires Act and planning requirements (such as Bushfire Management Plans) administered by LGs as well as undertaking proactive mitigation on their property.</p>
<p>2.1.3 Public Authorities</p>	<p><i>Revised text:</i></p>	<p>Revisions to make text accurate Para 1</p>

	<p>Building construction standards are set by the State, usually by reference to the National Construction Code of Australia (NCC). Local governments Permit issuing authorities and registered building surveyors have responsibility for ensuring adherence to building construction standards.</p> <p>DFES has a statutory referral obligation for commercial and industrial building permits building development applications through the Local Government WA Building Commission by providing operational advice concerning fire safety to Building Surveyors</p> <p>Local governments are responsible for planning in their local communities by ensuring appropriate local planning controls frameworks are consistent with the objectives and requirements set by the Western Australia Planning Commission.</p>	<p>-is 'building development applications' intended to mean 'building permits'?</p> <p>Para 2</p> <p>-is this intended to be the WA Building Commission, as the referral is usually direct to LGs?</p> <p>This section should also make an appropriate link to State Planning Policy 3.7 Bushfire. Feedback from one LG has highlighted the conflict that existing between the advice in SPP 3.7 guiding development in bushfire prone areas in relation to enforcement of BMP through notices issued under s.33 of the Bush Fires Act 1954 and the intent of s.33. See section 4.3 of the Planning for Bushfire Guidelines for further information on opportunities to link the Bushfire Management Plan with existing State or LG bushfire preparation / policy documentation.</p>
<p>2.2 Prevention/Mitigation strategies - Table 2: Prevention / Mitigation Strategies for Fire</p>	<p><i>Revise text</i></p> <p>Fuel reduction and modification through mechanical or chemical measures: Mulching, slashing, mechanical removal, herbicide or controlled livestock grazing to reduce the amount or alter the structure of available fuel.</p>	<p>To recognise the role of controlled livestock grazing as a mitigation strategy.</p>
	<p>Delete</p> <p>local brigades as an agency involved in</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fuel reduction and modification through mechanical or chemical measures: Mulching, slashing, 	<p>Brigades are generally not equipped or trained to do mechanical or chemical fuel reduction/modification. Funding is not provided by LGGs, and DFES does not provide training. The inclusion of LGs is sufficient to encompass any BFB activities.</p>

	<p>mechanical removal or herbicide to reduce the amount or alter the structure of available fuel.</p>	
2.2.1 Bushfire Risk Management Plans	<p><i>Revised text:</i> A local government may use its Bushfire Advisory Committee (BFAC) or Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC) as a means of negotiating a commitment by all land owners and managers to participate in the BRM planning process and implement risk treatments. to advise on the Bushfire Risk Management (BRM) planning process and implementation of risk treatments.</p>	<p>BFAC exists primarily to advise Council on a range of bushfire related matters, once Council has that advice it (Council) does not have any new or extra power to compel a State Government land manager/owner to undertake mitigation works. The situation is similar with LEMC, noting that LEMC's contain a range of stakeholders. Despite what a LEMC resolves, members operate within their existing powers. LEMC and BFAC do not have an operational management role. Private landowners are not normally represented on the BFAC or the LEMC.</p>
	<p><i>Revised text:</i> Local governments identified within this State Hazard Plan - Fire (Appendix G) as having high or extreme bushfire risk must develop a BRM Plan that applies to the entire local government area. All local Governments are eligible to participate in the Bushfire Risk Management Program, and many Local Governments in addition to those identified in Appendix G have developed one.</p>	<p>To acknowledge the work of LGs on BRMPs</p>
3.1. Responsibility for preparedness	<p><i>Add new text:</i> As the HMA for fire, the FES Commissioner has responsibility for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> providing communication materials, resources, tools and advice for community education on fire 	<p>LGs require resources and guidance from the State Government to support them with preparedness activities and community engagement. One LG suggested that that DFES develop generic bushfire community education materials for LGs to use as</p>

	<p>preparedness and prevention, that local governments and other agencies can use and adapt.</p>	<p>templates rather than each developing their own materials.</p>
	<p><i>Revised text:</i> DFES, DBCA, Local Governments and other government departments and agencies are responsible for the following preparedness activities within their respective areas of responsibility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establishing mechanisms to providing at risk community members with information and education and engage them in bushfire fire risk reduction activities prior to and during an incident if applicable and resources are available. 	<p>In keeping with the remainder of the plan, suggest to not differentiate between property and other fires.</p> <p>Not all WA LGs are required to undertake fire and bushfire risk management or have dedicated Emergency Management (EM) officers/Community Emergency Services Managers (CESMs) to engage the community. The revised text focuses on community members at risk, which in some areas includes all members of the community, but in other areas may focus on those at higher risk.</p>
	<p><i>Add new text</i> The principle of shared responsibility is that everyone understands their own responsibility in an emergency, and the responsibility of others. Communities and individuals understand the risk. This encourages all stakeholders to prevent, prepare for, and plan for how they will safely reduce their risk, respond to and recover from an emergency situation.</p>	<p>To define shared responsibility in alignment with the definition provided in the Australian Emergency management Arrangements Handbook.</p>
3.1.1 Individuals and communities	<p><i>Add new text</i> Individuals, households and communities are responsible for preparing bushfire plans at the household / street level.</p>	<p>Reflects the importance of individual, household and community planning for bushfires</p>
3.1.2 Industry and Private Sector	<p><i>Revised text:</i> In accordance with regulatory frameworks, industry and private sector are required to have emergency plans in</p>	<p>LEMA refers to the overarching document and associated sub-plans which the LG is responsible for developing, maintaining and testing. While LEMA may</p>

		place, these plans may include additional preparedness provisions. Local Emergency Management Committees (LEMCs) are encouraged to seek the inclusion of these plans within Local Emergency Management Arrangements (LEMAs,) and making them available on local government websites where possible.	consider major industry and private sector plans, these plans are beyond the scope of LG LEMA obligations and should not be included on LG websites.
3.2.1	Local Arrangements	<p><i>Revised text:</i></p> <p>Local governments are responsible for developing and maintaining LEMAs which should include comprehensive (prevention, preparedness, response and recovery) arrangements for the management of fire within their area.</p> <p>Local governments are responsible for developing and maintaining LEMAs which may include comprehensive (prevention, preparedness, response and recovery) arrangements for the management of fire within their area.</p>	<p>Revised text to align with the State EM Framework</p> <p>There are no hazard specific requirements for LEMA. While fire / bushfire is a priority hazard of many LGs, and many will have bushfire/fire related plans, by-laws, etc, LEMA compliance does not require the inclusion of comprehensive (prevention, preparedness, response and recovery) arrangements for the management of fire.</p>
		<p><i>Remove text:</i></p> <p>Brigade Area Response Plans are the responsibility of both DFES and local Governments. DFES has an Urban / Bushland Response Plan template which can be adapted to suit local circumstances.</p>	<p>WALGA has received feedback that DFES do not recognise LG brigade area response plans or fire control areas outside of gazetted townsites, therefore this should be removed.</p>
3.2.3	State Arrangements	<p><i>Revised text</i></p> <p>A PFT Subcommittee consisting of DFES, DBCA and WALGA representatives provides oversight and overall management of the PFTs.</p> <p>The Interagency Bushfire Operations Committee (IBOC), consisting of DFES, DBCA and WALGA representatives, provides oversight and overall</p>	<p>WALGA is only able to provide a representative at IBOC subcommittees when there are items on the agenda that require LG input or perspective. Overall governance is provided by IBOC, which WALGA is a member, and may be the more appropriate reference here.</p>

	management of the PFTs and other interagency bushfire matters.	
3.2.5 Resourcing Responsibilities	<p><i>Revised text:</i></p> <p>To comply with the obligations of the Work Health and Safety Act 2020, Controlling Agencies responsible for the hazard of fire should ensure their personnel are trained and equipped to a standard that complies with their responsibilities under the WHS Act. A standard may also be developed by the HMA and Local Governments will be supported by the HMA to ensure their personnel are trained to any HMA standard.</p>	<p>Responsibility for LG as the Controlling Agency to ensure personnel are trained and equipped to a standard should not be set in the absence of, or without reference to a specific baseline standards document published by DFES. DFES should also make the commitment that the LGGs will support the necessary expenditure by a LG controlling agency in achieving or maintaining that standard. Feedback to WALGA has outlined that a standard should have been developed and endorsed upon release of the WHS Act rather than imposed through State Hazard Plan Fire prior to it having been developed.</p>
3.2.6 Community education and information	<p><i>Revised text</i></p> <p>DFES works collaboratively with Local Governments communities and volunteers to raise awareness and understanding of risks, encourage and support mitigation measures, prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters.</p> <p>Local governments are encouraged to have locally developed implement local community education programs. The local BRM Plan must may include strategies for community education relating to preparedness activities in their local community.</p>	<p>BRMP do not have to include community education programs or strategies as a must. The only requirement is to consult and engage with community during the development. WALGA recommends that the MAFGP is expanded to include community education as an eligible risk treatment</p>
	Media and public information strategies are reviewed annually by DFES and DBCA, and in consultation with Local Governments to ensure that the communication of	The text changes seek to ensure that DFES community education is informed by LGs, who are well-placed to

	fire information to the community is appropriate in both in level and method, ensuring messages effectively reach different demographics and at-risk groups.	understand their community demographics, values and communications needs.
4.1.1 Individuals and communities	Change title to "Property owner or occupier"	Change is in keeping with the text in this section, and the comment at 2.1.1
4.2.1 Local Arrangements	<p><i>Revised text</i></p> <p>Local government Bush Fire Brigade response to fires is managed at the local level by Chief Bush Fire Control Officers (CBFCO), Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officers, Fire Control Officers and Captains.</p> <p>DFES assists Local government Bush Fire Brigades through the coordination of resource deployments (individual resources, strike teams and task forces) to incidents at the request of Controlling Agencies. Local government Bush Fire Brigades provide these resources at the request of the DFES RDC, neighbouring local government CBFCOs or DBCA Duty Officers. Local Governments may provide resources at the request of the DFES RDC, neighbouring Local Governments or DBCA duty officers if within their capacity</p>	The revised order of listing Captains and Bush Fire Control officers reflects/reinforces control hierarchy of the <i>Bush Fires Act 1954</i> . The revised text clarifies appropriate arrangements
4.2.2 Regional / District Arrangements	<i>Check wording</i>	The use of this term has caused some confusion. Is Emergency Services Liaison Officer meant read Emergency Management Liaison Officer? Do they have any legislative responsibility?

4.3.1 Notification of a Fire	<i>Revise wording</i>	This section should be revised to encompass the reality that the process set out for notification of a fire is not always practicable, especially in areas of limited or no communications.
4.3.4 IMT Structures	<i>Revise wording</i> IMT personnel must be trained appropriately for their role to a standard as accepted by the HMA and should include personnel with local knowledge where practicable. A standard for IMT training may also be developed by the HMA and Local Governments will be supported by the HMA to ensure their IMT personnel are trained to any HMA standard.	Responsibility to ensure IMT personnel are trained to a standard should not be set in the absence of, or without reference to a specific standard. DFES should also make the commitment that the LGGS will support the necessary expenditure by a LG controlling agency in achieving or maintaining any training standard.
4.3.7 Evacuation arrangements	<i>Revised text</i> Local government evacuation plans are to be made accessible to the Controlling Agency/HMA 24 hours-a-day, seven days-a-week. Local government evacuation plans are to be made accessible to the Controlling Agency/HMA. In some circumstances facilities in a local area in which an emergency occurs may not be suitable or sufficient to ensure the safety of all evacuees and staff and other arrangements will need to be put in place. Department of Communities is responsible for planning the provision of emergency support and relief services and for operating evacuation centres on behalf of the relevant HMA and Controlling Agency. For full details of evacuation arrangements, refer to State Emergency Management Plan 5.3.2 and the SEMC's WA Community Evacuation in Emergencies	LGs do not operate 24 hour-a-day seven days a week. LG Rangers and Emergency Management Officers may be contactable after ordinary office hours to assist in emergency situations, however, dependent on the nature of the emergency, they may not be able to attend immediately. WALGA's LEMA Improvement Program has identified a lack of clarity around evacuation planning and the delineation of roles and responsibilities between Local Governments and the Department of Communities and recommends this be made clearer in the State EM Framework. For smaller LGs with limited facilities, the Department of Communities may need to coordinate evacuations across jurisdictions.

	<p>Guideline. Details on emergency relief and support, including evacuation centres are provided in the State Support Plan Emergency Relief and Support.</p>	<p>Additionally, clear guidelines are required to support Controlling Agencies to determining the need for evacuation or shelter-in-place and on implementing these measures.</p>
	<p><i>Revise text for clarity</i> The decision to undertake an evacuation will be made by the Controlling Agency (where authorised by the HMA) or an authorised officer who will determine if the evacuation is to be recommended (voluntary) or directed (compulsory).</p> <p><i>Add text</i> This may include the identification of refuges and safer place as required.</p>	<p>Is it the controlling agency or the HMA taking the decision to evacuate, who is the authorised officer that determines if the evacuation is voluntary or compulsorily and are they from the controlling agency, or the HMA. If referring to persons authorised under section 13 and 14B of the BF Act this should be explicitly stated.</p> <p>LGs require a suitable standard for refuges and safer places in order to begin investigating the provision of these areas in specific high risk areas, as is common in other Australian states</p>
4.4.3 Emergency Alert	<p><i>Revise text for clarity</i> Emergency Alert is a Telephone Warning System that uses web technology to send alerts to home phones and mobiles.</p>	<p>Is an Emergency Alert the same as the Telephone Warning System, has the terminology changed or is this now an additional measure? Suggested wording seeks to provide clarity around this, assuming they are the same thing.</p>
4.5 Funding Arrangements for Response	<p><i>Revised text:</i> To receive emergency incident financial assistance a Local government must make application (documented within a Personal Incident Diary/Incident Records) to a DFES Bushfire Liaison Officer (BFLO) or RDC/MDC.</p>	<p>The process for reimbursement of LG expenses in a DFES managed fire should be streamlined and widely publicised.</p>

	DFES will provide clear and accessible guidance to Local Governments on a streamlined process for reimbursement of Local Government expenses.	
5.3 Transition to Recovery	<i>Revised text</i> Prior to the cessation of a response, the Controlling Agency is responsible for the coordination of an assessment of all known impacts relating to all recovery environments. This includes assessing risk and ensuring adequate treatments to provide for safe community access to the affected area.	In addition to providing further detail on impact statements, this section should further define the roles and responsibility of the State and other agencies in post loss inspection and management of the burn area, for example - hazard tree identification/ post event clean-up.
Appendix B Glossary of Terms	<i>Add new acronyms:</i> AFDRS FDR COMCEN <i>Add new definitions:</i> bushfire refuge safer place spontaneous volunteer structure fire	Where possible, define with references to national definitions, including for refuges and safer places.
Appendix C Roles and Responsibilities	Comment applies to the whole of Appendix C	This section should be revised to ensure consistency of terminology and wording where identical actions are assigned to different stakeholders.
Appendix C Prevention and Mitigation Responsibilities - DFES	<i>Revised text</i> d. Develop and implement statewide community engagement and community education programs and support their implementation at a local level.	Community engagement and education is most effective at the local level where individuals and communities can understand their risk, what actions they need to prevent and mitigate bushfire and be

		<p>i Undertake community engagement activities to prevent and prepare for property fire</p>	<p>supported to act. As the HMA, DFES has a role in supporting local implementation.</p> <p>In keeping with the remainder of the plan, suggest to not differentiate between property and other fires. Community engagement activities should include prevention and preparedness.</p>
		<p><i>Add new text:</i> vi. Conduct cross-jurisdictional/district-level exercising with neighbouring Local Governments</p>	<p>Highlights the role of the district EM arrangements and supports LG exercising for events that require response/recovery efforts that span across LG boundaries.</p>
Appendix Prevention and Mitigation Responsibilities - DPLH	C and	<p><i>Add new text:</i> b. work with DFES and DBCA to ensure adequate and effective risk mitigation on townsite (DFES) and non townsite (DBCA) UCL and UMR</p>	<p>DPLH has MOUs for risk mitigation on UCL and UMR with DFES and DBCA and shares responsibility ensuring that adequate and effective risk mitigation occurs on UCL and UMR, which covers a substantial proportion of the State.</p> <p>WALGA has received feedback that risk mitigation on UCL and UMR is often inadequate, posing additional risk to communities and to BFB volunteers who turn out to fires on UCL and UMR.</p>
Appendix Prevention and Mitigation Responsibilities - DPAW	C and	<p><i>Add new text:</i> Provide community education and bushfire evacuation planning for community members on DBCA land</p>	<p>To maintain community safety on DBCA land</p>
Appendix Prevention and Mitigation	C and	<p><i>Revise Text</i> a. Develop mitigation strategies for relevant lands vested in the local government</p>	<p>a. To clarify requirement for mitigation strategies, g. to outline that LG powers for risk reduction under the Bush Fires Act are wider than fire break requirements</p>

Responsibilities – Local Government	g. Manage fire break bushfire risk reduction requirements in accordance with the Bush Fires Act 1954	
	<i>Revise text</i> i. Contribute to and participate in the development of BRM Plans at the local level. i. Develop a BRM Plan that applies to the entire local government area, if identified within this State Hazard Plan - Fire (Appendix G) as having high or extreme bushfire risk.	To align with the responsibility outlined in 2.2.1 Bushfire Risk Management Plans
	j. Distribute DFES community educational material e.g. Develop a home evacuation plan k. Participate in DFES community education campaigns e.g. Smoke Alarm Change Battery j. Share DFES community education material and campaigns related to fire with the Local Community. k. Within the Local Government’s capacity, engage with the local community to improve risk awareness and preparedness for fire.	To remove references to specific programs, which are outdated and including community engagement where this is within the capacity of the LG to better support community preparedness and resilience.
Appendix C Prevention and Mitigation Responsibilities – Forest Products Commission (FPC)	<i>Add</i> c. maintain MOU with DBCA for DBCA to respond to fires on FPC land, including private landholdings.	LGs do not have the capacity to respond to fires on FPC land.
Appendix C Preparedness Responsibilities – DFES	<i>Revise text</i> i. Exercises for DFES staff and emergency services volunteers	This reads as if the exercises are for DFES volunteers (i.e. VFERS – VFES) only however should also include BFB volunteers.

	v. Conduct joint exercises with DBCA and Local Governments, including cross-jurisdictional / district-level exercising with neighbouring Local Governments.	Highlights the role of the district EM arrangements and supports LG exercising for events that require response/recovery efforts that span across LG boundaries.
Appendix C Preparedness Responsibilities Local Governments	<i>Revise text</i> b. Ensure evacuation centres are ready as required b. Ensure suitable buildings are identified for the purpose of evacuation centres during an emergency event.	As provided in the State EM Plan Evacuation Centre Locations are the responsibility of Communities - "Evacuation Centre Locations - evacuation centre locations are predetermined by Evacuation Centre Coordinators in consultation with the LG and endorsed by LEMCs. The endorsed centre locations are listed in Local Emergency Relief and Support Plans"
	d. Participate in joint exercises with DFES and DBCA when invited to attend.	WALGA received feedback from a bushfire prone peri urban LG, with substantial areas of State Forest, that they have not been invited to participate in DBCA and DFES joint exercising for years.
	f. Train and maintain response personnel to a training standard developed by the HMA in consultation with Local Governments that is implemented with support, adequate resourcing and guidance from DFES.	Aligned to feedback provided above regarding appropriate design and support for training standards. As discussed above, WALGA is advocating for the introduction of mandatory and minimum training standards, designed in consultation with LGs, BFBs and LGIS, and supported by a system that provides all LG CEOs with up-to-date access to training records held by DFES for BFBs.
	<i>Revise text</i> h. Participate in exercises with building owners/occupiers and DFES when requested.	Feedback from LGs is that it is not a LG role to coordinate exercises with building owners / occupiers and DFES.
	<i>Clarify role and responsibilities</i> j. Service street water hydrants	WALGA received feedback that some LGs test but do not service street water hydrants and that the Water

		Corporation is responsible for servicing, others don't test or service. Responsibilities should be clarified, and clearly outlined in the SHP Fire, noting they may be different within and outside gazetted fire districts / in different LGs, which should also be clear.
Appendix Response Responsibilities DFES	<p>C – Revise text for clarity</p> <p>b. Response to all bushfires on lands within prescribed fire districts declared under the Fire Brigades Act or where a Volunteer Fire and Emergency Service brigade is established under the FES Act</p> <p>l. Response to all property fires within prescribed fire districts declared under the Fire Brigades Act or where a Volunteer Fire and Emergency Service brigade is established under the FES Act</p>	This wording could suggest that VFES brigades respond to all fires regardless of within a Gazetted Fire District or not.
	<p>Revise text for clarity</p> <p>k. Mobilise appropriate incident response personnel and equipment</p>	How does the 000 arrangement affect this (see 4.323 State Arrangements) – this should reflect LG's responsibility in deciding mobilisation levels
	<p><i>Revise text</i></p> <p>o. Nominate an Incident Controller (IC) where there are no Local government personnel present the responsible Local Government does not have capacity to provide one or as described under appendix C or D of this plan</p>	<p>In addition to the revised text, the following additional comments are provided to support refinement.</p> <p>1) The response responsibilities mostly refer to bushfires. Is this intended and should there be separate detail regarding structure fires or should it just refer to fires?</p> <p>2) At b. should 'prescribed' fire districts be 'gazetted' fire districts to be consistent with other parts of the SHP.</p> <p>How does the 000 arrangement affect this, should reflect LG's responsibility in deciding mobilisation levels</p>

<p>Appendix Response Responsibilities DBCA</p>	<p>C –</p>	<p><i>Revise text</i> a. Respond to bushfires on all DBCA managed land and FPC land.</p>	<p>LGs do not have the capacity to respond to fires on FPC land.</p>
<p>Appendix Response Responsibilities Local Government</p>	<p>C –</p>	<p>Add text a. Response to all bushfires on lands including UMR and UCL outside: ... iv. Where a Local Government does not have the capacity to respond to bushfire under its jurisdiction, including UMR and UCL, the Local Government must advise DFES d. Response to all property fire outside prescribed fire districts declared under the Fire Brigades Act or where a Volunteer Fire and Emergency Service brigade is established under the FES Act. Where a Local Government does not have the capacity to respond to property fire under its jurisdiction, the Local Government must advise DFES. f. The provision of appropriately trained personnel and the provision of firefighting equipment as notified through DFES COMCEN in areas that are declared under the provision of Fire Brigades Act or where a Fire and Emergency Service brigade is established under the FES Act where it has the operational capacity to do so.</p>	<p>Changes to highlight the variation on LG capacity. Where a LG does not have the capacity to respond to fire under its jurisdiction, including UMR and UCL, responsibility should be allocated to DFES as the HMA for Fire, including consideration of whether the LG has a permanent or long-term lack of capacity to respond, or if the issues is related to the specific incident/</p>

Appendix 2 – Local Government Feedback and input into WALGA’s submission

1. City of Armadale
2. City of Belmont
3. City of Busselton
4. City of Cockburn
5. City of Joondalup
6. City of Nedlands
7. City of Perth
8. City of Rockingham
9. City of Stirling
10. City of Swan
11. City of Wanneroo
12. Shire of Augusta Margaret River
13. Shire of Broome
14. Shire of Cuballing
15. Shire of Donnybrook Balingup
16. Shire of Dundas
17. Shire of Kalamunda
18. Shire of Kent
19. Shire of Lake Grace
20. Shire of Manjimup
21. Shire of Merredin
22. Shire of Mundaring
23. Shire of Murray
24. Shire of Narembeen
25. Shire of Perenjori
26. Shire of Ravensthorpe
27. Shire of Serpentine-Jarrahdale
28. Shire of Shark Bay
29. Shire of Toodyay
30. Shire of Victoria Plains & Wongan-Ballidu
31. Shire of West Arthur
32. Shire of Yalgoo
33. Town of Bassendean

Appendix 3 – WALGA Emergency Management Advocacy Positions relevant to the SHP Fire

8.1 Emergency Management Principles

1. The State Government bears fundamental responsibility for emergency management and has the role of providing strategic guidance, support and services for emergency management activities in Western Australia.
2. The State Government should provide financial and resourcing support as necessary to enable Local Governments to adequately deliver their extensive emergency management roles and responsibilities under the State Emergency Management Framework.
3. The Local Government Sector should be engaged as a partner in policy and legislative reviews that impact Local Government emergency management roles and responsibilities.

8.2 State Emergency Management Framework

Local Governments are supported to undertake their emergency management responsibilities by a simple and streamlined State Emergency Management Framework with the primary objectives of:

1. Protecting people, the economy, and the natural environment from disasters;
2. Supporting communities in preventing, preparing for, responding to and recovering from emergencies;
3. Clearly outlining roles, responsibilities and accountabilities for Local Government and other emergency management stakeholders;
4. Scalability and adaptability that supports Local Governments of varied capacity and capability; and

Supporting agency interoperability through common systems and approaches to key activities including data management, communications, and hazard management.

8.4 Consolidated Emergency Services Act

1. The Association advocates for the development of a Consolidated Emergency Services Act to provide a comprehensive and contemporary legislative framework to support the effective delivery of emergency services in Western Australia. The Legislation should clearly define the roles and responsibilities of all emergency management stakeholders including Local Government.
2. The Local Government sector seeks ongoing engagement in the scoping and co-design of the Act and associated Regulations and supporting materials such as Guidelines and fact sheets.
3. The Association advocates for DFES to undertake a full costing analysis of the new Act and to provide to Local Government details of the cost implications prior to the release of any Exposure Draft Bill.
4. Any new or increased responsibilities placed on Local Government by the Consolidated Emergency Services Act must be accompanied by funding and resource support to enable Local Governments to adequately discharge those responsibilities.
5. The Association recognises that in addition to the Consolidated Emergency Services Act, the Regulations and other supporting materials that are developed

to support it provide a key resource for Local Governments in understanding and discharging their legislative obligations

8.7 Emergency Services Levy

1. Local Government request the implementation of the recommendations from the 2017 Economic Regulation Authority (ERA) Review of the Emergency Services Levy, which supported increased transparency and accountability in the administration and distribution of the ESL through:
 - a. Expansion of the ESL to fund Local Government emergency management activities across prevention, preparedness and response;
 - b. Administration of the ESL by an independent organisation that is funded through consolidated revenue, with regular independent reviews of expenditure and assessment of the effectiveness of ESL funding expenditure to support prevention, preparedness and response activities;
 - c. The ESL administration fee should recompense Local Governments for the complete cost of administering the ESL;
 - d. Public disclosure of the allocation and expenditure of the ESL;
 - e. Public disclosure by the State Government on the progress of implementation of each of the ERA Review recommendations; and
 - f. A review of the role, responsibilities and reporting arrangements of the Community Emergency Services Manager (CESM) Program.
2. Local Government advocates that the ESL should be collected by the State Government, but failing that, the administration fee should recompense Local Governments for the complete cost of administering the ESL.

8.8 Local Government Grants Scheme Local Government supports:

1. A full, independent review of the LGGS to investigate and analyse how ESL funds are allocated to Local Government via the LGGS;
2. A redesign of the LGGS to remove the ineligible and eligible list and create a sustainable, modern, equitable grants program that funds Local Government emergency management activities across prevention, preparedness and response;
3. An audit of existing buildings, facilities, appliances, vehicles, and major items of equipment for both Local Government Volunteer Bushfire Brigades (BFB) and State Emergency Services (SES) to inform the preparation of a Comprehensive Asset Management Plan and to guide future funding requests; and
4. in the interim, an immediate increase in the quantum of State Government funding to enable the provision of funding of operating and capital grant applications in full, to provide all resources necessary for the safe and efficient operation of Local Government Bushfire Brigades, in accordance with obligations of the Work Health and Safety 2020 legislation.

8.9 Expansion of the Community Emergency Services Manager Program

That the Association advocates for an expansion of the Community Emergency Service Manager (CESM) Program, as follows:

1. All Local Governments should have the option of participating in the CESM Program.
2. The full cost of the CESM Program should be funded through the Emergency Services Levy.

8.10 Management of Bush Fire Brigades

1. Bush Fire Brigade volunteers play a critical role in helping to protect their local communities. Local knowledge and skills are integral to bushfire management in Western Australia.
2. Future management and funding of volunteer Bush Fire Brigades must:
 - a. Recognise the changing risk environment, including work health and safety requirements, and the increasing intensity and frequency of bushfires;
 - b. Take account of the differing circumstances of Bush Fire Brigade units and regional variations in bush firefighting approaches; and
 - c. Be adequately and equitably resourced through the Emergency Services Levy.
3. The State Government, through the Consolidated Emergency Services Act and/or other mechanism's must:
 - a. Establish a clear framework to enable transfer of Bush Fire Brigades to the State Government if a Local Government decides to do;
 - b. Consult on the process, timeline, and implications for transfer of responsibility for Bush Fire Brigades in accordance with 3(a) through the establishment of a working group comprising representatives of Local Government, Bush Fire Brigades, the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (DLGSC) and the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES);
 - c. Provide for mandatory and minimum training requirements and recognition of competency and prior learning for Bush Fire Brigade volunteers, supported by locally delivered fit-for-purpose and universally accessible training program, designed in consultation with Bush Fire Brigade representatives, Local Government and LGIS, and managed by DFES; and
 - d. Develop a co-designed suite of relevant management guidelines and materials to assist in the management of Bush Fire Brigades.
4. As a matter of priority within the emergency services Acts review, the State Government to consider the most appropriate operational model for management of Bush Fire Brigades, which may include the establishment of an independent Rural Fire Service, as recommended in the 2016 Ferguson Report.

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION BY STATE COUNCILLORS (UNDER SEPARATE COVER)

8.9 WALGA STRATEGIC PLAN 2025-2029

By Kathy Robertson, Manager Association and Corporate Governance

WALGA CEO, Nick Sloan provided a presentation to State Council on the proposed Strategic Plan.

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Cr Helen Sadler
Seconded: President Chris Mitchell JP

That WALGA's Strategic Plan 2025-2029 be endorsed.

RESOLUTION 098.5/2024

CARRIED

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The current WALGA Corporate Strategy (2020-2025) is due to end next year.
- State Council, as the governing body of WALGA, is responsible for setting the overall strategic direction of the Association, which includes endorsing the Strategic Plan.
- The new Strategic Plan has been developed over several months and has involved consultation and discussion with a wide range of stakeholders including State Council, staff, Members and Directors General.
- Once endorsed, the new Strategic Plan will be published on the WALGA website and distributed to Members and other stakeholders.

ATTACHMENT

- Draft WALGA Strategic Plan 2025-2029

BACKGROUND

WALGA's Strategic Plan 2025-2029 is presented for State Council consideration and endorsement.

The current Corporate Strategy (2020-2025) is due to end next year.

Clause 9 of the Association's Constitution vests responsibility for all matters relating to the management and affairs of the Association in State Council. As per the Corporate Governance Charter, this includes responsibility for setting the overall strategic direction of the Association.

Development of the Strategic Plan has been an involved process of consultation and discussion over the course of this past year. Supported by Keogh Consulting, key inputs into the development of the Strategy included:

- Facilitated workshops with State Council
- Facilitated workshops with WALGA staff
- Facilitated workshops with the WALGA Executive team

- Targeted consultation with a sample of Members at the CEO and Mayor/President level
- Individual engagement with external stakeholders including Directors General and senior public sector decision makers

COMMENT

The Strategic Plan outlines WALGA's vision, values and key outcomes under four strategic pillars.

WALGA's vision for 2025-2029 is "to be the authoritative voice and trusted partner for Western Australian Local Government". This vision reinforces WALGA's role as a member-based organisation, representing and supporting all Local Governments in WA.

The five WALGA values have been left mostly unchanged from the previous Corporate Strategy, except for 'Curiosity' which has replaced the previous value of 'Innovation'. The five WALGA values are:

1. Respect
2. Excellence
3. Accountability
4. Collaboration
5. Curiosity

The four strategic pillars of Influence, Support, Expertise and Explore draw on WALGA's existing brand pillars, with the addition of a fourth (Explore).

Finally, under each of the strategic pillars are outcomes which will form the basis for measuring the organisations progress towards achieving the Strategy over the next five years.

Following endorsement by State Council, the Strategic Plan will be published on the website and distributed to Members and other relevant stakeholders.

A body of work is currently being undertaken at the Executive level to develop Strategic Priorities and individual Portfolio Business Plans which will include objectives, actions, KPIs and metrics to underpin the Strategic Plan and embed it into the organisation.

2025-2029 Strategic Plan

Our Vision

To be the authoritative voice and trusted partner for Western Australian Local Government



Our Values



Respect
We act honestly, with integrity and respect.



Excellence
We strive for excellence and an environment of continuous improvement.



Accountability
We take responsibility and work openly and transparently.



Collaboration
We value strong relationships and partnerships.



Curiosity
We encourage a spirit of enquiry, and an innovation mindset.

Strategic Pillars



Influence

- Lead advocacy on issues important to Local Government.
- Champion Local Government.
- Lead policy development for the Local Government sector.
- Empower the Local Government sector to build communities equipped for the future.



Support

- Anticipate, understand and respond to Member needs.
- Offer integrated, Member-centric services.
- Provide practical sector-wide solutions based on research and evidence.
- Grow opportunities for Local Government sharing of services and resources.



Expertise

- Optimise organisational capability to service members' needs.
- Pursue growth and innovation through investment in emerging technologies.
- Promote a dynamic, agile, high-performance culture.
- Foster relationships between our subject matter experts and stakeholders.



Explore

- Diversify WALGA's revenue streams.
- Invest in transformation and innovation.
- Adopt a positive risk culture informed by the organisation's frameworks and policies.
- Encourage experimentation and agility to enable quick adaptation to change.

8.10 SUBMISSION ON THE FINAL REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF COMMONWEALTH DISASTER FUNDING (COLVIN REVIEW)

By Rachel Armstrong, Policy Manager, Emergency Management

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: President Chris Antonio
Seconded: Cr Wendy McWhirter-Brooks

That State Council endorse the submission on the Final Report of the Independent Review of Commonwealth Disaster Funding (the Colvin Review).

RESOLUTION 099.5/2024

CARRIED

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- In May 2023, the Australian Government initiated the Independent Review of Commonwealth Disaster Funding (the Colvin Review) to improve disaster funding arrangements.
- The Colvin Review aimed to identify the reforms required to produce a system that is scalable, sustainable, effective, equitable, transparent and accessible.
- WALGA provided a detailed submission to inform the Colvin Review, endorsed by State Council on 9 August 2023.
- On 25 October, the Australian Government released the [final report of the Colvin Review](#) that provided 47 recommendations.
- The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) is seeking feedback on the recommendations by 20 December to inform the Australian Government's response.
- WALGA's submission is informed by Local Governments' feedback and aligns with WALGA's advocacy positions and previous submissions.
- The submission contains recommendations regarding specific reforms required to enhance the decision-making processes, functioning, outcomes, and governance of Commonwealth Disaster Funding.

ATTACHMENT

- WALGA Draft Submission on the Final Report of the Independent Review of Commonwealth Disaster Funding (Colvin Review).

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This submission is relevant to, and aligns with, the following WALGA [emergency management advocacy positions](#):

5.4.1 Funding arrangements

The Local Government sector supports increased support for mitigation measures, greater fiscal equity and funding for repairing of damaged infrastructure which includes appropriate trigger points for access to funding and thresholds to limit the amount liable to be paid for each eligible event.

5.4.3 Betterment (resilience)

The WA Local Government sector supports increased funding for the replacement or restoration of damaged assets to a more resilient standard following an event.

5.4.4 Planning for risk management and recovery plans

The WA Local Government sector supports access to additional expertise to assist with assessing and planning/designing for recovery projects and designated funding to Local Government for the development of emergency risk management plans and recovery plans.

5.4.5 Assessment periods

Position Statement - The Local Government sector supports a shorter assessment period for events and immediate access to funding to commence works.

8.1 Emergency Management Principles

- 1. The State Government bears fundamental responsibility for emergency management and has the role of providing strategic guidance, support and services for emergency management activities in Western Australia.*
- 2. The State Government should provide financial and resourcing support as necessary to enable Local Governments to adequately deliver their extensive emergency management roles and responsibilities under the State Emergency Management Framework.*

8.2 State Emergency Management Framework

Local Governments are supported to undertake their emergency management responsibilities by a simple and streamlined State Emergency Management Framework

8.3 Sustainable Grant Funding Model for Emergency Management

Local Government should be empowered to discharge its emergency management responsibilities through sustainable grant funding models that support a shared responsibility and all hazards approach to prevention, preparedness, response and recovery from natural disasters.

8.6 Lessons Learnt Management

The Association advocates for the implementation of a transparent and contemporary assurance framework for emergency management lessons management overseen by the State Emergency Management Committee.

8.11 Local Emergency Management Arrangements (LEMA)

- 1. The State Government should fund the implementation of the Local Emergency Management Arrangements (LEMA) Improvement Plan endorsed by the State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC).*
- 2. A reformed LEMA system should:*
 - a. Clearly articulate the roles and responsibilities of Local Governments in emergency management;*
 - b. Simplify the reporting processes and reduce the administrative burden of maintaining compliance;*
 - c. Provide a suite of scalable tools and guidance materials that are accessible through an online knowledge hub;*
 - d. Build the emergency management capacity and capability of Local Governments through the provision of targeted training, exercising support, human resources and sustainable funding;*
 - e. Assist Local Governments to continue to deliver their core business activities and provide public information during an emergency event; f) Improve the connectivity of Local Governments' various risk management and hazard planning processes through an integrated approach; and*
 - f. Enable resource sharing and collaboration across the Local Government sector.*

BACKGROUND

In May 2023, the Australian Government commissioned the [Independent Review of Commonwealth Disaster Funding](#) (the Colvin Review) to improve disaster funding arrangements. The review examined the Commonwealth's disaster funding arrangements to identify reforms required to produce a system that is scalable, sustainable, effective, equitable, transparent and accessible. The Colvin Review seeks to clarify the role and strategic direction of the Australian Government in emergency management, and in doing so, has examined State, Territory, Local Government and non-government roles and responsibilities.

Public consultation to inform the Colvin Review occurred between 15 May 2023 and 4 August 2023, with feedback sought regarding experiences of Commonwealth disaster funding, understandings of processes and clarity of roles. [WALGA's submission](#) to the Colvin Review, endorsed by State Council, was submitted on 9 August 2023.

On 25 October, the Australian Government released the [final report of the Colvin Review](#). The report presents 47 recommendations. NEMA is inviting [public responses to the final report of the Colvin Review](#) to help inform the Government response to the recommendations by 20 December.

COMMENT

This submission on the Final Report of the Colvin Review aligns with WALGA's advocacy positions and previous submissions. It is informed by Local Governments' feedback regarding their experiences with Commonwealth Disaster Funding and emergency management and includes specific reforms required to enhance the decision-making processes, functioning, outcomes, and governance of Commonwealth Disaster Funding.

WALGA Recommendations

To inform the Australian Government's response to the Colvin Review Final Report, WALGA's submission recommends:

1. Uplifting Local Government capability through targeted Commonwealth investment.
2. Improving national coordination to ensure equity in recovery support, and investment in risk reduction and resilience across jurisdictions.
3. Ensuring a sustainable funding model for Commonwealth investment in resilience and risk reduction across jurisdictions, including untied non-competitive funding streams and the removal of co-contribution requirements.
4. The development and implementation of a national strategy, supported by dedicated Emergency Management support officers employed in Local Government Associations in each jurisdiction, working with Local, State and Commonwealth governments to build capacity across the sector.
5. The provision of enhanced training and exercising opportunities for Local Governments to build capability and provide structured learning pathways and nationally recognised qualifications for Local Government emergency management practitioners.
6. That any National Natural Disaster Outcomes Policy framework be developed in consultation with Local Government, and any requirement to demonstrate how projects deliver outcomes does not create additional administrative burden on Local Governments.
7. The development of common vocabulary for disaster management be a consultative process, as there are jurisdictional variations in language and interpretations.

8. That an evidence-informed, risk-based approach to Commonwealth investment in risk reduction and resilience must be consistent and coordinated with State-based systems for risk assessment and avoid duplication.
9. The differences in maturity and capacity between jurisdictions and of Local Governments in applying a risk-based approach must be considered to ensure that those with less mature risk data and resource capacity are not disadvantaged.
10. A consistent local risk assessment method and supporting resources for WA Local Governments be developed to facilitate better risk planning through Local Emergency Management Arrangements (LEMA) and / or for risk management to be scaled up to the district or State level.
11. That clarification be provided on whether the Local Disaster Management Plans proposed in the Colvin Review are the same as current Local Government Emergency Plans, in WA, the LEMA, and increase the investment in Local Government capacity and capability for emergency management planning.
12. Ensuring that any mandated capability assessments of Local Government are not administratively burdensome for Local Governments and are complimented with targeted investment to address local capability gaps.
13. Greater clarification is required on what constitutes equity in disaster funding investment and if it is to be aimed for at a State, Local Government, community or individual level, and / or between different disaster events.

Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA)

14. Increased consistency between States on the implementation of the DRFA to facilitate greater equity.
15. Other DRFA issues not covered in the Colvin Review be addressed including the:
 - a. complex scoping requirements for Category B works that do not account for the unique challenges of remote Local Governments
 - b. lack of dispute resolution mechanisms between State agencies and Local Governments, leading to prolonged conflicts
 - c. need for strict timeframes for claim payments and dispute resolution mechanisms to address delays
 - d. burdensome audit requirements especially for small and remote Local Governments, which already face strict procurement and financial oversight
 - e. lack of a mechanism to support betterment mechanisms which would reduce long term costs.
16. Further consultation be undertaken on the design and implementation of any structural changes to the DRFA that removes the existing current DRFA Category A, B, C, and D and replaces this with a criteria framework.
17. Simplifying and streamlining the DRFA administrative arrangements as the core objective of any DRFA reforms.
18. That the Commonwealth require early engagement of State DRFA managers, (e.g. DFES, re DRFAWA) with Local Governments at the preliminary stages of DRFA notification and claiming to assist Local Governments in understanding the eligibility requirements and implementing the required record keeping processes to ensure receipt of the funding that is critical for reconstruction.
19. Expanding DRFA evidence requirements for emergency works to be more holistic rather than strict reliance on before and after photographs.

Disaster Ready Fund (DRF)

20. That DRF program is reformed to be more responsive to the variations in Local Government resourcing and context, and develops the skills, capacity, and capability needed to access funding and enable locally led action.

Disaster Management Advisory Council (DMAC)

21. That Local Governments, as the closest level of government to the community, be included on the Disaster Management Advisory Council (DMAC).

Final Report of the Independent Review of Commonwealth Disaster Funding (Colvin Review): WALGA Submission

November 2024

About WALGA

The Western Australian Local Government Association (WALGA) is an independent, member-based, not for profit organisation representing and supporting the WA Local Government sector.

Our membership includes all 139 Local Governments in the State. WALGA uses its influence, support and expertise to deliver better outcomes for WA Local Governments and their communities.

We advocate to all levels of Government on behalf of our Members, and provide expert advice, services and support to Local Governments. WALGA's vision is for agile and inclusive Local Governments enhancing community wellbeing and enabling economic prosperity.

Acknowledgement of Country

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

1. Introduction

In May 2023, the Australian Government commissioned the [Independent Review of Commonwealth Disaster Funding](#) (also known as the Colvin Review) to improve disaster funding arrangements. The Colvin Review was initiated in response to the increasing size, scale, intensity, cost, and complexity of natural disasters and has considered how Commonwealth disaster funding arrangements can be enhanced so that we:

- reduce risks
- are ready for disasters
- better respond when they happen
- help people recover
- make communities stronger.

The Colvin Review aimed to identify the reforms required to produce a system that is scalable, sustainable, effective, equitable, transparent and accessible. It sought to clarify the role and strategic direction of the Commonwealth in emergency management. To achieve this, the review also examined State, Territory, Local Government and non-government roles and responsibilities.

Initial public submissions to the Colvin Review opened 15 May 2023 and closed 4 August 2023, requesting feedback of experiences of Commonwealth disaster funding, understandings of processes and clarity of roles. WALGA provided a detailed submission to the Colvin Review, endorsed by State Council on 9 August 2023.

WALGA's initial submission to the Colvin Review:

- Advocated for implementation of the findings of the [Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements](#), in relation to recovery services and funding assistance.
- Provided recommendations on the Commonwealth – State [Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements \(DRFA\)](#) including to:
 - incorporate betterment funding
 - streamline administration, approvals and evidentiary requirements
 - provide additional resources, training and support to Local Governments for DRFA administration
 - reduce the amount of time it takes to reimburse for recovery works
 - ensure flexibility of the DRFA to meet local needs
 - provide for equity between jurisdictions.
- Provided recommendations to other Commonwealth Disaster Funding, such as the [Disaster Ready Fund](#), which provides grants for natural disaster resilience and risk reduction projects, to:
 - provide a more sustainable grant funding model that enables Local Governments to discharge their Emergency Management responsibilities
 - increase the amount of grant funding available to Western Australian (WA) Local Governments and revise the co-contribution requirements
 - increase the support available to Local Governments to develop grant ready projects, and submit successful applications by funding dedicated project officer positions
 - streamline Commonwealth Disaster Funding communication and administration and ensure that application timeframes consider Local Government budget requirements and the impact of the high threat bushfire season.

On 25 October 2024, the Australian Government released the final report of the [Colvin Review](#) and [appendices](#).

The final report of the Colvin Review addresses five key themes:

1. Commonwealth Role and Coordination
2. National Natural Disaster Outcomes Policy
3. Evidence Informed Risk-Based Approach
4. Program Reforms
5. Non-government and Community Sector

The report presents 47 recommendations under these themes, with some more relevant to WA Local Governments than others. A summary of the Colvin Review recommendations, and their alignment to WALGA Advocacy Positions is included in Appendix 1. NEMA has invited [public responses to the final report of the Colvin Review](#) to help inform how the Government responds to the recommendations presented. Responses are due by 20 December 2024.

This submission on the Final Report of the Colvin Review aligns with WALGA's advocacy positions and previous submissions and was informed by Local Governments' feedback regarding their experiences with Commonwealth Disaster Funding and emergency management.

2. WALGA's Recommendations

To inform the Australian Government's response to the Colvin Review Final Report, WALGA recommends:

- 1. Uplifting Local Government capability through targeted Commonwealth investment.**
- 2. Improving national coordination to ensure equity in recovery support, and investment in risk reduction and resilience across jurisdictions.**
- 3. Ensuring a sustainable funding model for Commonwealth investment in resilience and risk reduction across jurisdictions, including untied non-competitive funding streams and the removal of co-contribution requirements.**
- 4. The development and implementation of a national strategy, supported by dedicated Emergency Management support officers employed in Local Government Associations in each jurisdiction, working with Local, State and Commonwealth governments to build capacity across the sector.**
- 5. The provision of enhanced training and exercising opportunities for Local Governments to build capability and provide structured learning pathways and nationally recognised qualifications for Local Government emergency management practitioners.**
- 6. That any National Natural Disaster Outcomes Policy framework be developed in consultation with Local Government, and any requirement to demonstrate how projects deliver outcomes does not create additional administrative burden on Local Governments.**
- 7. The development of common vocabulary for disaster management be a consultative process, as there are jurisdictional variations in language and interpretations.**
- 8. That an evidence-informed, risk-based approach to Commonwealth investment in risk reduction and resilience must be consistent and coordinated with State-based systems for risk assessment and avoid duplication.**
- 9. The differences in maturity and capacity between jurisdictions and of Local Governments in applying a risk-based approach must be considered to ensure that those with less mature risk data and resource capacity are not disadvantaged.**
- 10. A consistent local risk assessment method and supporting resources for WA Local Governments be developed to facilitate better risk planning through Local Emergency Management Arrangements (LEMA) and / or for risk management to be scaled up to the district or State level.**
- 11. That clarification be provided on whether the Local Disaster Management Plans proposed in the Colvin Review are the same as current Local Government Emergency**

Plans, in WA, the LEMA, and increase the investment in Local Government capacity and capability for emergency management planning.

12. Ensuring that any mandated capability assessments of Local Government are not administratively burdensome for Local Governments and are complimented with targeted investment to address local capability gaps.
13. Greater clarification is required on what constitutes equity in disaster funding investment and if it is to be aimed for at a State, Local Government, community or individual level, and / or between different disaster events.

Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA)

14. Increased consistency between States on the implementation of the DRFA to facilitate greater equity.
15. Other DRFA issues not covered in the Colvin Review be addressed including the:
 - a. complex scoping requirements for Category B works that do not account for the unique challenges of remote Local Governments
 - b. lack of dispute resolution mechanisms between State agencies and Local Governments, leading to prolonged conflicts
 - c. need for strict timeframes for claim payments and dispute resolution mechanisms to address delays
 - d. burdensome audit requirements especially for small and remote Local Governments, which already face strict procurement and financial oversight
 - e. lack of a mechanism to support betterment mechanisms which would reduce long term costs.
16. Further consultation be undertaken on the design and implementation of any structural changes to the DRFA that removes the existing current DRFA Category A, B, C, and D and replaces this with a criteria framework.
17. Simplifying and streamlining the DRFA administrative arrangements as the core objective of any DRFA reforms.
18. That the Commonwealth require early engagement of State DRFA managers, (e.g. DFES, re DRFAWA) with Local Governments at the preliminary stages of DRFA notification and claiming to assist Local Governments in understanding the eligibility requirements and implementing the required record keeping processes to ensure receipt of the funding that is critical for reconstruction.
19. Expanding DRFA evidence requirements for emergency works to be more holistic rather than strict reliance on before and after photographs.

Disaster Ready Fund (DRF)

20. That DRF program is reformed to be more responsive to the variations in Local Government resourcing and context, and develops the skills, capacity, and capability needed to access funding and enable locally led action.

Disaster Management Advisory Council (DMAC)

21. That Local Governments, as the closest level of government to the community, be included on the Disaster Management Advisory Council (DMAC).

3. Summary of the Colvin Review Final Report

- The Colvin Review, officially known as the Independent Review of Commonwealth Disaster Funding, was commissioned by the Australian Government in May 2023 to enhance disaster funding arrangements.
- Natural disaster is defined in the review as a rapid onset naturally occurring event that causes serious disruption to the functioning of a community or a society, due to its hazardous nature.
- The forecast total economic cost of natural disasters across Australia in 2023-24, excluding the impact of climate change, is \$11.8 billion and is predicted to rise to \$40.3 billion per year by 2049-50.
- The Colvin Review found there are significant economic benefits to focusing more investment on risk reduction and resilience.
- The Commonwealth plays a leadership role in facilitating a coordinated and consistent approach to disaster funding, providing better access to the types of data needed, developing a nation-wide Natural Disaster Risk Profile approach, and implementing an enhanced national training and exercising regime.
- The [Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements \(DRFA\)](#), the [Disaster Ready Fund \(DRF\)](#), and the [Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment \(AGDRP\)](#) are the three largest disaster funding programs, and in combination, account for more than 80% of Commonwealth disaster investment.
- Current funding is heavily favoured towards infrastructure and economic outcomes and there needs to be a more deliberate assessment of need and priority that considers the wide-ranging impacts of disasters.

4. Overview of Key Findings Relevant to WA Local Government

The Colvin Review reported that:

- Many Local governments lack the capacity and capability to meet the needs of their communities during disasters. This is particularly true for rural and regional areas with large areas, dispersed populations, and fewer resources.
- Despite the critical role of Local Government in emergency management, this lack of capacity and capability, as well as an increasing reliance on Local Government, is cause for concern.
- Uplifting Local Government capacity and capability, through target Commonwealth investment is required.
- The responsibility to support the capability and capacity of Local Government remains a function of State and Territory Governments.
- Priority should be placed on assessing Local Government capability, capacity, and investment requirements, as well as assessing any barriers to enabling locally led action.
- Local Governments often face significant financial risks due to the scale of works required for disaster recovery, which can lead to insolvency if reimbursement from the Commonwealth is delayed.

- Compared to other States, WA received the lowest level of reimbursement from the Commonwealth under the DRFA, with only 30% of eligible expenditure reimbursed. This is significantly lower compared to Queensland and New South Wales, which received 64% and 59% respectively.
- WA had a higher average net State expenditure on the DRFA compared Victoria despite receiving less reimbursement.

5. WALGA Comments and Recommendations in Response to the Colvin Review Final Report

The findings of the Colvin Review relevant to Local Governments, provide further evidence to support [WALGA's initial Colvin Review Submission](#) recommendations. The Final Report highlights the urgent need for enhanced support and funding mechanisms for Local Governments across Australia. WA is the largest state in Australia, covering about one-third of the country's total land area, and is characterised by vast rural and regional areas with dispersed populations and fewer resources. This immense size contributes to the challenges faced by rural and regional communities to effectively discharge the various emergency management responsibilities delegated to them by WA State Government, across the spectrum of preparedness, prevention, response, and recovery. WALGA has long advocated for several key positions that align closely with these findings (see Appendix 1).

WALGA Recommends:

1. Uplifting Local Government capability through targeted Commonwealth investment.

Theme 1 - Commonwealth Role and Coordination

The Colvin Review reported that:

- The Commonwealth has an opportunity to improve its emergency management governance and coordination, particularly in disaster funding, to foster national success.
- A clearer articulation of the Commonwealth's intent in disaster risk reduction and resilience building is needed to provide national leadership and assurance.
- The Commonwealth's role has evolved beyond reactive funding support, but its structures and governance have not kept pace.
- The recent establishment of NEMA has enhanced capabilities, but further maturity in arrangements is required.
- The Commonwealth must define its role, implement reforms, prioritise nationwide investments in risk reduction and resilience, and ensure coordinated activities across all agencies, with NEMA and the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet leading these efforts.
- The Commonwealth should establish a national training and exercise program to evaluate local capabilities and promote collaboration and learning across Local Government jurisdictions.

WALGA Recommends:

- 2. Improving national coordination to ensure equity in recovery support, and investment in risk reduction and resilience across jurisdictions.**
- 3. Ensuring a sustainable funding model for Commonwealth investment in resilience and risk reduction across jurisdictions, including untied non-competitive funding streams and the removal of co-contribution requirements.**

A formula-based funding approach would assist Local Governments to plan their work and respond in a structured way.

Considering Colvin Review Recommendation 5: “The Commonwealth, via NEMA, should work with state and territory governments to adopt a leadership and oversight role in ensuring adequate capability, capacity and/or investment exists across Australia for local government and communities to adequately respond to natural disaster events, and to engage with appropriate support and funding structures”

WALGA Recommends:

- 4. The development and implementation of a national strategy, supported by dedicated Emergency Management support officers employed in Local Government Associations in each jurisdiction, working with Local, State and Commonwealth governments to build capacity across the sector.**

WALGA supports the implementation of enhanced training and exercising opportunities for Local Governments.

WALGA Recommends:

- 5. The provision of enhanced training and exercising opportunities for Local Governments to build capability and provide structured learning pathways and nationally recognised qualifications for Local Government emergency management practitioners.**

This approach should not only aim to test local capabilities and identify gaps but should also aim to build strategic emergency planning and risk assessment capabilities, which are crucial for adapting to the compounding and cascading impacts of climate change. Any training and exercising program requirements for Local Governments should be appropriately resourced.

Theme 2 - National Natural Disaster Outcomes Policy

The Colvin Review reported that:

- Over the past several years, the Commonwealth has responded quickly to significant natural disasters, but this reactive approach has blurred the clarity of its roles and responsibilities.
- The focus on recovery, driven by the frequency and severity of recent events, has taken precedence over strategic planning and the evaluation of disaster expenditure success.
- While some States have initiated risk reduction programs, most Commonwealth spending has been on recovery and has lacked standardised national outcomes.

- Developing a National Natural Disaster Outcomes Policy could help provide clear objectives and a cohesive strategy for disaster funding, facilitating a more equitable and coordinated approach to disaster management.
- The Commonwealth should develop a common vocabulary for disaster management that can be used at national, regional and local levels in both government and non-government sectors to support the Outcomes Policy.

WALGA supports the development of a National Natural Disaster Outcomes Policy to better focus investment in risk reduction and resilience.

WALGA Recommends:

- 6. That any National Natural Disaster Outcomes Policy framework be developed in consultation with Local Government, and any requirement to demonstrate how projects deliver outcomes does not create additional administrative burden on Local Governments.**
- 7. The development of common vocabulary for disaster management be a consultative process, as there are jurisdictional variations in language and interpretations.**

Theme 3 - Evidence Informed Risk-based Approach

The Colvin Review reported that:

- Australia urgently needs to reduce disaster risk, but the Commonwealth lacks a comprehensive mechanism to guide investments in risk reduction and resilience.
- Developing a Nation-wide Natural Disaster Risk Profile (Risk Profile) would identify risks and assess mitigation capacities across natural, social, economic, and built domains.
- This collaborative effort would involve all government levels and provide a structured process for targeted investments.
- Analysis shows significant economic benefits from a risk-based approach, which should be integrated with the National Natural Disaster Outcomes Policy to prioritise investments effectively.

WALGA supports an evidence-informed, risk-based approach to Commonwealth investment in risk reduction and resilience.

WALGA Recommends:

- 8. That an evidence-informed, risk-based approach to Commonwealth investment in risk reduction and resilience must be consistent and coordinated with State-based systems for risk assessment and avoid duplication.**
- 9. The differences in maturity and capacity between jurisdictions and of Local Governments in applying a risk-based approach must be considered to ensure that those with less mature risk data and resource capacity are not disadvantaged.**
- 10. A consistent local risk assessment method and supporting resources for WA Local Governments be developed to facilitate better risk planning through Local**

Emergency Management Arrangements (LEMA) and / or for risk management to be scaled up to the district or State level.

Considering Colvin Review Recommendation 28: "To support a comprehensive risk-based approach, the Commonwealth should require state and territory governments to develop local or regional Disaster Management Plans"

WALGA Recommends:

11. That clarification be provided on whether the Local Disaster Management Plans proposed in the Colvin Review are the same as current Local Government Emergency Plans, in WA, the LEMA, and increase the investment in Local Government capacity and capability for emergency management planning.

Considering Colvin Review Recommendation 29: "The Commonwealth should mandate regular capability assessments of local governments by state and territory governments" Until recently, the State Government has undertaken regularly assessments of Local Governments through an annual preparedness and capability survey. Capability and capacity of Local Governments is reasonably well understood, what is required is investment in capability.

WALGA Recommends:

12. Ensuring that any mandated capability assessments of Local Government are not administratively burdensome for Local Governments and are complimented with targeted investment to address local capability gaps.

Theme 4 – Program Reforms

The Colvin Review reported that:

- Several Commonwealth disaster funding programs need reform to ensure financial investments effectively aid communities.
- The DRFA and AGDRP, the largest programs, require clearer intent and governance, and alignment with revised Commonwealth objectives.
- The DRFA should be restructured for equitable application and focus on recovery, not risk reduction.
- The AGDRP needs refined activation criteria and tighter claiming timeframes to reduce fraud.
- The DRF should align with the Risk Profile and consider increased funding to meet community expectations.
- Structural reforms and improved governance are essential for these programs to be fit for purpose, including streamlined administration and better communication.

WALGA agrees that disaster funding programs need reform and supports the Colvin Review's focus on equity of investment. However, there needs to be greater clarification on what constitutes equity and if it is to be aimed for at a State, Local Government, community or individual level, and / or between different disaster events.

WALGA Recommends:

- 13. Greater clarification is required on what constitutes equity in disaster funding investment and if it is to be aimed for at a State, Local Government, community or individual level, and / or between different disaster events.**

Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements:

Currently, the States publish their own interpretations of the DRFA which can lead to very different outcomes between jurisdictions, with some States going beyond DRFA requirements.

WALGA Recommends:

- 14. Increased consistency between States on the implementation of the DRFA to facilitate greater equity.**

Because the Colvin Review focusses on the interactions between the Commonwealth and the States, key issues WA Local Governments are routinely faced with in engaging with the DRFA are not directly addressed.

WALGA Recommends:

- 15. Other DRFA issues not covered in the Colvin Review be addressed including the:**
- a. complex scoping requirements for Category B works that do not account for the unique challenges of remote Local Governments**
 - b. lack of dispute resolution mechanisms between State agencies and Local Governments, leading to prolonged conflicts**
 - c. need for strict timeframes for claim payments and dispute resolution mechanisms to address delays**
 - d. burdensome audit requirements especially for small and remote Local Governments, which already face strict procurement and financial oversight**
 - e. lack of a mechanism to support betterment mechanisms which would reduce long term costs.**

Considering Colvin Review Recommendation 37: "The Commonwealth should remove existing current DRFA Category A, B, C, and D and negotiate their replacement with a criteria framework that categorises measures into short- (or immediate), medium-, and long-term recovery initiatives and groups initiatives according to their domain (natural, social, economic and built)".

WALGA cautiously supports this recommendation noting the need for further consultation in the design and implementation of structural changes to the DRFA, with a focus on streamlining and simplifying the arrangements and ensuring they meet diverse recovery needs in different communities and different disasters.

WALGA Recommends:

- 16. Further consultation be undertaken on the design and implementation of any structural changes to the DRFA that removes the existing current DRFA Category A, B, C, and D and replaces this with a criteria framework.**
- 17. Simplifying and streamlining the DRFA administrative arrangements as the core objective of any DRFA reforms.**
- 18. That the Commonwealth require early engagement of State DRFA managers, (e.g. DFES, re DRFAWA) with Local Governments at the preliminary stages of DRFA notification and claiming to assist Local Governments in understanding the eligibility requirements and implementing the required record keeping processes to ensure receipt of the funding that is critical for reconstruction.**
- 19. Expanding DRFA evidence requirements for emergency works to be more holistic rather than strict reliance on before and after photographs.**

Disaster Ready Fund:

WALGA's 2023 EM survey revealed significant barriers for WA Local Governments in accessing competitive grants. A dedicated, non-competitive Local Government funding stream is required to effectively target risk reduction and resilience. WALGA advocates for a sustainable funding model for local risk reduction and resilience that is responsive to the variations in Local Government resourcing and context and develops the skills, capacity, and capability of the emergency management workforce. WALGA's position aligns with the Colvin Review's prioritising the assessment of capability, capacity, and investment requirements, as well as identifying any barriers to enabling locally led action, particularly in disadvantaged or disproportionately impacted communities.

WALGA Recommends:

- 20. That DRF program is reformed to be more responsive to the variations in Local Government resourcing and context, and develops the skills, capacity, and capability needed to access funding and enable locally led action.**

Theme 5 – Non-government and Community Sector

The Colvin Review reported that:

- Non-government actors play a crucial role in disaster management, and the Commonwealth should enhance relationships with these partners to better represent vulnerable communities and industries.
- This can begin with a national assessment to identify and map existing and potential partners.
- Many communities, including First Nations, have strong networks with valuable disaster knowledge.

- Recognising and supporting these networks will lead to more effective outcomes.
- Amplifying local, community, and First Nations' voices in national disaster planning can improve outcomes for all Australians.

The Colvin Review also recommends that the Commonwealth Government convene a Disaster Management Advisory Council (DMAC). This DMAC would advise on leveraging disaster arrangements to achieve the Commonwealth's funding outcomes and offer insights on engaging the non-government sector. The Colvin Review Report proposes the DMAC would include representatives from government, the non-government sector, industry, academia, the not-for-profit and charitable sectors, and First Nations perspectives.

WALGA Recommends:

- 21. That Local Governments, as the closest level of government to the community, be included on the Disaster Management Advisory Council (DMAC).**

6. Conclusion

The Western Australian Local Government Association (WALGA) strongly supports the recommendations of the Colvin Review and emphasises the urgent need for targeted Commonwealth investment to uplift Local Government capacity and capability. By improving national coordination, ensuring sustainable funding models, and enhancing training and support mechanisms, we can build a more resilient and prepared Local Government sector. WALGA advocates for a collaborative approach involving all levels of government to address the unique challenges faced by WA Local Governments, particularly those with limited emergency management capacity and capability in rural and regional areas.



Summary of Colvin Review Recommendations and alignment with WALGA Advocacy Positions

Summary of the Colvin Review Recommendations

- Establish a Disaster Management Advisory Council (DMAC) of diverse stakeholder input and advice on disaster management policies.
- Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C) should take on a coordinating role across the Commonwealth and support NEMA to deliver an annual Statement to Parliament outlining the Commonwealth's vision, investment approach, and risk reduction priorities.
- The Commonwealth to adopt a leadership and oversight role in ensuring adequate capability, capacity, and/or investment exists across Australia for Local Governments and communities to adequately respond to natural disaster events.
- Implementation of a national training and exercise regime that tests local capabilities, encourages better information sharing, continual improvement, cross-Local Government collaboration, and identifies gaps in local disaster management capability and capacity.
- Embedment of regular sharing of lessons learnt from program outcomes between State and Territory governments and the Commonwealth to develop a continuous improvement culture.
- Development of a Nation-wide Natural Disaster Risk Profile and methodology to identify and prioritise risk reduction and resilience efforts across Australia.
- State and Territory Governments to develop local or regional Disaster Management Plans to support a comprehensive risk-based approach.
- Mandate regular capability assessments of Local Governments by State and Territory governments to Inform the Risk Profile and ensure they are adequately supported and can access appropriate disaster funding.
- Institute Commonwealth funding program reforms required to support a disaster management system that is scalable, sustainable, effective, equitable, transparent and accessible.
- Proposed reforms DRFA include:
 - clarifying the role of the DRFA, reinforcing the recovery focus (including betterment provisions)
 - simplifying the application of the DRFA and streamline its use
 - replacing categories A, B, C, and D with a framework that recognises the phases of disaster recovery (short-, medium-, and long-term) and four recovery domains.
 - introducing a more robust decision-making framework based on a disaster funding Outcomes Policy
 - clarifying and more narrowly defining an exceptional circumstance consideration;
 - reviewing the existing DRFA cost-sharing arrangements, considering appropriate thresholds, reimbursement rates, and whether insurance costs should be considered

- ensuring nationally consistent standardised measures, focused on response and short-term recovery that can be delivered quickly following a disaster event.
- Proposed reforms to DRF include:
 - underpinning the program with an investment strategy informed by Risk Profiles; and
 - reconsidering, with a view to increasing, the current amount of funding allocated to the program.
- Proposed reforms to AGDRP include:
 - clarifying the intent of the AGDRP and better target its use to those most in need; and
 - prioritising saved AGDRP expenditure towards measures that build risk reduction and resilience.

Colvin Recommendations Alignment with the WALGA Advocacy Positions

5.4.1 Funding arrangements

The Local Government sector supports increased support for mitigation measures, greater fiscal equity and funding for repairing of damaged infrastructure which includes appropriate trigger points for access to funding and thresholds to limit the amount liable to be paid for each eligible event.

5.4.3 Betterment (resilience)

The WA Local Government sector supports increased funding for the replacement or restoration of damaged assets to a more resilient standard following an event.

5.4.4 Planning for risk management and recovery plans

The WA Local Government sector supports access to additional expertise to assist with assessing and planning/designing for recovery projects and designated funding to Local Government for the development of emergency risk management plans and recovery plans.

5.4.5 Assessment periods

Position Statement - The Local Government sector supports a shorter assessment period for events and immediate access to funding to commence works.

8.1 Emergency Management Principles

1. The State Government bears fundamental responsibility for emergency management and has the role of providing strategic guidance, support and services for emergency management activities in Western Australia.

2. The State Government should provide financial and resourcing support as necessary to enable Local Governments to adequately deliver their extensive emergency management roles and responsibilities under the State Emergency Management Framework.

8.2 State Emergency Management Framework

Local Governments are supported to undertake their emergency management responsibilities by a simple and streamlined State Emergency Management Framework

8.3 Sustainable Grant Funding Model for Emergency Management

Local Government should be empowered to discharge its emergency management responsibilities through sustainable grant funding models that support a shared responsibility and all hazards approach to prevention, preparedness, response and recovery from natural disasters.

8.6 Lessons Learnt Management

The Association advocates for the implementation of a transparent and contemporary assurance framework for emergency management lessons management overseen by the State Emergency Management Committee.

8.11 Local Emergency Management Arrangements (LEMA)

1. The State Government should fund the implementation of the Local Emergency Management Arrangements (LEMA) Improvement Plan endorsed by the State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC).

2. A reformed LEMA system should:

- a. Clearly articulate the roles and responsibilities of Local Governments in emergency management;*
- b. Simplify the reporting processes and reduce the administrative burden of maintaining compliance;*
- c. Provide a suite of scalable tools and guidance materials that are accessible through an online knowledge hub;*
- d. Build the emergency management capacity and capability of Local Governments through the provision of targeted training, exercising support, human resources and sustainable funding;*
- e. Assist Local Governments to continue to deliver their core business activities and provide public information during an emergency event; f) Improve the connectivity of Local Governments' various risk management and hazard planning processes through an integrated approach; and*
- f. Enable resource sharing and collaboration across the Local Government sector.*

8.11 LGIS BOARD APPOINTMENTS – CONFIDENTIAL

State Councillors who nominated for a position on the LGIS Board declared an interest in this item and left the meeting at 12:28pm.

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: President Chris Mitchell JP

Seconded: President Paige McNeil

That:

- 1. President Christopher Antonio be appointed to the LGIS Board as Non-Metropolitan Elected Member;**
- 2. Mr John Pearson be reappointed to the LGIS Board as Metropolitan Officer; and**
- 3. Mr Peter Forbes term as Independent Director ~~and Chair~~ of the LGIS Board be extended for an additional 12 months.**

RESOLUTION 100.5/2024

CARRIED

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Three positions on the LGIS Board are due for appointment:
 - Metropolitan Officer;
 - Independent Director (Chair); and
 - Non-Metropolitan Elected Member;
- Regarding the Metropolitan Officer and Independent Director (Chair) positions, there is a recommendation to reappoint and continue the terms for the Board members currently in those positions. That is, Mr John Pearson in the position of Metropolitan Officer and Mr Peter Forbes as Independent Director (Chair).
- For the Non-Metropolitan Elected Member positions, nominations were sought during October for consideration by the Selection Committee. From the seven nominations received, the Committee shortlisted the top three candidates for interview based on their written nominations.
- Following a comparative assessment of the strengths and attributes of the three candidates, the interview panel resolved to recommend President Christopher Antonio for appointment given his demonstrated skills and experience.

BACKGROUND

Three positions on the LGIS Board are due for appointment, namely:

1. Metropolitan Officer;
2. Independent Director (Chair); and
3. Non-Metropolitan Elected Member;

State Council has ultimate authority for appointment of all LGIS Board positions.

COMMENT

Metropolitan Officer Board Position

This position is currently filled by Mr John Pearson, Director Corporate Services at the City of Rockingham. Mr Pearson has completed two of his three possible board terms and given his performance on the Board to date, it is recommended he is extended for a third and final term. This final term will expire on 1 January 2028.

Independent Director (Chair)

Mr Peter Forbes is currently an Independent Director and the LGIS Board Chair. Mr Forbes has served three terms on the LGIS Board during which time he has brought a wealth of knowledge and experience given his extensive involvement in Mutuals across the country.

The LGIS Corporate Governance Charter specifies that the maximum number of consecutive terms that a Director may serve is three, unless resolved otherwise by State Council. WALGA is seeking to extend Mr Forbes term for an additional 12 months due to the significant knowledge and leadership skills he brings to the Board.

Mr Forbes' knowledge and experience is unmatched and retaining his contribution to the Board for an extra year would be invaluable to LGIS, particularly given four of the nine Board Members are relatively new, commencing their terms in 2022 and 2023. It should also be noted that there is precedent for State Council resolving to extend Board positions beyond three terms.

Non-Metropolitan Elected Member

The Selection Committee conducted a nomination and selection process to appoint a Non-Metropolitan Local Government Elected Member to the LGIS Board. This vacancy was created after the completion of a maximum three terms by outgoing member, Cr Paul Omodei.

The secretariat advertised the vacancy, along with all other Board and Committee vacancies as outlined in the 13 November Selection Committee Minutes, in October.

Detail pertaining to nominees and selection process has been redacted.

The panel considered that President Antonio would bring a wealth of experience and strategic thinking to the Board, as well as a strong commitment to the Local Government sector, WALGA and LGIS.

State Councillors who nominated for a position on the LGIS Board returned to the meeting at 12:29pm.

8.12 APPOINTMENT TO STATE COUNCIL POLICY TEAM

By Meghan Dwyer, Executive Officer Governance

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: President Paige McNeil
Seconded: President Chris Antonio

That State Council appoint Cr Haeden Miles, the State Council representative from the East Metropolitan Zone, to the People and Place Policy Team.

RESOLUTION 101.5/2024

CARRIED

BACKGROUND

In mid-August Cr Aaron Bowman resigned as State Councillor representing the East Metropolitan Zone.

This resulted in a vacancy in the People and Place Policy Team.

An election was held at the November East Metropolitan Zone meeting for the vacant State Councillor position, and Cr Haeden Miles was elected.

COMMENT

It is proposed that the newly elected State Councillor, Cr Haeden Miles, fill the vacant position on the People and Place Policy Team.

8.13 FINANCE AND SERVICES COMMITTEE MINUTES – 20 NOVEMBER 2024

By Tony Brown, Executive Director Member Services

WALGA's Chief Financial Officer, Rick Murray and Executive Director Member Services, Tony Brown provided a presentation on the proposal to consolidate WALGA's subscription services with the general association subscription.

WALGA's Chief Financial Officer, Rick Murray also provided a presentation on the mid-year budget review.

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: President Chris Antonio
Seconded: Cr Haeden Miles

That State Council:

- 1. endorse the Minutes of the Finance and Services Committee meeting held on 20 November 2024; and**
- 2. endorse the revised Budget 2024-25.**

RESOLUTION 102.5/2024

CARRIED BY ABSOLUTE MAJORITY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Finance and Services Committee (Committee) met on 20 November.
- In addition to the standard finances and services reporting, the Committee considered the following matters:
 - Mid-Year Budget Revision – 2024-25
 - Subscription Model Review
 - Appointment of External Auditors
 - WALGA Sustainable Energy Project Phase Two
 - Council Connect Transition
- The Minutes of the meeting have been distributed to members of State Council under separate cover.

ATTACHMENTS – CONFIDENTIAL

- Finance and Services Committee Minutes – 20 November 2024
- Attachments to Minutes:
 - 6.1 WALGA Finance Report Board Pack 31 October 2024
 - Budget Amendment Schedules consisting of Project Budget 2024-25 – Recast and Capital Budget 2024-25 - Revised
 - Current subscriptions 2024-25 and Scenarios (Scenario 1, Scenario 2 and Scenario 3)

BACKGROUND

The Finance and Services Committee met on 20 November.

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

COMMENT

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

- Mid-Year Budget Revision – 2024-25
- Subscription Model Review
- Appointment of External Auditors
- WALGA Sustainable Energy Project Phase Two
- Council Connect Transition

The Chief Financial Officer will provide a presentation on the Subscription Model Review.

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

The endorsement of the revised budget 2024-25 requires an absolute majority decision.

8.14 LOCAL GOVERNMENT HOUSE TRUST BOARD OF MANAGEMENT MINUTES –20 NOVEMBER 2024

By Tony Brown, Executive Director Member Services

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: President Paige McNeil
Seconded: Cr Helen Sadler

That State Council note the Minutes of the Local Government House Trust Board of Management meeting held on 20 November 2024.

RESOLUTION 103.5/2024

CARRIED

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Local Government House Trust (LGHT) Board of Management (Board) met on 20 November.
- The Audited Financial Report for 2023-2024 was adopted, and Deloitte will issue an unqualified audit opinion.
- The Budget for the 2024-2025 Financial Year was adopted.
- The Minutes of the meeting have been distributed to members of State Council under separate cover.

ATTACHMENTS – CONFIDENTIAL

- Local Government House Trust Board of Management Minutes – 20 November 2024
- Attachments to Minutes:
 - 6.1 LGHT Audited Financial Report for the year ended 30 June 2024 - Draft
 - 6.2 Balance Sheet as at 31 October 2024.
 - 6.2 Profit and Loss Statements at 31 October 2024.
 - 6.3 LGHT Budget FY2024-25
 - 7.1 Café tenancy survey results summary

BACKGROUND

The LGHT Board met on 20 November.

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

COMMENT

The Audited Financial Report for 2023-2024 was adopted, and Deloitte will issue an unqualified audit opinion.

The Budget for the 2024-2025 Financial Year was adopted.

The Board was also provided with updates on the ground floor café at ONE70 and the ONE70 level three fitout project.

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

8.15 SELECTION COMMITTEE MINUTES – 13 NOVEMBER 2024

By Chantelle O'Brien, Governance Support Officer

State Councillors who nominated for a position on the LGIS Board declared an interest in this item and left the meeting at 12:50pm.

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: President Cr Les Price
Seconded: Cr Haeden Miles

That State Council:

- 1. note the resolutions contained in the 13 November 2024 Selection Committee Minutes; and**
- 2. endorse the recommendations contained in the 13 November 2024 Selection Committee Minutes.**

RESOLUTION 104.5/2024

CARRIED

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Selection Committee recently met for their scheduled ordinary meeting on 13 November.
- At that meeting, the Committee considered nominees for the following vacancies:
 - Bushfire Operations Committee
 - WALIS Council
 - Local Health Authorities Analytical Committee
 - LGIS Board
 - National Trust of Australia (WA) Council
 - Municipal Waste Advisory Council / Officers Advisory Group

ATTACHMENT

- Selection Committee Minutes – 13 November 2024 – CONFIDENTIAL

BACKGROUND

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

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

COMMENT

In the most recent selection round, WALGA advertised six vacancies:

- Bushfire Operations Committee
- WALIS Council
- Local Health Authorities Analytical Committee
- LGIS Board
- National Trust of Australia (WA) Council
- Municipal Waste Advisory Council / Officers Advisory Group

Nominations opened in early October and closed on 1 November.

Bushfire Operations Committee

Vacancies were advertised for two Chief Executive Officer positions on the Bushfire Operations Committee. Only one nomination was received. The Selection Committee recommended that the nominee be recommended to the Department of Fire and Emergency Services for appointment, and that the second vacancy be readvertised for an outcome to be provided following the March 2025 State Council meeting.

Western Australian Land Information System (WALIS) Council

No nominations were received for the one vacant position (open to both officers and Elected Members) on the WALIS Council. The Selection Committee recommended that the vacancy be readvertised for an outcome to be provided following the March 2025 State Council meeting.

Local Health Authorities Analytical Committee

Vacancies were advertised for two Metropolitan Member (officer) positions on the Local Health Authorities Analytical Committee (LHAAC). Five nominations were received, and the Selection Committee have resolved to put two nominees forward to the Minister for Health for consideration and appointment to LHAAC.

LGIS Board

The Non-Metropolitan (Elected Member) position on the LGIS Board attracted a lot of interest with seven nominations received. This position is classed as a strategic appointment requiring an interview process. The Selection Committee resolved to shortlist three nominees for interview. The interview panel prepared a written report for State Council consideration, including a recommended appointment (see [item 8.11](#)).

National Trust of Australia (WA) Council

One nomination was received for an Elected Member position on the National Trust of Australia (WA) Council. The Selection Committee recommended that the nominee be put forward to the CEO of the National Trust for appointment to the Council.

Municipal Waste Advisory Council / Officers Advisory Group

Vacancies were advertised for one Metropolitan and one Non-Metropolitan (officer) positions on the Municipal Waste Advisory Council / Officers Advisory Group. One nomination was received for each position, and the Selection Committee recommended to put forward both nominees for appointment.

State Councillors who nominated for a position on the LGIS Board returned to the meeting at 12:51pm.

**8.16 LGIS BOARD MINUTES – 23 AUGUST AND 25 OCTOBER 2024 –
CONFIDENTIAL**

By Kirsty Martin, Manager Commercial Management

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: President Chris Antonio
Seconded: Cr Haeden Miles

That State Council note the Minutes of the LGIS Board meetings held on 23 August 2024 and 25 October 2024.

RESOLUTION 105.5/2024

CARRIED

9 POLICY TEAM AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

9.1 INFRASTRUCTURE POLICY TEAM REPORT

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.

The Infrastructure Policy Team includes the following subject areas:

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

This Report provides an update on matters considered, since the last State Council meeting, by the Infrastructure Policy Team at its meeting held on 1 November.

1. MATTERS FOR STATE COUNCIL DECISION

The Policy Team considered the draft Partnership Agreement Between WALGA and the Public Transport Authority Defining Roles and Responsibilities for the Planning, Installation and Maintenance of Bus Stop Infrastructure and resolved that the document be considered by Zones prior to the State Council meeting in December.

2. MATTERS FOR STATE COUNCIL NOTING

The Infrastructure Policy Team noted the Native Vegetation Clearing Regulations Issues Paper and requested that the secretariat seek feedback on the matters raised and proposed initiatives from Zones. An item, including the Issues Paper, has been included in all Zone Agendas for the November round of meetings.

The Active, Green Transport Discussion Paper framework and approach was considered. It was agreed to set further time aside to discuss this in more detail.

ZONE CONSIDERATION

Avon Midland Country Zone	Noted
Central Country Zone	Noted
Central Metropolitan Zone	Noted
East Metropolitan Zone	Noted
Gascoyne Country Zone	Noted
Goldfields Esperance Country Zone	Noted
Great Eastern Country Zone	Noted
Great Southern Country Zone	Noted
Kimberley Country Zone	Noted
Murchison Country Zone	NA
North Metropolitan Zone	Noted
Northern Country Zone	Noted
Peel Country Zone	Noted
Pilbara Country Zone	Noted
South East Metropolitan Zone	Noted
South Metropolitan Zone	Noted
South West Country Zone	Noted

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Cr Helen Sadler
Seconded: President Cr Les Price

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

RESOLUTION 106.5/2024

CARRIED

9.2 PEOPLE AND PLACE POLICY TEAM REPORT

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.

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

- *Community*
- *Emergency Management*

This Report provides an update on matters considered since the last State Council meeting by the People and Place Policy Team out of session and at its meeting held on 25 October.

1. MATTERS FOR STATE COUNCIL DECISION

Advocacy Position Review

The People and Place Policy Team endorsed proposed updates to four WALGA Advocacy Positions:

- 3.10.1 - Family and Domestic Violence ([item 8.4](#))
- 3.1.2 - Reconciliation ([item 8.3](#))
- 3.1.3 - Constitutional Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People ([item 8.3](#))
- 3.1.4 - *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2021* and South West Native Title Settlement ([item 8.3](#))

2. MATTERS FOR STATE COUNCIL NOTING

The Policy Team discussed the following items included for noting in the 6 December State Council Agenda:

- Local Government Primary Health Service Survey Report ([item 10.4](#))
- Submission on the draft State Hazard Plan – Human Biosecurity ([item 10.10](#))
- Draft Submission on the draft Regional Education Strategy ([item 10.8](#))
- Draft Objectives and Priorities for the upcoming State Public Health Plan ([item 10.7](#))

The Policy Team received a verbal update on the following:

- Public Health Planning
- GROH Housing Workshop
- Reconciliation Hub Launch
- Draft Education Strategy
- LEMA Improvement Plan Progress
- State Hazard Plan – Fire Submission
- WALGA's 2025 Emergency Management Forum
- Release of reports of the Independent Reviews of Commonwealth Disaster Funding (Colvin Review) and National Natural Disaster Governance Arrangements (Glasser Review)

ZONE CONSIDERATION

Avon Midland Country Zone	Noted
Central Country Zone	Noted
Central Metropolitan Zone	Noted
East Metropolitan Zone	Noted
Gascoyne Country Zone	Noted
Goldfields Esperance Country Zone	Noted
Great Eastern Country Zone	Noted
Great Southern Country Zone	Noted
Kimberley Country Zone	Noted
Murchison Country Zone	NA
North Metropolitan Zone	Noted
Northern Country Zone	Noted
Peel Country Zone	Noted
Pilbara Country Zone	Noted
South East Metropolitan Zone	Noted
South Metropolitan Zone	Noted
South West Country Zone	Noted

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Cr Helen Sadler
Seconded: President Cr Les Price

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

RESOLUTION 106.5/2024

CARRIED

9.3 GOVERNANCE POLICY TEAM REPORT

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.**

The Governance Policy Team includes the following subject areas:

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

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

1. MATTERS FOR STATE COUNCIL DECISION

The Governance Policy Team discussed three items requiring a State Council decision.

The following two items are presented as reports in the State Council Agenda:

- Local Government Elections Advocacy Position ([item 8.2](#))
- 2025 Salaries and Allowances Tribunal Remuneration Inquiry for Local Government Chief Executive Officers and Elected Members ([item 8.7](#))

An item on the review of Employee Relations Advocacy Positions was also considered.

The [current Employee Relations Advocacy Positions](#) require updating to better reflect the industrial issues and needs of the sector since the legislative mandate for Local Governments to transition from the Federal (*Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth)) jurisdiction to the State industrial relations jurisdiction (*Industrial Relations Act 1979* (WA)) on 1 January 2023.

The following issues are relevant:

- The transition to the State system resulted in significant change to the industrial landscape for Local Governments and their employees.
- A multitude of union applications and motions have been made to the Western Australian Industrial Relations Commission (WAIRC) in 2023 and 2024.

- The Minister for Industrial Relations, the Hon Simone McGurk has introduced further reform to the State industrial relations system by tabling the *Industrial Relations Legislation Amendment Bill 2024* (IRLA Bill) on 18 September 2024. It is likely that the IRLA Bill will pass before Christmas with effect from 31 January 2025.
- Despite WALGA's continued advocacy the WA Government has not agreed via the IRLA Bill:
 - To provide an extension of time for transitional regulations to continue to displace the operation of the State awards for those Local Governments' agreements that transitioned from the Federal system beyond 1 January 2025.
 - Name WALGA as an employer organisation in the IR Act similar to the WA Branch of the Australian Medical Association Incorporated at s. 72B of the IR Act. This amendment would have provided WALGA withstanding under the IR Act at the same level as industrial unions including the WASU, LGRCEU and the CFMEU.

Advocacy Position 2.8.1 Industry Award Coverage

It is recommended to amend the position to:

That WALGA advocate for amending the WA industrial relations framework to improve the industry award conditions beneficial to Local Governments.

This Advocacy Position is sufficiently broad for WALGA to continue to advocate for improving the State awards and in turn the sector's terms and conditions to achieve consistency with the Federal system.

This Position is reliant on WALGA acting for a Local Government as agent or seeking to intervene in matters which have sector implications.

Advocacy Position 2.8.2 Local Government Long Service Leave Regulations

It is recommended this Advocacy Position be retired.

A review of the Local Government (Long Service Leave) Regulations has resulted in the making of new Regulations [Local Government \(Long Service Leave\) Regulation 2024 \(WA\)](#). WALGA was consulted and provided meaningful feedback to the Local Government Minister and Department to amend this legislation.

Advocacy Position 2.8.3 Registration of WALGA as an Employer Organisation

It is recommended to amend the position to:

That WALGA advocate for amendments to the Industrial Relations Act 1979 (WA) (IR Act) for WALGA to be an employer organisation by either:

- a) naming WALGA as an employer organisation in the IR Act; or*
- b) amending the IR Act for WALGA to be in a position to apply to become a registered employer organisation without the need for significant governance and constitutional change.*

The IRLA Bill proposes to amend section 54 of the IR Act to clarify that an incorporated body can apply to register as an organisation of employers which removes the ambiguity about whether a body can hold 'dual incorporation'. Although the proposed amendment overcomes one of the hurdles preventing WALGA to register as an employer organisation (given WALGA is already incorporated under the *Local Government Act 1995 (WA)*), WALGA's governance structure and election procedures will continue to prohibit WALGA from applying to become an employer organisation on the basis that the IR Act provisions are highly prescriptive and significant. To meet these requirements, it will be necessary to either make amendments to the IR Act or the Association Constitution.

2. MATTERS FOR STATE COUNCIL NOTING

The Pilbara Country Zone resolved at its meeting of 18 April as follows:

That the Pilbara Country Zone request WALGA to raise the matter of investigating infrastructure owned by State Government with the Office of the Auditor General.

The Policy Team considered a report on the resolution and resolved to:

... request the WALGA Secretariat write to the Office of the Auditor General, requesting a broad performance audit of State Government public building maintenance, that expands on the 2021/22 performance audit so that the following is also assessed:

1. *State Government entity asset management practices, specifically planning for building asset maintenance, renewal, replacement and redundancy;*
2. *State Government entity asset management financial planning, so that sufficient funding is appropriated to facilitate asset management maintenance and building renewal or replacement; and*
3. *Assessment of State Government entities that do not use the Department of Finance to facilitate building maintenance services.*

ZONE CONSIDERATION

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

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Cr Helen Sadler
Seconded: President Cr Les Price

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.**

RESOLUTION 106.5/2024

CARRIED

9.4 ENVIRONMENT POLICY TEAM REPORT

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.

The Environment Policy Team includes the following subject areas:

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

This Report provides an update on matters considered, since the last State Council meeting, by the Environment Policy Team at its meetings held on 2 September and 30 October.

1. MATTERS FOR STATE COUNCIL DECISION

Nil

2. MATTERS FOR STATE COUNCIL NOTING

The Policy Team discussed the following items for noting on the 4 September State Council agenda:

- Environmental Protection Act Amendment Bill
- Draft River Protection Strategy
- National Water Agreement
- National Biosecurity Strategy Action Plan
- Native Vegetation Clearing Issues Paper
- Planning Principles and Reform Advocacy Position

The Policy Team discussed the following items for noting on the 6 December State Council Agenda:

- Flying Minute Submission on Swan Canning River Protection Strategy ([item 10.9](#))
- Renewable Energy Survey ([item 10.5](#))

3. PORTFOLIO UPDATES

The Policy Team was provided with an update on Polyphagous Shot-Hole Borer and the Urban Greening Grants at their meeting on 2 September.

At their meeting on 30 October, the Policy Team was provided with an update on the following:

- Urban Greening Grants – Round Three Outcomes
- Polyphagous Shot-Hole Borer
- Avian Influenza
- Climate Change Advocacy Position progress

- Waterwise Action Plan 3 (Kep Katitjin – Gabi Kaadadjan)
- Local Planning Policy Template, Manner and Form
- Metropolitan Region Scheme (MRS) consultation and the associated Draft Clause 28.

The Policy Team also noted the Native Vegetation Clearing Regulations Issues Paper, which is being provided to Zones for feedback.

ZONE CONSIDERATION

Avon Midland Country Zone	Noted
Central Country Zone	Noted
Central Metropolitan Zone	Noted
East Metropolitan Zone	Noted
Gascoyne Country Zone	Noted
Goldfields Esperance Country Zone	Noted
Great Eastern Country Zone	Noted
Great Southern Country Zone	Noted
Kimberley Country Zone	Noted
Murchison Country Zone	NA
North Metropolitan Zone	Noted
Northern Country Zone	Noted
Peel Country Zone	Noted
Pilbara Country Zone	Noted
South East Metropolitan Zone	Noted
South Metropolitan Zone	Noted
South West Country Zone	Noted

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Cr Helen Sadler
Seconded: President Cr Les Price

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

RESOLUTION 106.5/2024

CARRIED

9.5 MUNICIPAL WASTE ADVISORY COUNCIL (MWAC) REPORT

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.

This Report provides an update on matters considered since the last State Council meeting by the Municipal Waste Advisory Council (MWAC) at meetings held on 21 August and 23 October.

1. MATTERS FOR STATE COUNCIL DECISION

- Container Deposit Scheme Policy Statement and Advocacy Position ([item 8.5](#))

2. MATTERS FOR STATE COUNCIL NOTING

MWAC considered the following matters:

- [Submission on Reform of Packaging Regulation](#) ([item 10.2](#))
- Battery disposal and recycling: Batteries continue to be problematic for Local Government, as inappropriate disposal can cause fires in collection vehicles and at facilities. MWAC discussed the various options and agreed to focus on changing community behaviour regarding battery disposal and advocating for fully funded product stewardship schemes.
- Recovered Material Framework: The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation has been developing a Recovered Materials Framework since 2014. Consultation on the Framework has occurred, with the most recent work completed in 2020. Cabinet has approved the development of the legislative framework for recovered materials, however this is not likely to occur until 2027. MWAC discussed the focus materials and outcomes that are necessary for Local Government in relation to the Framework and interim measures.
- Review of the Waste Management Legislation Policy Statement and Advocacy Position: MWAC agreed on the update of the Waste Management Legislation Advocacy Position. The focus of the review will be on ways the legislation could support better waste management practices across WA, including waste avoidance, strengthening product stewardship provisions and funding for the sector.

3. UPDATES

MWAC noted the following updates:

- Policy Statement Review Update
- Better Practice Document Review Update
- Bin Tagging Program
- 2024 Waste & Resource Recovery Conference outcome and feedback
- Household Hazardous Waste Program 2023/24 Summary
- Emerging issue - Photo Voltaic Recycling

ZONE CONSIDERATION

Avon Midland Country Zone	Noted
Central Country Zone	Noted
Central Metropolitan Zone	Noted
East Metropolitan Zone	Noted
Gascoyne Country Zone	Noted
Goldfields Esperance Country Zone	Noted
Great Eastern Country Zone	Noted
Great Southern Country Zone	Noted
Kimberley Country Zone	Noted
Murchison Country Zone	NA
North Metropolitan Zone	Noted
Northern Country Zone	Noted
Peel Country Zone	Noted
Pilbara Country Zone	Noted
South East Metropolitan Zone	Noted
South Metropolitan Zone	Noted
South West Country Zone	Noted

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Cr Helen Sadler
Seconded: President Cr Les Price

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

RESOLUTION 106.5/2024

CARRIED

10 MATTERS FOR NOTING / INFORMATION

10.1 WALGA STRATEGIC PLANNING UPDATE

By Kathy Robertson, Manager Association and Corporate Governance

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That the update on the WALGA Strategic Plan 2025-2029 be noted.

BACKGROUND

The current WALGA Corporate Strategy (2020-2025) is due to end next year.

A new Strategic Plan for 2025-2029 has been developed over the course of the last year, involving consultation and discussion with a wide range of stakeholders including State Council, WALGA staff, Members, Industry, and State Government representatives.

State Council, as the governing body of WALGA, is responsible for setting the overall strategic direction of the Association, which includes endorsing the Strategic Plan.

ATTACHMENT

- Draft Strategic Plan (refer to Item 8.9)
- [Summary of key outputs from consultation process](#)

COMMENT

Development of the new Strategic Plan has been an involved process of consultation and discussion over the course of this past year. Supported by Keogh Consulting, key inputs into the development of the Plan included:

- Facilitated workshops with State Council
- Facilitated workshops with WALGA staff
- Facilitated workshops with the WALGA Executive team
- Targeted consultation with a sample of Members at the CEO and Mayor/President level
- Individual engagement with external stakeholders including Directors General and senior public sector decision makers

A summary of the key outputs from this consultation process (including themes, strategic challenges, organisational vision and Member requirements) is attached for reference. These outputs formed the basis for development of the new Strategic Plan.

The new Strategic Plan 2025-2029 will be presented to State Council for consideration at the 6 December meeting as an item under separate cover. A draft of the Plan is attached.

Following endorsement by State Council, the Strategic Plan will be published on the website and distributed to Members and other relevant stakeholders. In addition, a body of work will be undertaken at the Executive level to develop an Operational Plan including objectives, actions, KPIs and metrics to underpin the Strategy.

ZONE CONSIDERATION

Avon Midland Country Zone	Noted
Central Country Zone	Noted
Central Metropolitan Zone	Noted
East Metropolitan Zone	Noted
Gascoyne Country Zone	Noted
Goldfields Esperance Country Zone	Noted
Great Eastern Country Zone	Noted
Great Southern Country Zone	Noted
Kimberley Country Zone	Noted
Murchison Country Zone	Noted
North Metropolitan Zone	Noted
Northern Country Zone	Noted
Peel Country Zone	Noted
Pilbara Country Zone	Noted
South East Metropolitan Zone	Noted
South Metropolitan Zone	Noted
South West Country Zone	Noted

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Mayor Patrick Hall
Seconded: President Chris Antonio

That the update on the WALGA Strategic Plan 2025-2029 be noted.

RESOLUTION 107.5/2024

CARRIED

10.2 SUBMISSION ON REFORM OF PACKAGING REGULATION

By Rebecca Brown, Policy Manager, Environment and Waste

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council note the submission to the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water on the Consultation Paper on Reform of Packaging Regulation.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Australian Government Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) released a [Consultation Paper on Reform of Packaging Regulation](#) for consultation between 27 September and 28 October.
- The Australian Government is working to reform Australia's packaging regulations to minimise packaging waste and pollution and build a circular economy for packaging. Under a circular economy, packaging would be designed to reduce waste, be recyclable and use recycled content, and used packaging would be collected and reused, or recycled back into packaging or other valuable products.
- The Consultation Paper outlines three potential options to reform packaging regulation:
 1. Strengthening administration of the co-regulatory arrangement.
 2. National mandatory requirements for packaging circularity.
 3. An extended producer responsibility scheme for packaging.
- WALGA's submission, which aligns with Policy Statement and Advocacy Position 7.15 Product Stewardship, supports Option 3, as this includes funding options, design requirements and an organisation to drive the outcomes required for packaging.
- The Municipal Waste Advisory Council (MWAC) endorsed the submission at its meeting on 23 October.

ATTACHMENT

- [WALGA Submission Packaging October 2024](#)

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This submission aligns with WALGA's [Policy Statement](#) and Advocacy Position [7.15 Product Stewardship](#):

1. *Industry should take responsibility (physical and/or financial) for the waste that it generates through the entire life cycle of the products it produces through the implementation of effective product stewardship. Without effective Product Stewardship, there will be increasing costs for the community, resource recovery targets will be difficult to reach and a transition to a circular economy is unlikely.*
2. *Effective Product Stewardship is characterised by:*
 - a. *Producers and importers taking responsibility for post consumption product impacts.*
 - b. *Schemes covering the entire cost of product recycling or recovery, including transport.*
 - c. *Leveraging existing Schemes and collection locations.*
 - d. *Being easy and convenient for the community to access.*
 - e. *Having equitable national coverage and access for all, including regional and remote locations.*

- f. *Being evidence based.*
 - g. *Consistent regulation and implementation across Australia using national Product Stewardship legislation.*
 - h. *Timely action and industry cooperation during Scheme development and implementation.*
 - i. *Being demand based and aiming to recover the maximum amount of material, rather than being limited by targets.*
 - j. *No additional cost to consumers when the product is disposed of post consumption.*
3. *Local Government calls on the Commonwealth Government to implement effective Product Stewardship schemes for all products that drive environmentally and socially sustainable outcomes through the design, manufacture and distribution of products that can be more easily reused, repaired, recovered or recycled.*
 4. *If national action is not progressed within a reasonable timeframe, or in a way that meets the needs of the Western Australian community, then Local Government supports a State based approach to Product Stewardship.*

BACKGROUND

The Australian Government Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) released a Consultation Paper on [Reform of Packaging Regulation](#) on 27 September for feedback by 28 October. The Paper highlights that design decisions impact recycling and waste management sectors and the environment and the "costs to manage the used packaging and litter it generates often fall to the taxpayer, Local Government and the waste and recycling industry".

The Australian Government undertook consultation on the current regulatory arrangements for packaging, the National Environmental Protection (Used Packaging Material) Measure 2011, in 2021. WALGA's [Submission](#) did not support the current approach and recommended that packaging product stewardship be made mandatory and be brought under the national legislation.

The Paper outlines three potential options to reform packaging regulation:

1. Strengthening administration of the co-regulatory arrangement.
2. National mandatory requirements for packaging circularity.
3. An extended producer responsibility scheme for packaging.

COMMENT

Option 1 is a strengthening of this current arrangement, which is not supported as it has significant flaws. Option 2 focuses on government regulation only, without any product stewardship organisation. It would achieve some outcomes in relation to design for recyclability but does not include a funding mechanism for infrastructure or to underpin costs. Option 3 includes a product stewardship organisation which would be responsible for the Scheme administration, options for funding mechanisms and many of the design requirements identified in Option 2.

Option 3 most closely aligns to the WALGA Product Stewardship [Advocacy Position 7:15](#) and [Policy Statement](#). MWAC supported endorsing Option 3 as it encompasses all aspects related to effective product stewardship schemes.

MWAC endorsed the submission at its meeting on 23 October.

ZONE CONSIDERATION

Avon Midland Country Zone	Noted
Central Country Zone	Noted
Central Metropolitan Zone	Noted
East Metropolitan Zone	Noted
Gascoyne Country Zone	Noted
Great Eastern Country Zone	Noted
Great Southern Country Zone	Noted
Kimberley Country Zone	Noted
Murchison Country Zone	Noted
North Metropolitan Zone	Noted
Northern Country Zone	Noted
Peel Country Zone	Noted
Pilbara Country Zone	Noted
South East Metropolitan Zone	Noted
South Metropolitan Zone	Noted
South West Country Zone	Noted

GOLDFIELDS ESPERANCE COUNTRY ZONE

The GVROC believe that for the reform in packaging to work and a circular economy to occur, there is a need for some type of incentive program by Government to be provided that encourages industry to undertake R&D and develop a new industry to utilise the packaging to manufacture new products with recyclables. The Government is on the wrong path if it's trying to get existing industry to be responsible to manage the whole process and it will be a lost opportunity.

SECRETARIAT COMMENT

The Zone's comments are noted.

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Mayor Patrick Hall
Seconded: President Chris Antonio

That State Council note the submission to the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water on the Consultation Paper on Reform of Packaging Regulation.

RESOLUTION 107.5/2024

CARRIED

10.3 SUBMISSION ON THE DRAFT STATE SUPPORT PLAN – ANIMAL WELFARE IN EMERGENCIES

By Rachel Armstrong, Policy Manager, Emergency Management

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council note WALGA's submission to the State Emergency Management Committee on the Draft State Support Plan – Animal Welfare in Emergencies.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) undertook a review of the State Support Plan – Animal Welfare in Emergencies (SSP – AWiE), with consultation open between 21 May and 12 August via [Engage WA Emergency Management](#).
- The objective of the SSP – AWiE is to integrate arrangements for animal welfare with the State's formal emergency management arrangements. DPIRD is responsible for coordinating animal welfare in emergencies.
- WALGA's submission, which aligns to relevant WALGA Emergency Management Advocacy Positions, recommended:
That DPIRD:
 1. Ensure all roles and responsibilities allocated to Local Government in the SSP - AWiE accurately align to other documents in the State Emergency Management Framework and Local Government responsibilities under the *Dog Act 1976*, *Cat Act 1976*, *Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1960*, and the *Animal Welfare Act 2002*.
 2. Revise existing guidance for the development of AWiE plans and communicate this guidance proactively with the Local Government sector, including via DPIRD's representatives on LEMCs and continues to provide Local Government AWiE training.
That the State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC):
 3. Note the importance of a sustainable resourcing model for Local Government Emergency Management to expand their capability to plan and prepare for emergencies and strengthen WA's resilience.
- WALGA's submission on the Draft SSP – AWiE was provided to SEMC on 12 August.

ATTACHMENT

- [WALGA Submission on Draft State Support Plan – Animal Welfare in Emergencies](#).

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

WALGA's submission on the Draft SSP – AWiE aligned to the following WALGA Advocacy Positions:

5.4.4 Planning for risk management and recovery plans

The Local Government sector supports access to additional expertise to assist with assessing and planning/designing for recovery projects and designated funding to Local Government for the development of emergency risk management plans and recovery plans.

8.1 Emergency Management Principles

- 1. The State Government bears fundamental responsibility for emergency management and has the role of providing strategic guidance, support and services for emergency management activities in Western Australia.*
- 2. The State Government should provide financial and resourcing support as necessary to enable Local Governments to adequately deliver their extensive emergency management roles and responsibilities under the State Emergency Management Framework.*
- 3. The Local Government Sector should be engaged as a partner in policy and legislative reviews that impact Local Government emergency management roles and responsibilities.*

8.2 State Emergency Management Framework

Local Governments are supported to undertake their emergency management responsibilities by a simple and streamlined State Emergency Management Framework with the primary objectives of:

- 1. Protecting people, the economy, and the natural environment from disasters*
- 2. Supporting communities in preventing, preparing for, responding to and recovering from emergencies;*
- 3. Clearly outlining roles, responsibilities and accountabilities for Local Government and other emergency management stakeholders;*
- 4. Scalability and adaptability that supports Local Governments of varied capacity and capability; and*
- 5. Supporting agency interoperability through common systems and approaches to key activities including data management, communications, and hazard management.*

8.3 Sustainable Grant Funding Model for Emergency Management

Local Government should be empowered to discharge its emergency management responsibilities through sustainable grant funding models that support a shared responsibility and all hazards approach to prevention, preparedness, response and recovery from natural disasters. A sustainable grant funding model for Local Government emergency management:

- 1. empowers Local Governments to undertake proactive approaches to preparedness, prevention, response and recovery;*
- 2. supports the resilience of local communities through capacity-building activities and programs;*
- 3. is responsive to the variations in Local Government resourcing and context;*
- 4. develops the skills, capacity and capability of the emergency management workforce; and*
- 5. is consistent, flexible, timely, accessible, scalable, strategic and the guidance provided is comprehensive.*

8.11 Local Emergency Management Arrangements (LEMA)

- 1. The State Government should fund the implementation of the Local Emergency Management Arrangements (LEMA) Improvement Plan endorsed by the State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC).*
- 2. A reformed LEMA system should:*
 - a) Clearly articulate the roles and responsibilities of Local Governments in emergency management;*
 - b) Simplify the reporting processes and reduce the administrative burden of maintaining compliance;*

- c) *Provide a suite of scalable tools and guidance materials that are accessible through an online knowledge hub;*
- d) *Build the emergency management capacity and capability of Local Governments through the provision of targeted training, exercising support, human resources and sustainable funding;*
- e) *Assist Local Governments to continue to deliver their core business activities and provide public information during an emergency event;*
- f) *Improve the connectivity of Local Governments' various risk management and hazard planning processes through an integrated approach; and*
- g) *Enable resource sharing and collaboration across the Local Government sector*

BACKGROUND

The purpose of the State Support Plan – Animal Welfare in Emergencies (SSP – AWiE) is to integrate arrangements for animal welfare with the State's formal emergency management arrangements, to ensure that animals are planned for and their welfare is appropriately addressed in any emergency. The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) is responsible for coordinating animal welfare in emergencies.

The amendments made by DPIRD in the revised SSP – AWiE focused on clarifying roles and responsibilities, management of evacuation centres, distribution of information in culturally and linguistically appropriate formats, funding arrangements, biosecurity considerations, and treatment and euthanasia provisions.

Local Governments do not have legislative responsibilities for animal welfare other than those relating to stray domestic animals, or animals impounded in Local Government managed facilities, as prescribed in the *Dog Act 1976*, *Cat Act 1976*, and the *Animal Welfare Act 2002*, and impounding of cattle under the *Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1960*. Local Governments have a supporting role for Animal Welfare in Emergencies, and many have Local Animal Welfare in Emergency Plans.

Prior to preparing the submission on the draft SSP - AWiE, WALGA provided initial feedback as a member of the Committee for Animal Welfare in Emergencies, highlighting that the SSP – AWiE should consider the varying capacity and capabilities of individual Local Governments.

WALGA shared DPIRD's request for feedback with Local Governments via the Emergency Management Newsletter, Network, and Emergency Management Advisory Group. Input was received from the City of Perth and City of Rockingham.

WALGA's submission on the Draft SSP – AWiE was provided to the State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC) on 12 August.

COMMENT

WALGA's submission, which aligns to relevant WALGA Emergency Management Advocacy Positions, recommended:

That DPIRD:

1. Ensure all roles and responsibilities allocated to Local Government in the SSP AWiE accurately align to other documents in the State Emergency Management Framework and Local Government responsibilities under the *Dog Act 1976*, *Cat Act 1976*, *Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1960*, and the *Animal Welfare Act 2002*.

(Further detail on recommended changes to the SSP AWiE are outlined in Attachment 1 of the submission).

2. Revise existing guidance for the development of AWiE plans and communicate this guidance proactively with the Local Government sector, including via DPIRD's representatives on LEMCs and continues to provide Local Government AWiE training.

That SEMC:

3. Note the importance of a sustainable resourcing model for Local Government Emergency Management to expand their capability to plan and prepare for emergencies and strengthen WA's resilience.

In addition to the recommendations above, WALGA's submission highlighted the unique challenges for Local Governments with animal welfare during emergencies and the requirement for clear guidance, support and funding to plan and assist in animal welfare during emergencies. WALGA also advocated for the continuation of DPIRD's animal welfare training, which was offered from 2020 to 2022, to support Local Governments in preparing for and responding to animal welfare issues during emergencies.

ZONE CONSIDERATION

Avon Midland Country Zone	Noted
Central Country Zone	Noted
Central Metropolitan Zone	Noted
East Metropolitan Zone	Noted
Gascoyne Country Zone	Noted
Goldfields Esperance Country Zone	Noted
Great Eastern Country Zone	Noted
Great Southern Country Zone	Noted
Kimberley Country Zone	Noted
Murchison Country Zone	Noted
North Metropolitan Zone	Noted
Northern Country Zone	Noted
Peel Country Zone	Noted
Pilbara Country Zone	Noted
South East Metropolitan Zone	Noted
South Metropolitan Zone	Noted
South West Country Zone	Noted

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Mayor Patrick Hall
Seconded: President Chris Antonio

That State Council note WALGA's submission to the State Emergency Management Committee on the Draft State Support Plan – Animal Welfare in Emergencies.

RESOLUTION 107.5/2024

CARRIED

10.4 LOCAL GOVERNMENT PRIMARY HEALTHCARE SURVEY REPORT

By Hannah Godsave, Policy Manager Community

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council note the Primary Healthcare Services Survey Report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 103 Local Governments participated in a WALGA commissioned Primary Healthcare Services Survey to examine the extent to which Local Governments were providing support to secure primary healthcare services in their communities.
- 69 Local Governments (67% of respondents) reported contributing financial and/or in-kind support towards primary healthcare services at a net cost of \$6.8m.
- The Survey Report makes clear that primary healthcare provision is the responsibility of the Australian and State governments, and that Local Government support is a result of their failure to ensure adequate provision of essential health services.
- The Report aligns to existing calls for systematic changes to the health system to ensure equity of access and recommends practical solutions to alleviate the need for Local Governments to support primary healthcare services:
 - State Government to establish a Local Government Primary Healthcare funding program.
 - State Government to facilitate increased sector awareness of advice and support available to Local Governments seeking to support primary healthcare services for their communities.
 - WA Local Government Grants Commission to review the appropriateness and effectiveness of the Medical Facilities Cost Adjuster within the Financial Assistance Grants.
- WALGA is working with Rural Health West (RHW), ALGA and wider stakeholders to explore joint advocacy opportunities to the State and Australian Governments.
- The Survey Report was considered by the People and Place Policy team at its meeting on 25 October.

ATTACHMENT

- [Local Government Primary Healthcare Services Survey Report](#)

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The Report and associated advocacy are aligned to [WALGA Advocacy Position 3.2.2 Regional Health Services](#):

The Association supports continuing to work with affected Local Governments and key stakeholders to identify and develop collaborative strategies. The Association supports continuing to advocate to the State Government to prioritise regional health and the regional health workforce. The Association supports developing a policy connection with the Australian Local Government Association as a pathway for advocating for stronger specialised regional health workforces.

BACKGROUND

The 2023 Local Government Primary Healthcare Service Survey (the Survey) builds on the 2018 WALGA research into Local Government support for General Practice services. WALGA commissioned Rural Health West (RHW) to undertake the survey and report.

Based on data from financial year 2021-22, the Survey gathered data across primary healthcare services including: general practice; allied health services; mental health; aged care and Aboriginal health services. 103 (74 per cent) Local Governments participated in the Survey.

Key findings include:

- 69 Local Governments (67% of respondents) reported contributing financial and/or in-kind support towards primary healthcare services at a net cost of \$6.8m;
- 48 Local Governments (47% of respondents) reported providing financial support for either resident or visiting general practice services, at a combined net cost of \$5.2 million;
- 92% of respondent financial or in-kind support for general practice services is undertaken by Local Governments with populations of 1,000 to 5,000;
- 77% of respondents indicated they are likely to increase support for primary healthcare services in the coming year; and
- That the Financial Assistance Grants Medical Facilitators Cost Adjustor does not reflect the costs incurred by Local Governments supporting primary healthcare services.

The Survey Report demonstrates the diverse nature of arrangements that Local Governments utilise to secure primary healthcare services. This includes direct employment of GPs, incentive payments and benefits such as vehicles and housing, income guarantees and the provision of practice facilities.

The survey data has already provided the quantitative data to support policy development including the WALGA State Budget Submission, which called for the establishment of an annual \$5 million Local Government Primary Healthcare funding program. WALGA has achieved advocacy successes more broadly in rural health including changes to State legislation surrounding procurement for General Practitioner contracts in 2023 and increases to the Patient Assisted Travel Scheme fuel subsidy rate in August.

The Report clearly states that primary healthcare provision is the responsibility of the Australian and State governments. The report findings reinforce existing calls for reform to the Australian healthcare system to ensure access to primary healthcare for regional and remote communities, including:

- adequate and appropriate funding models;
- attracting and retaining healthcare professionals, leveraging technology enabled care; and
- increased collaboration between the Commonwealth and State Governments.

The provision of medical services was one of 15 issues identified as priority areas by Band 4 Local Governments at the Minister's Roundtable meeting held on 3 September. At the following Band 4 Local Government meeting on 11 October, the topic was identified as a top three strategic priority for WALGA to support members to address.

COMMENT

WALGA is working with RHW to explore joint advocacy opportunities to address the lack of primary healthcare services in rural, regional and remote areas and the cost impost on Local Governments in procuring and supporting these services in their communities. Immediate advocacy opportunities are focused on the upcoming State and Australian Government elections, including through ALGA.

ZONE CONSIDERATION

Avon Midland Country Zone	Noted
Central Country Zone	Noted
Central Metropolitan Zone	Noted
East Metropolitan Zone	Noted
Gascoyne Country Zone	Noted
Goldfields Esperance Country Zone	Noted
Great Eastern Country Zone	Noted
Great Southern Country Zone	Noted
Kimberley Country Zone	Noted
Murchison Country Zone	Noted
North Metropolitan Zone	Noted
Northern Country Zone	Noted
Peel Country Zone	Noted
Pilbara Country Zone	Noted
South East Metropolitan Zone	Noted
South Metropolitan Zone	Noted
South West Country Zone	Noted

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Mayor Patrick Hall
Seconded: President Chris Antonio

That State Council note the Primary Healthcare Services Survey Report.

RESOLUTION 107.5/2024

CARRIED

10.5 RENEWABLE ENERGY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

By Lisa Harwood, Principal Policy Advisor (Economic Development)

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council note the update on the Renewable Energy Survey.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Western Australia's energy industry is transforming to achieve the goal of net zero emissions by 2050.
- Western Australia does not have a plan or framework that provides a consistent approach to how proponents of major energy projects consult with local communities and how they can share in the benefits.
- Three new advocacy positions related to the renewable energy transition were endorsed by State Council at its September 2024 meeting.
- WALGA conducted a Renewable Energy Survey of Local Governments to capture data on Local Government sentiment on the energy transition to inform policy development and ongoing advocacy.

ATTACHMENT

- [Renewable Energy Survey Highlights](#)

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This item relates to the following [WALGA advocacy positions](#):

- 6.16 Energy Transition Engagement and Community Benefit Framework
- 6.17 Renewable Energy Facilities
- 6.18 Priority Agriculture

BACKGROUND

The 2023 WALGA Annual General Meeting resolved *that WALGA establish and promote policies 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*. Following on from this discussion, further conversations across WALGA Member Councils have led to the consideration of how local communities can be involved in, and benefit from, renewable energy projects.

After consultation with Members, discussions with State Governments and other jurisdictions, WALGA developed three advocacy policy positions related to the renewable energy transition. These were endorsed by all WALGA Zones and State Council at its September 2024 State Council Meeting. These positions form the basis of WALGA's advocacy on this topic and will be used to inform discussions with Government and advocate on behalf of our Member Councils.

To further support these advocacy efforts, WALGA conducted a survey to capture data on Local Government sentiment on the energy transition. This survey was targeted towards Local Government CEOs.

COMMENT

The Renewable Energy Survey was completed by 48 Local Governments. 75% of respondents were from regional Local Governments. Key highlights include:

- 66% of respondents stated the energy transition is important or very important to their community.
- Only 8% perceived community support to be low or very low when it comes to renewable energy projects.
- 60% of regional Local Governments stated local economy diversification as the greatest opportunity from the energy transition.
- When it comes to community benefits frameworks, upgrades of infrastructure, services or facilities (62%) and new infrastructure, services or facilities (47%) were stated as the top two most important inclusions.
- No framework to deliver community benefits (57%) was stated as the biggest challenge for regional Local Governments.

WALGA continues to progress work in supporting Members with the renewable energy transition. Current initiatives include:

- The establishment of a Teams Group for CEOs and Elected Members, to facilitate continued collaboration and knowledge sharing between Local Governments.
- A Large Scale Renewable Energy Forum, which provides the chance to bring together Local Governments across the state to discuss the opportunities and challenges of large scale renewable energy projects, and what support Local Governments need when it comes to engaging with proponents.
- A research paper for WA Local Governments that outlines the current renewable energy environment in WA and looks at case studies from across Australia.
- The preparation of a scope of works to engage a consultant to prepare a community engagement and benefits guidelines to assist Local Governments when dealing with large scale renewable energy projects.

ZONE CONSIDERATION

Avon Midland Country Zone	Noted
Central Country Zone	Noted
Central Metropolitan Zone	Noted
East Metropolitan Zone	Noted
Gascoyne Country Zone	Noted
Goldfields Esperance Country Zone	Noted
Great Eastern Country Zone	Noted
Great Southern Country Zone	Noted
Kimberley Country Zone	Noted
Murchison Country Zone	Noted
North Metropolitan Zone	Noted
Northern Country Zone	Noted
Peel Country Zone	Noted
Pilbara Country Zone	Noted
South East Metropolitan Zone	Noted
South Metropolitan Zone	Noted
South West Country Zone	Noted

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Mayor Patrick Hall
Seconded: President Chris Antonio

That State Council note the update on the Renewable Energy Survey.

RESOLUTION 107.5/2024

CARRIED

10.6 FLYING AGENDA: SUBMISSION TO MAIN ROADS WA ON THE REVISED WESTERN AUSTRALIA TRAFFIC SIGNALS APPROVAL POLICY AND PROCESS

By Max Bushell, Senior Policy Advisor, Road Safety and Infrastructure

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council note the submission to Main Roads WA on the Revised Main Roads Western Australia Traffic Signals Approval Policy and Process as endorsed by State Council via Flying Minute.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- This submission was a response to a request for review of the Main Roads Western Australia Traffic Signals Approval Policy and Process.
- This submission supports three existing WALGA policy positions.
- This Policy and Process has historically been controversial, so WALGA undertook a consultation process with Local Governments to develop a submission reflective of current issues relating to this Policy and Process.
- Diverse issues were raised by Local Governments, including concerns around the accommodation of non-motorised users, the preference for roundabouts, design requirements, and the relationship of the Policy and Process to the Structure Planning Process, among others.
- Generally, Local Governments would like more control over the selection of intersection types to reflect community and strategic transport goals and planning documents.
- The Infrastructure Policy Team considered this item at a meeting held on 29 July and approved the recommendation that the submission be provided to State Council for endorsement.
- State Council endorsed the submission via Flying Minute on 7 August and the submission was provided to Main Road WA on 15 August.

ATTACHMENT

- [Flying Minute: Submission to Main Roads WA on the revised Western Australia Traffic Signals Approval Policy and Process](#)

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The submission on the Main Roads Traffic Signals Approval Policy and Process is aligned to the following [WALGA Advocacy Positions](#):

5.3.5 Active Travel to Schools

The Local Government sector supports:

1. *the Department of Transport's Draft Active Travel to School Roadmap; and*
2. *increased State and Federal Government funding for walking and cycling infrastructure in Western Australia.*

5.3.6 Pedestrian Crossings

The Local Government sector supports the following principles regarding the design and implementation of pedestrian crossings:

- 1. Planning at the local level - A detailed understanding of modal networks at the local level and/or local transport plans should inform where and which pedestrian crossing types are implemented.*
- 2. Pedestrian Crossings are essential - High-speed, high-volume roads are the major barrier to active transport that must be resolved.*
- 3. Pedestrian Priority - Pedestrian travel should be given equal weight to vehicular travel. High-quality, cost-effective, pedestrian-priority crossings should be implemented wherever possible. Pedestrian Crossings on roads with heavy vehicles should also be given higher priority toward the implementation of a safe, pedestrian-priority crossings in the Guidelines, based on the risk to the pedestrian.*
- 4. Cost - Cost-effective pedestrian-priority crossings should be considered first, rather than high-cost facilities. The Guidelines should provide guidance on the cost of installing pedestrian crossing facilities and general information on which party may bear the costs.*
- 5. Proactive Approach - Forecast pedestrian demand based on network planning, rather than existing pedestrian counts should be used to plan appropriate crossings.*
- 6. Speed - Vehicle travel speed requirements for implementing pedestrian crossings must not be a barrier to selecting and installing pedestrian-priority crossings, but should be a consideration in selecting cost-effective designs.*
- 7. Intersections - Intersection designs, including roundabouts, should accommodate pedestrian crossing priority.*

5.2.7 Road Safety Strategy

The Local Government sector supports:

- the development and adoption of a new road safety strategy for Western Australia, to direct and focus effective road safety activities beyond 2020,*
- the safe system approach as the framework for the next road safety strategy,*
- the long-term vision of zero deaths and serious injuries,*
- the retention of WA's Default Open Speed Limit at 110km per hour and opposes the proposed reduction to 100km per hour,*
- the continuation of enforcement, school and community education, promotion and community participation activity to support compliant and safe road user behaviour along with the following recommendations:*
 - 1. That the Road Safety Council establish a mechanism to ensure that implementation is managed and coordinated, in a collaborative manner, at operational level.*
 - 2. That the new strategy and above mechanism is developed to embrace and empower a broader multisectoral effort, where all contributors are respected as partners and the contributions of all are valued.*
 - 3. To better understand the failures in implementation and enhance accountability, work should be done to define and seek to engage all players in the design, operation, maintenance and upgrades (system designers) to the road transport system. This exercise might also aim to clarify capacity and capability to better understand how to bridge implementation gaps.*

4. *That as a matter of urgency the Road Safety Council initiate the development of a comprehensive speed reform plan. That the speed reform plan be designed, to meet the various needs of metropolitan, rural and remote Western Australian communities, with the aim of improving liveability, amenity and safety. WALGA Advocacy Positions Page 110*
5. *That a speed reform plan incorporates:*
 - a. *measures to ensure that Local Governments are consulted in the process of changing speed limits on the local road network, and*
 - b. *processes to reduce the barriers and red tape for Local Governments seeking lower speed limits in targeted locations on local urban roads.*
6. *That the Road Safety Council initiate work to investigate and facilitate systematic assessments and star ratings for the WA road network.*
7. *That the Road Safety Council considers establishing a program that encourages and supports the development of innovative, low cost solutions that can be applied as mass action treatments to progressively work towards the zero vision.*
8. *That the Road Safety Council consider supporting overt police patrols in regional areas to improve compliance through general deterrence.*
9. *That WALGA calls on the Road Safety Council to make recommendations to the Minister responsible for road safety, to direct any additional revenue generated from speed limit changes to safety-focused road infrastructure improvements. Further that Local Government managed roads be eligible for such funding to avoid a growing gap in safety performance, on the roads used by the community, on every trip.*
10. *That the new draft road safety strategy includes, at a minimum, targets to meet the Global Road Safety Performance Targets.*
11. *That the Road Safety Council explores mechanisms to quantify, understand and address the gaps in safety performance and standards as well as the capability and capacity of system designers to respond.*
12. *That the Road Safety Council considers enhancing the dissemination of research, data and other information more broadly to system designers to encourage and enable others (beyond the Road Safety Council membership and government agencies) to set targets, towards zero, relevant to their context, challenges and gaps.*

BACKGROUND

Main Roads WA released the Revised Traffic Signals Approval Policy and Process (TSAP) for review on 21 May. WALGA initiated a comprehensive review of the policy during June. This review identified significant issues with the Policy and Process and highlighted the need for more extensive consultation with Local Governments.

Submissions were due to Main Roads on 15 August.

COMMENT

In recent years, Local Governments in WA have voiced serious concerns on various elements of this policy, which are not addressed in the revised draft. WALGA invited the following Local Governments to provide comment. This list was compiled based on the presence of traffic signals in these Local Governments.

- All Perth Metro Local Governments
- Karratha
- Geraldton
- Kalgoorlie
- Northam
- Bunbury
- Busselton
- Dardanup
- Collie

A consultation process took place over June-July.

The WALGA review and feedback from Local Governments highlighted some significant issues in this draft version of a new Main Roads Western Australia Traffic Signals Approval Policy and Process, which are summarized below.

- Roundabouts – The strong preference for roundabouts does not always align with Local Government strategic goals and may place an undue financial burden on Local Governments in instances where other intersection options are less costly or provide other net benefits. The requirement to prove a roundabout is not feasible should be removed and a process implemented whereby the best option for the asset owner can be selected.
- Non-Motorised Users – Signalised intersections provide a safe place for non-motorised users to cross and it is essential that non-motorised users be accommodated safely and comfortably at intersections. Treatment options to support better pedestrian/bicycle networks should be actively considered and encouraged in this Policy and Process. Roundabouts should safely accommodate non-motorised users with priority.
- Intersection Performance Metrics – These metrics, e.g. intersection Level-of-Service, should be considered in light of Local Government strategic transport planning documents and with due consideration to the priorities of various transportation modes.
- Bureaucracy/Complexity – This Policy and Process should be simplified as a general rule and should avoid the use of overly bureaucratic and technical language. Additionally, workflows should be developed for simple and complex projects, keeping Local Government strategic transport planning goals in mind.
- Design Requirements – Various modelling software should be allowed to support reducing costs and ensuring a broader scope of expertise is present in Local Government.
- Local Government Asset Ownership – The policy should acknowledge that Local Governments are in the best position to make decisions regarding the development of intersections under their control and should have priority advising powers over the type of intersection selected for implementation.
- Relationship to Structure Plans - The Policy and Process should be very clear on how the TSAP process relates to the Structure Planning process and should honour previous decisions and plans, e.g. approved arrangements under Development Contribution Plans. Where traffic lights are proposed and supported (including by

ministerial approval), this should be honoured, while timeframes should be amended (from two years to four years) to align with the planning system. Once Structure Plans have been finalised, the selected signal type should not be subject to change except by agreement.

Broadly, Local Governments would like more control over the selected signal type/intersection design to better align with their strategic community goals and transport plans and would support a simplified and less bureaucratic Traffic Signals Approval Policy and Process.

ZONE CONSIDERATION

Avon Midland Country Zone	Noted
Central Country Zone	Noted
Central Metropolitan Zone	Noted
East Metropolitan Zone	Noted
Gascoyne Country Zone	Noted
Goldfields Esperance Country Zone	Noted
Great Eastern Country Zone	Noted
Great Southern Country Zone	Noted
Kimberley Country Zone	Noted
Murchison Country Zone	Noted
North Metropolitan Zone	Noted
Northern Country Zone	Noted
Peel Country Zone	Noted
Pilbara Country Zone	Noted
South East Metropolitan Zone	Noted
South Metropolitan Zone	Noted
South West Country Zone	Noted

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Mayor Patrick Hall
Seconded: President Chris Antonio

That State Council note the submission to Main Roads WA on the Revised Main Roads Western Australia Traffic Signals Approval Policy and Process as endorsed by State Council via Flying Minute.

RESOLUTION 107.5/2024

CARRIED

10.7 FLYING MINUTE: SUBMISSION ON THE DRAFT OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES FOR THE UPCOMING STATE PUBLIC HEALTH PLAN

By Hannah Godsave, Policy Manager Community

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council note the submission to the Department of Health on the draft Objectives and Priorities for the upcoming State Public Health Plan as endorsed by State Council via Flying Minute.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Department of Health provided [draft objectives and priorities for the upcoming State Public Health Plan](#) for public consultation in August.
- Stage 5 of the *Public Health Act 2016* commenced on 4 June and requires Local Governments to prepare and publish Local Public Health Plans by 4 June 2026.
- Local Public Health Plans must consider the State Public Health Plan objectives and priorities as they relate to the needs of their local community.
- WALGA's submission is aligned to Advocacy Position 3.2.1 Public Health Plans and was informed by the WALGA Local Government Public Health Plans Reference Group.
- State Council endorsed the submission via Flying Minute on 30 August.

ATTACHMENT

- [Flying Minute: Submission on the Draft Objectives and Priorities for the Upcoming State Public Health Plan](#)

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This submission is aligned to [WALGA Advocacy Position](#), 3.2.1 Local Public Health Plans:

WALGA supports the objects and principles of the Public Health Act 2016.

The State Government must ensure that:

- 1. Guidance, tools and resources are developed to support the development of Local Public Health Plans; and*
- 2. Funding is provided for:*
 - a. Smaller rural and regional councils are provided with funding to support the development of Local Public Health Plans; and*
 - b. Local Governments receive ongoing funding for the implementation of actions under Local Public Health Plans.*

BACKGROUND

The Department of Health is consulting on the objectives and priorities for the 2024-2029 State Public Health Plan (SPHP) to replace the [State Public Health Plan for Western Australia 2019-2024](#). Stage 5 of the *Public Health Act 2016* commenced on 4 June and requires Local Governments to prepare and publish Local Public Health Plans (LPHPs) by 4 June 2026. LPHPs must consider SPHP objectives and priorities as they relate to the needs of their local community.

The proposed framework for the SPHP is at Table 1:

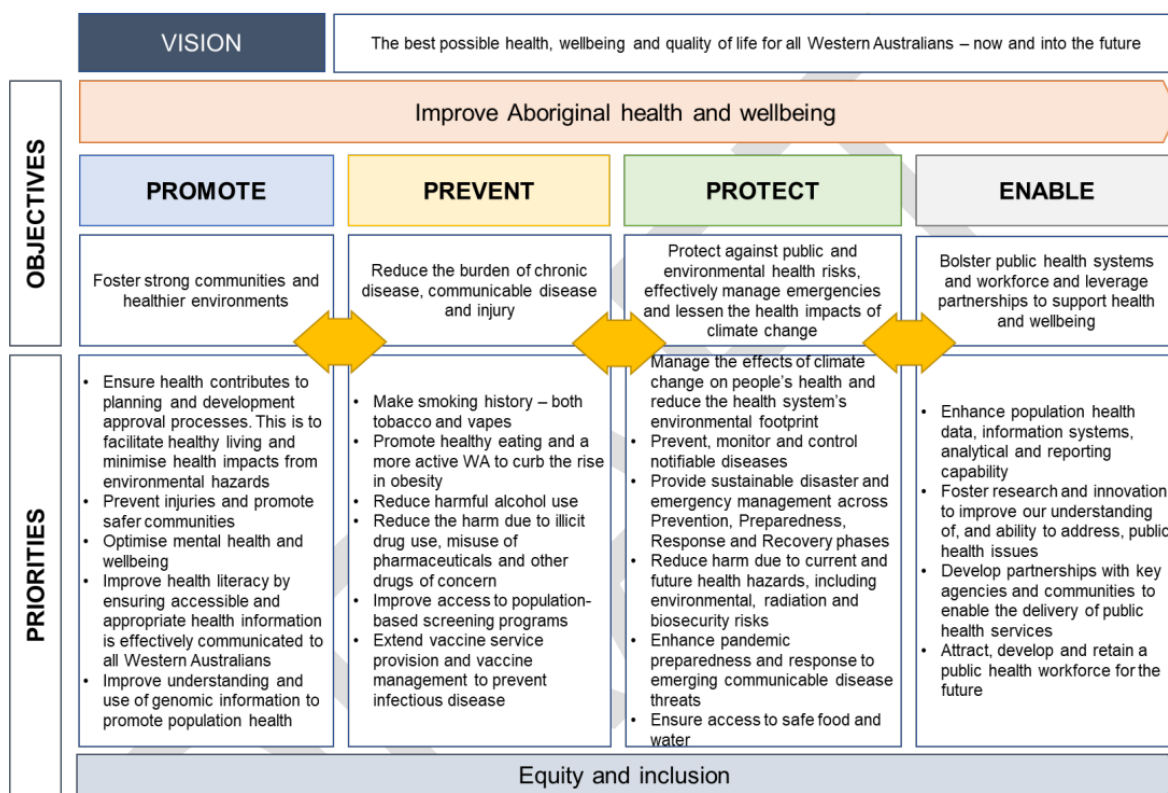


Table 1: Draft 2024-20298 SHP Vision, Objectives and Priorities

Improve Aboriginal health and wellbeing has been proposed as an overarching objective that should be considered when applying all other objectives. Equity and inclusion are guiding principles of the plan that should be addressed across all objectives.

COMMENT

WALGA's submission focused on SPHP objectives and priorities in relation to the Local Government Sector and the requirement to prepare and publish LPHPs by June 2026 under Stage 5 of the *Public Health Act 2016*.

The submission stresses the need for sufficient resourcing and support for the preparation and implementation of local health plans. This is a key advocacy position that is echoed in the feedback on the Public Health Planning Guide for Local Government. Specifically the submission recommends that the:

- Department of Health continue to engage with the Local Government sector on the development of documents and support relating to LPHPs,
- State Government commit to investing in the preparation and implementation of LPHPs through additional funding,
- State Government ensure equitable access to support and guidance for Local Governments through prioritised recruitment and resources to Population Health Units across the Department of Health and WACHS, especially in non-metro regions,
- overarching State Public Health Plan's objective of Equity and Inclusion is repositioned to the top of the diagram to reflect its importance to all other objectives,
- State Government invest significantly in supporting the scope and implementation of the new 'managing the effects of climate change on people's health' priority, and

- Department of Health set specific actions under the State Plan and commits to appropriate resourcing.

State Council endorsed the submission via Flying Minute on 30 August.

Further consultation on a draft State Public Health Plan is expected in the new year.

The Department of Health has also sought Local Government feedback on the [draft Public Health Planning Guide for Local Government](#) by 29 November. The Guide is being developed to assist Local Governments with public health planning and developing LPHPs by June 2026 as required under Stage 5 of the *Public Health Act 2016*.

WALGA strongly encouraged Local Governments to provide feedback on the draft guide directly to inform WALGA's submission on behalf of the sector.

ZONE CONSIDERATION

Avon Midland Country Zone	Noted
Central Country Zone	Noted
Central Metropolitan Zone	Noted
East Metropolitan Zone	Noted
Gascoyne Country Zone	Noted
Goldfields Esperance Country Zone	Noted
Great Eastern Country Zone	Noted
Great Southern Country Zone	Noted
Kimberley Country Zone	Noted
Murchison Country Zone	Noted
North Metropolitan Zone	Noted
Northern Country Zone	Noted
Peel Country Zone	Noted
Pilbara Country Zone	Noted
South East Metropolitan Zone	Noted
South Metropolitan Zone	Noted
South West Country Zone	Noted

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Mayor Patrick Hall
Seconded: President Chris Antonio

That State Council note the submission to the Department of Health on the draft Objectives and Priorities for the upcoming State Public Health Plan as endorsed by State Council via Flying Minute.

RESOLUTION 107.5/2024

CARRIED

10.8 FLYING MINUTE: SUBMISSION ON THE DRAFT REGIONAL EDUCATION STRATEGY

By Hannah Godsave, Policy Manager Community

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council note the submission to the Department of Health on the draft Regional Education Strategy as endorsed by State Council via Flying Minute.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Department of Education released the [Draft Regional Education Strategy](#) (Draft Strategy) for comment in July.
- The Draft Strategy sets out a vision for equitable educational opportunities for students in the regions, underpinned by four pillars:
 - Building the capacity of our regional workforce
 - Expand curriculum delivery
 - Strengthen support for student wellbeing
 - Develop partnerships to create opportunity.
- WALGA developed a submission on the Draft Strategy, informed by submissions from the Great Southern and Central Country Zones and Advocacy Position 3.6 Children and Young People.
- The submission recommends that the Strategy:
 - Clearly state the duration of the Strategy and the regional education issues the Strategy seeks to address.
 - Include regional education profiles and develop place-based actions and goals.
 - Further develop the content and data under the four pillars to clearly articulate Strategy actions and outcomes.
 - Adequately fund implementation to ensure that it will deliver actions, outcomes and effective evaluation.
 - Should address the urgent issue of undersupply of Government Regional Officer Housing (GROH).
 - Should acknowledge the wider community implications of regional education challenges and build on existing strategic documents to create a whole of government approach.
 - Commit to ongoing place-based engagement with communities and Local Governments on the development and delivery of the Strategy.
- State Council endorsed the submission via Flying Minute on 1 October.

ATTACHMENT

- [Flying Minute: Submission on the draft Regional Education Strategy](#)

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This submission aligns with Advocacy Position [3.6 Children and Young People](#):

3.6 Children and Young People

The Local Government sector supports the development and well-being of children and young people through strategic partnerships and a combination of services and facility provision. The Association advocates that the State and Commonwealth should continue to invest in the wellbeing of young West Australians.

BACKGROUND

The Draft Strategy aims to provide a framework to guide more effective delivery of education in regional, rural and remote locations, focusing on improved education and wellbeing opportunities.

Considerable interest in regional education has been expressed by Local Government. In November 2023 a motion from the Great Southern Country Zone requested that *WALGA advocate to the Department of Education, on behalf of rural and remote districts, that greater efforts be made to reduce the inequality of educational opportunity.*

This motion was subsequently supported by an additional eight Country Zones in April.

WALGA hosted an online information and feedback session with the Department of Education on 20 August.

COMMENT

The provision of education sits within the remit of the Australian and State Governments. However, it is intrinsically linked to wider individual, family and community services, outcomes and issues that Local Government is responsible for and therefore impacts on functions and responsibilities.

The Draft Strategy includes high-level statements of intent without reference to data, analysis of current settings and issues or clear and measurable outcomes or actions.

WALGA's submission supports and builds on feedback provided by the Great Southern and Central County Zones and the feedback from the information session. The submission recommends that the Strategy needs to clearly articulate goals and measurable actions, underpinned by additional funding and evaluation.

The submission does not include feedback on specific local area issues which are best provided by individual Local Governments and Zones. The Department of Education has strongly encouraged regional Local Governments to provide feedback on Local Governments perspective regarding regional education needs and issues.

WALGA will continue to encourage the Department of Education to engage with non-metropolitan Local Governments to develop and implement the Strategy.

ZONE CONSIDERATION

Avon Midland Country Zone	Noted
Central Country Zone	Noted
Central Metropolitan Zone	Noted
East Metropolitan Zone	Noted
Gascoyne Country Zone	Noted
Goldfields Esperance Country Zone	Noted
Great Eastern Country Zone	Noted
Great Southern Country Zone	Noted
Kimberley Country Zone	Noted
Murchison Country Zone	Noted
North Metropolitan Zone	Noted
Northern Country Zone	Noted
Peel Country Zone	Noted
Pilbara Country Zone	Noted

South East Metropolitan Zone	Noted
South Metropolitan Zone	Noted
South West Country Zone	Noted

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Mayor Patrick Hall
Seconded: President Chris Antonio

That State Council note the submission to the Department of Health on the draft Regional Education Strategy as endorsed by State Council via Flying Minute.

RESOLUTION 107.5/2024

CARRIED

10.9 FLYING MINUTE: SUBMISSION ON DERBAL YIRAGAN (SWAN) DJARLGARRO (CANNING) DRAFT RIVER PROTECTION STRATEGY

By Rebecca Brown, Policy Manager, Environment and Waste.

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council note the submission to Swan River Trust on the Derbal Yiragan (Swan) Djarlgarro (Canning) Draft River Protection Strategy as endorsed by State Council via Flying Minute

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Swan River Trust has released the Derbal Yiragan (Swan) Djarlgarro (Canning) Draft River Protection Strategy (Draft Strategy) for comment.
- The Draft Strategy relates to the Swan Canning Riverpark, which includes the waters and foreshores of the Swan Canning River system and considerations relating to the catchment for the River system.
- Local Government has an active role in the management of the River system, including balancing recreation use, development and ecosystem health. Local Government also manage most drainage networks within the catchment.
- WALGA has developed a submission on the Draft Strategy, informed by previous advocacy and feedback from Local Government via a webinar and written submissions.
- The submission includes detailed comments on the key elements of the Draft Strategy and identifies the need for an adequately funded, strategic approach to managing the Swan Canning River System and catchment, taking an evidenced-based approach using best available science.
- State Council endorsed the submission via Flying Minute on 8 October.

ATTACHMENT

- [Flying Minute - Submission on the Draft Swan Canning River Protection Strategy](#)

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This submission aligns with previous WALGA Advocacy undertaken through the Swan Canning Policy Forum, including the development of the [Priority Plan for Investment in the Swan Canning Catchment](#).

BACKGROUND

The Derbal Yiragan (Swan) Djarlgarro (Canning) Draft River Protection Strategy (Draft Strategy) was released for consultation on 14 August. The Draft Strategy's vision is "a healthy, thriving river system for nature and people, to be cared for and enjoyed as the heart of our community".

Key threats to the river system are identified as coming from population growth, climate change, and resourcing. Threats include weeds, pests and disease, agriculture, urban drains, fertilisers and pesticides, construction and development, vegetation clearing and fire, sediment, human disturbance, growing user demand, wildlife entanglement and ingestion of pollutants, water abstraction, contaminated water and erosion.

The consultation period for the Draft Strategy closed on 9 October. WALGA requested, but did not receive, an extension for the submission deadline. State endorsed the submission out of session via Flying Minute on 8 October.

COMMENT

Local Government has an active role in relation to the management of the river system, with the sector having a vital role in maintaining the balance between recreational use, development and ecosystem health. Local Governments are the key land managers with the capacity to make real improvements to water quality and manage most drainage networks in the catchment (80%), which can be a source of nutrient and non-nutrient contaminants.

WALGA has advocated for Local Governments interests in the Swan Canning River, including through the Priority Plan for Investment in the Swan Canning Catchment which was developed on behalf of the Swan Canning Policy Forum. This Priority Plan was underpinned by a Local Government Charter for the Swan and Canning River system, signed by 21 Local Governments and WALGA, which outlined a vision for a healthy Swan Canning River system. The aim was for the river system to be managed for its ecological, social and economic values in a sustainable way, accessible, valued and where responsibility for river health is shared by all. WALGA has also developed Erosion and Sediment Control Guidelines for Local Government to provide practical ways to minimise impact to the River system.

The Draft Strategy provides a framework for funding and an implementation plan to achieve the outcomes that are essential to Local Government. The submission includes detailed comments on the key elements of the Draft Strategy and identifies the need for an adequately funded, strategic approach to managing the Swan Canning River System and catchment, taking an evidenced-based approach using best available science.

ZONE CONSIDERATION

Avon Midland Country Zone	Noted
Central Country Zone	Noted
Central Metropolitan Zone	Noted
East Metropolitan Zone	Noted
Gascoyne Country Zone	Noted
Goldfields Esperance Country Zone	Noted
Great Eastern Country Zone	Noted
Great Southern Country Zone	Noted
Kimberley Country Zone	Noted
Murchison Country Zone	Noted
North Metropolitan Zone	Noted
Northern Country Zone	Noted
Peel Country Zone	Noted
Pilbara Country Zone	Noted
South East Metropolitan Zone	Noted
South Metropolitan Zone	Noted
South West Country Zone	Noted

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Mayor Patrick Hall
Seconded: President Chris Antonio

That State Council note the submission to Swan River Trust on the Derbal Yiragan (Swan) Djarlgarro (Canning) Draft River Protection Strategy as endorsed by State Council via Flying Minute.

RESOLUTION 107.5/2024

CARRIED

10.10 FLYING MINUTE: SUBMISSION ON THE STATE HAZARD PLAN - HUMAN BIOSECURITY

By Rachel Armstrong, Policy Manager, Emergency Management

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council note WALGA's submission on the State Hazard Plan – Human Biosecurity provided to the State Emergency Management Committee as endorsed by State Council via Flying Minute.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Department of Health released a [revised State Hazard Plan - Human Biosecurity](#) (SHP – Human Biosecurity) for consultation between 16 August to 8 November.
- The SHP – Human Biosecurity sets out hazard management arrangements across prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery for two hazards:
 - Human epidemic; and
 - Actual or impending spillage, release or escape of a biological substance that is capable of causing loss of life, injury to a person or damage to the health of a person, property or the environment.
- WALGA prepared a submission aligned to WALGA's emergency management advocacy positions and incorporating feedback and lessons learned during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The submission's recommendations focus on clarifying Local Government roles and responsibilities in keeping with the State Emergency Management Framework and *Local Government Act 1995*, improving links to the WA Pandemic Plan and *Public Health Act 2016*, and ensuring consideration of concurrent hazards and adequate emergency relief and support arrangements.
- The People and Place Policy Team considered WALGA's draft submission on the State Hazard Plan – Human Biosecurity and recommend its endorsement by State Council via Flying Minute on 25 October.
- The submission was endorsed by State Council via Flying Minute on 5 November and provided to the State Emergency Management Committee on 8 November.

ATTACHMENT

- [Flying Minute: Submission on the State Hazard Plan – Human Biosecurity](#)

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This submission is relevant to four of WALGA's Emergency Management [Advocacy Positions](#):

- 8.1 Emergency Management Principles*
- 8.2 State Emergency Management Framework*
- 8.3 Sustainable Grant Funding*
- 8.11 Local Emergency Management Arrangements*

BACKGROUND

The State Hazard Plan – Human Biosecurity (SHP – Human Biosecurity) sets out the State's formal management arrangements for human biosecurity during an emergency across prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery. The Chief Executive Officer (Director General) of the Department of Health is the Hazard Management Agency (HMA) for Human Biosecurity. Local Governments have prescribed roles and responsibilities in prevention and mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery.

A summary of the proposed amendments to the draft SHP – Human Biosecurity is available on [Engage WA Emergency Management](#) (Engage WA), with a focus on agencies' capabilities, clarification of roles and responsibilities, incorporating elements of the [WA Government Pandemic Plan](#), and distinguishing recovery arrangements for the two hazards that are considered a human biosecurity. The current review is the first since the COVID-19 pandemic and stakeholders have been encouraged by Department of Health to consider the lessons learned. WALGA provided a submission to the Independent Review of Western Australia's COVID-19 Management and Response and input into ALGA's submission (dated 19 December 2023) to the Inquiry to review the Commonwealth Government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The key considerations from the two submissions have been incorporated in WALGA's submission on the Draft SHP – Human Biosecurity.

WALGA consultation

WALGA shared the Department of Health's request for feedback with Local Governments via the Emergency Management Newsletter, Network, Emergency Management Advisory Group and Environmental Health Officers Network, with a request to provide comments directly via Engage WA and to WALGA to support the development of this submission. Feedback was received from two Local Governments.

The People and Place Policy Team considered the SHP – Human Biosecurity draft submission at its meeting on 25 October and agreed that it be provided to State Council for endorsement by Flying Minute. The submission was endorsed by State Council via Flying Minute on 5 November and provided to the State Emergency Management Committee on 8 November.

COMMENT

WALGA's submission provides an overview of Local Government roles and responsibilities in emergency management and lessons learned by Local Governments on the COVID-19 pandemic. WALGA's recommendations are focussed on clarifying Local Government Roles and Responsibilities in keeping with the State Emergency Management Framework, improving links to the WA Pandemic Plan and *Public Health Act 2016* and ensuring consideration of concurrent hazards and adequate emergency relief and support arrangements.

Specifically, WALGA's submission recommends that the SHP - Human Biosecurity should:

1. Be supported by guidance to enable Local Governments to monitor and mitigate against infectious disease, prepare and plan for human biosecurity emergencies.
2. Identify relevant links to the *Public Health Act 2016*, including Local Governments' role in public health planning under Part 5.
3. Incorporate WALGA's proposed amendments as detailed in the table at Section 5 of the submission, to clarify Local Government roles and responsibilities.
4. Clarify the relationship between the Draft SHP – Human Biosecurity Plan and the WA Government Pandemic Plan.

5. Include a definition of pandemic and the difference between a pandemic and a human epidemic.
6. Recognise the challenge of concurrent hazards during a human biosecurity emergency and include relevant provisions in Section 4.4.3 Response.
7. Better outline the requirement and arrangements for clear, coordinated communication and a single source of information during a human biosecurity emergency.
8. Recognise the importance of Local Government community networks to engaging community members in a human biosecurity emergency.
9. Acknowledge the varied capacity of Local Governments to implement their roles and responsibilities under the SHP and mechanisms to provide additional support, for prevention and mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery, and the importance of increasing capacity and capability for response and recovery to a human biosecurity emergency across all stakeholders.
10. Specify Local Government inclusion in all relevant decision-making processes and bodies at the local / regional level and WALGA, as the representative body for the Local Government sector at the State level.

ZONE CONSIDERATION

Avon Midland Country Zone	Noted
Central Country Zone	Noted
Central Metropolitan Zone	Noted
East Metropolitan Zone	Noted
Gascoyne Country Zone	Noted
Goldfields Esperance Country Zone	Noted
Great Eastern Country Zone	Noted
Great Southern Country Zone	Noted
Kimberley Country Zone	Noted
Murchison Country Zone	Noted
North Metropolitan Zone	Noted
Northern Country Zone	Noted
Peel Country Zone	Noted
Pilbara Country Zone	Noted
South East Metropolitan Zone	Noted
South Metropolitan Zone	Noted
South West Country Zone	Noted

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Mayor Patrick Hall
Seconded: President Chris Antonio

That State Council note WALGA's submission on the State Hazard Plan – Human Biosecurity provided to the State Emergency Management Committee as endorsed by State Council via Flying Minute.

RESOLUTION 107.5/2024

CARRIED

11 ORGANISATION REPORTS

11.1 KEY ACTIVITY REPORTS

11.1.1 REPORT ON KEY ACTIVITIES, ADVOCACY PORTFOLIO

By Rachel Horton, Executive Manager Advocacy

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Cr Stephen Strange
Seconded: President Chris Antonio

That State Council note the Key Activity Report from the Advocacy Portfolio to the December 2024 State Council meeting.

RESOLUTION 108.5/2024

CARRIED

The Advocacy Portfolio comprises the following work units:

- *Marketing*
- *Communications*
- *Media*
- *Events*

The following outlines the activities of the Advocacy Portfolio since the September 2024 State Council meeting.

1. ADVOCACY

Following the launch of the West at its Best State Election Priorities document, the paid media campaign has now launched, complementing the pro-active, earned PR generated by the team.

Advocacy assets have been shared with Local Governments that can be used by Members to highlight their challenges and priorities in the lead up to the election and WALGA is collating stories from Local Governments to showcase areas under stress and those that can act as case studies 'at their best'.

2. MARKETING

Recruitment is now complete for the Marketing Team including the highly impactful role of in-house Graphic Designer. In the first two months a vast array of design requests have been completed ranging from the Annual Report through to motion graphics for the LGC screens, dramatically reducing spend on external agencies.

A new design trafficking system has been implemented to improve quality and efficiency of design requests.

Showcase in Pixels

The annual art competition was promoted to all Local Governments and resulted in 26 submissions from 21 Local Governments. The Awards ceremony is booked for 28 November at Yagan Square.

Website

Now in its second quarter, the new website generated 45,470 active users for the quarter ending October 2024. Organic performance (unique visitors) accounts for 49% which averages over 7,000 new users a month. The most visited page is 'Our Services/ Training' which received 4,295 views and 830 file downloads over the period.

The most downloaded single piece of content is the LG Directory (1,700 downloads) followed by the Training Calendar (522) and 2024 Local Government Convention program (499).

Brand

WALGA's main communications channel to the sector, the LG Direct electronic mail, has been relaunched in the new brand. This template will now be rolled out across all WALGA EDMs to ensure consistency of the brand and to enhance brand awareness.

3. COMMUNICATIONS

Multiple internal and external communications were prepared throughout the reporting period, most notably, the FY2023-24 Annual Report. Other communications include:

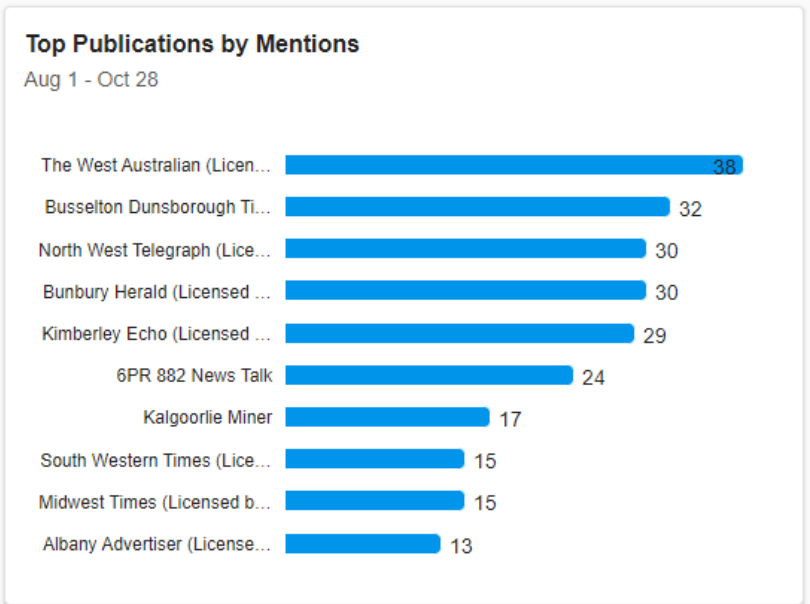
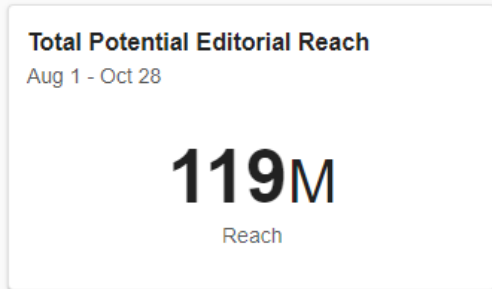
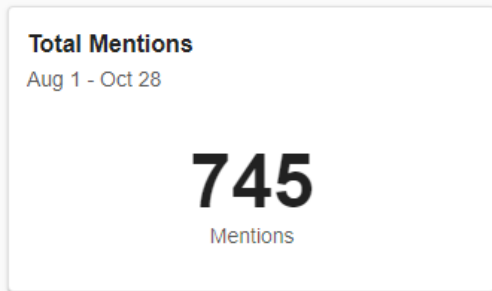
- Twelve LG Direct weekly newsletters distributed to over 2,000 Elected Members and senior staff
- The August edition of the Western Councillor Magazine August 2024 - 3,100 hard copies sent to Member Councils and electronic version available via the WALGA website
- Q2 and Q3 Quarterly Reports, emailed to all Members.

4. MEDIA

There were 736 mentions of WALGA and President Karen Chappel between 1 August and 28 October. The majority of mentions were in the West Australian newspaper.

The WALGA Convention attracted media interest around election issues, including the Nationals announcing a high-speed local roads funding package, Surfing Australia Patron Layne Beachley AO commenting on Coastal Management concerns for Local Government, the former Nationals leader Brendon Grylls MLA commenting on approvals for renewables projects and the former Premier, Colin Barnett AC, advocating for a dual carriageway to and from Albany. The land-banking AGM agenda item was also reported subsequently to the Convention.

WALGA also received publicity around WALGA's 2025 State Election Priorities, the Polyphagous shot-hole borer, rubbish truck fires and the WA population passing \$3 million people.



Top Advocacy mainstream media mentions by reach:

- Tiny Homes on Wheels media - 18.5m reach
- State of Play – Local Government Convention - 1m reach
- Lithium Batteries/Rubbish truck fires - State Election Priorities: Waste/Product Stewardship - 1m reach

Aug 1 - Oct 28

ABC Online (Licensed by Copyright Agency) • Samantha Goerling
News | AU | 23 Aug - 2:37 pm
A housing rule 'overhaul' allows WA residents to live in caravans, tiny homes or buses for up to two years
18.5M Reach 245 Social Echo

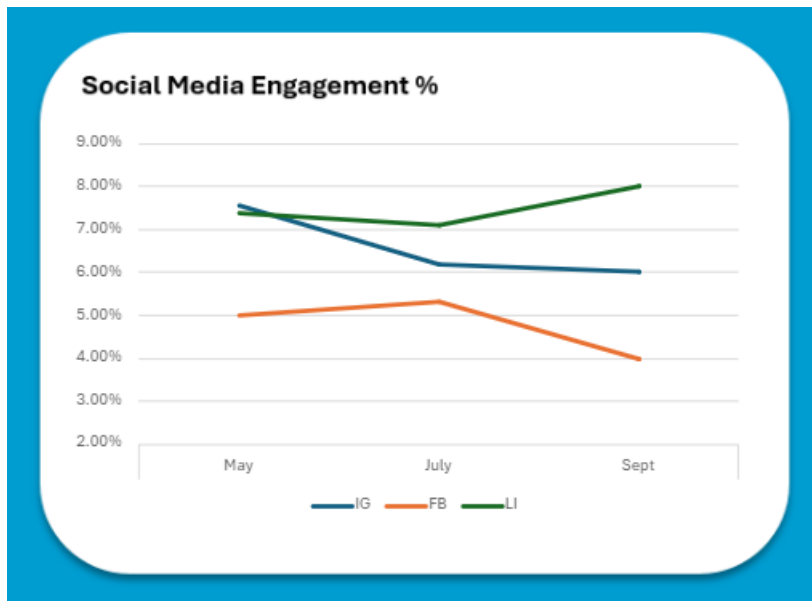
The West Australian (Licensed by Copyright Agency) • Jessica Page
News | AU | 9 Oct - 5:11 pm
WALGA conference: Former WA Nationals leader Brendan Grylls warns WA is losing clean energy race
1M Reach 37 Social Echo

The West Australian (Licensed by Copyright Agency) • Dylan Capom
News | AU | 26 Oct - 2:00 am
Lithium batteries cause Perth rubbish trucks to catch alight three times a week
1M Reach 36 Social Echo

Media Releases August-October:

- WA Local Government Association (WALGA) happy with win on Patient Assisted Travel Scheme (PATS) – 6 August
- WA Local Governments ready for Tranche 2 reforms of the Local Government Act – 15 August
- WALGA welcomes caravan and camping reforms to ease housing crisis – 22 August
- Funding 'a step in the right direction' in the fight against PSHB – 24 August
- We're at 3 million, Local Government to bear the brunt – 23 October

Social Media



The below statistics cover the period from 1 August to 28 October.

Top Posts on LinkedIn

Top posts

WA Local Government Association (WALGA)
Sep 27, 05:43

Congratulations to WALGA President Karen Chappel] (urn:li:person:nqli1fsHK_) AM JP on her re-election today as Vice President of the @Australian Local Government Association (ALGA). This is a great outcome for WA Local Governments and their communities as Karen brings her extensive knowledge and

105 reactions

WA Local Government Association (WALGA)
Oct 24, 00:00

And that's a wrap.. on all things Local Government Convention for 2024! We'd like to extend a huge heartfelt thank you to EVERYONE who contributed to a tremendous, action packed 3 days. Those beaming smiles say it all ❤️🇺🇦 Joined by over 650 delegates hailing from all corners of Western Australia, from Elected

90 reactions

WA Local Government Association (WALGA)
Oct 09, 00:30

The excitement is real 🥳🇺🇦 T minus 15 mins until day 2 of Local Government Convention kicks off - the event of the year in the Local Government calendar. Looking forward to chatting to all our Local Government members, suppliers, partners and state agencies, and hearing from all the renowned guest speakers over

85 reactions

- 1,909 post reactions (3% increase)
- 106,748 post impressions (3% decrease)
- 8.89% post engagement rate (37% increase)

Top Posts on Facebook

Top posts



WALGA
Sep 27, 05:43

Congratulations to WALGA President Karen Chappel AM JP on her re-election today as Vice President of the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA). This is a great outcome for WA Local Governments and their communities as Karen brings her extensive knowledge and dedication in her roles as WALGA

48 likes and reactions



WALGA
Aug 08, 00:00

Big congratulations to our recent Diploma of Local Government Jacqui Dodd Scholarship recipients 🎉🎉🎉🎉 Cr James Junio - Shire of Harvey 🌟 Deputy Mayor Ben Mayes - Town of Cambridge 🌟 Cr Deborah Sessions City of Belmont, WA 🌟 President Donelle Buegge - Shire of Manjimup They will join their

25 likes and reactions



WALGA
Aug 09, 08:02

(Post with no description)

24 likes and reactions

- 22,317 post reach (14% increase)
- 24,348 post impressions (14% increase)
- 5.3% post engagement rate (65% increase)

Top Posts on Instagram

Top posts



walga_
Oct 24, 00:01

And that's a wrap.. on all things Local Government Convention for 2024! We want to extend a huge thank you to EVERYONE who contributed to a tremendous, action packed 3 days 🍷 Joined by over 650 delegates hailing from all corners of Western Australia, from Elected Members, Suppliers, State Agencies, Corporate

29 likes



walga_
Aug 24, 04:15

Funding 'a step in the right direction' in the fight against Polyphagous Shot-Hole Borer (PSHB) This morning WALGA President Karen Chappel AM JP joined the Hon Reece Whitby MLA, Minister for Environment, and Hon Jackie Jarvis MLC, Minister for Agriculture at Hyde Park as they announced a \$7.2 million tree

19 likes



walga_
Oct 25, 02:05

Happy International Artists Day! 🎨 Arts and culture make our communities vibrant places to live, offering a range of benefits that contribute to overall well-being. Access to arts and culture fosters social cohesion, mental well-being, and education while also driving economic outcomes through tourism and generating

15 likes

- 11,942 post reach (113% increase)
- 11,890 post impressions (193% increase)
- 5.04% post engagement rate (10% increase)

5. EVENTS

2024 WALGA Local Government Convention

The 2024 WALGA Local Government Convention was a great success, attracting the largest ever contingent of delegates at over 650 guests.

In the leadup to the event the marketing campaign encouraged engagement through dedicated video content, animated event assets and storytelling links to key WALGA election priorities. In addition, the State Election PR campaign launch resulted in media interest during and following the event.

This year, the Events Team focussed on enhancing the in-room presentation for both the main sessions and the exhibition with the inclusion of high impact visuals, enhanced lighting and LED screen activations to bring the Innovation Ecosystem messaging to life.

The dynamic program of keynote speakers and panel sessions was punctuated by a number of curated performances throughout the event, including a bespoke opening performance, video piece and Welcome to Country, a live Showcase in Pixels gallery and performance.

In addition, the Convention Exhibition focussed on improving the delegate and exhibitor experience, with a dedicated helpdesk and support staff, elevated Custom WALGA booth, multiple dining zones and the re-inclusion of the large-scale machinery and products on display.

The check in experience was also streamlined, with digital check in kiosks and live printing of lanyards.

Sponsorship was also increased this year, with a total of nine event partners resulting in additional income of \$142k ex GST.

After the Convention, a survey was issued to all attendees. Feedback will be collated and utilised to inform the planning of the 2025 Convention.

Urban Forest Conference

Planning is now underway for the Urban Forest Conference to be held at Murdoch University on 14 February 2025.

11.1.2 REPORT ON KEY ACTIVITIES, INFRASTRUCTURE PORTFOLIO

By Ian Duncan, Executive Manager Infrastructure

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Cr Stephen Strange
Seconded: President Chris Antonio

That State Council note the Key Activity Report from the Infrastructure Portfolio to the December 2024 State Council meeting.

RESOLUTION 108.5/2024

CARRIED

The Infrastructure Portfolio comprises the following work units:

- *Roads*
- *Funding*
- *Urban and Regional Transport*
- *Utilities*
- *Road Safety*

The following outlines the activities of the Infrastructure Portfolio since the September 2024 State Council meeting.

1. ROADS

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

A design and construction guideline for the use of crushed recycled concrete has been published and can be downloaded from the LGTRRIP website. Further guidelines for the use of crumbed rubber modified asphalts, sprayed seals, reclaimed asphalt pavement (RAP) and a catalogue of standard pavement profiles are scheduled for publication by the year end.

Condition Assessment of Roads of Regional Significance

The condition assessment survey of significant roads in the Pilbara and Gascoyne regions has commenced with both survey and condition logging work underway. The condition survey work for the Kimberley region has been awarded and will commence in March/April 2025, following the wet season.

Road Rail Interface Agreements

Road Rail Interface Agreements are a requirement under the *Rail Safety National Law (WA) Act 2015*. A model *pro forma* agreement between Local Governments and Arc Infrastructure is nearing the end of negotiations and should be available for Local Government review and action soon. WALGA will begin a process to liaise with each relevant affected Local Government to provide advice around the new agreement.

Update of User Guides for calculating the cost of road wear for defined freight tasks

Due to recent escalation in road construction costs, WALGA has initiated an update of the unit rates that are used to underpin the methodologies in the User Guides for calculating the cost of road wear for defined freight tasks on sealed and unsealed roads. NTRO have been appointed to update the guides and to compile an online calculator and the project is scheduled for completion in December.

2. FUNDING

Achievements of the State Road Funds to Local Government Agreement

To provide foundational data to demonstrate the need for and value of State Government road funding, the Infrastructure Team has commenced a project to generate spatial data and provide a visual record of the projects completed on Local Government roads using the Road Project Grant funding component of the State Road Funds to Local Government Agreement.

Multi-Criteria Assessment (MCA) Model Revisions

The WALGA Infrastructure Team is working with the Regional Road Groups to harmonise the MCA models used by Regional Road Groups to prioritise projects for Road Project Grant funding. The proposed changes to the MCA models reflect the new focus areas of the State Roads Funds to Local Governments Agreement, while still allowing for flexibility to recognise the significant differences between regions.

3. TRANSPORT

Regional Freight Strategy

A new Regional Freight Strategy is being developed by the WA Department of Transport with WALGA represented on the project steering committee. Local Governments have provided valuable input through Zone meetings and workshops in regional centres. The draft strategy is expected to be completed in 2025.

Bus Stop Infrastructure

A new Bus Stop Infrastructure Partnership Agreement for 2025 to 2029 has been negotiated with the Public Transport Authority after consultation with a range of Local Governments. The revised Agreement is now finalised for submission to the December State Council for endorsement ([item 8.6](#)).

Active/Green Transport Discussion Paper

Following comprehensive consultations with Local Governments WALGA now has sufficient data to enable the structured development of a draft discussion paper on Active Transport gaps and needs. While still in progress, this paper will address biking, walking, and micromobility issues across WA, with ongoing consultation ensuring it reflects perspectives from both metropolitan and regional areas.

4. ASSET MANAGEMENT

Road Assets and Expenditure (RAE) Report Update Project

Tango IT has completed a report detailing the current processes used to develop the RAE Report. The consultant is preparing a final report to identify options for improvement in data collection, assessment and reporting as well as an RFX document for use by WALGA to go to market to undertake the suggested improvement works.

5. UTILITIES

Underground Power

A legal review of a template Co-funding Agreement between a Local Government and Western Power was completed and further meetings with Western Power undertaken with the aim of achieving an agreed draft.

WALGA is working with Energy Policy WA, Western Power and Treasury to develop options that respond to significant increases in contractor pricing for underground power projects.

Streetlighting

Following publication of its Public Lighting Asset Management Strategy V1 in early July Western Power has now engaged with WALGA regarding the process to develop V2 for completion in mid-2025. WALGA is seeking to ensure that the second version considers important issues raised by Local Governments during the consultation phase including environmental impacts (dark sky, native animals and humans), smart technology controls and response to cable faults.

Work is also progressing on identifying criteria and data to design the program of work to deliver the first tranche of 50,000 replacement LED luminaires over a 30-month period commencing in mid-2025.

6. ROAD SAFETY

Road Safety Council Update

Section 13 of the *Road Safety Council Act 2002* requires the Road Safety Council to provide the Minister with a report to be tabled in Parliament as soon as practicable after 1 July each year.

The 2023-24 annual report on the activities of the Road Safety Council was tabled in the house of the Legislative Assembly on 16 October ([available here](#)).

Meetings of the Road Safety Council were held in August and October to consider mid-year review adjustments and new projects for funding from the Road Trauma Trust Account, including two projects to support safety improvements on local roads. Recommendations will be made to the Minister responsible for road safety in the lead up to the State Budget process. The Road Safety Council has also undertaken work to identify a new set of priorities to focus road safety efforts.

Road Safety Roundtable

In response to growing concerns about the trend in road trauma, the Premier convened a roundtable of invited road safety experts and advocates, including Nick Sloan WALGA CEO, on 2 September.

The WA Government has since announced several initiatives, including:

- A new 'hard-hitting' campaign "Speed Shatters Your Excuses";
- Red P-Plate passenger restrictions allowing only one passenger in the car with limited exemptions;
- The expansion of the Safe Driver Reward Program to incentivise safe driving;
- A safe driving course pilot program for learner drivers under 25 years of age;

- The expansion of the Prevent Alcohol and Risk-related Trauma in Youth (P.A.R.T.Y.) injury Program to enable regional students to understand the traumatic consequences of road crashes and make safer choices; and
- A review of existing learner and provisional driver schemes, and skills and training requirements for motorcycle and heavy vehicles licences.

Further, the Government has committed \$32.5 million for regional road safety, including \$20 million to treat run-off-road crashes on selected sealed Local Government roads.

RoadWise Councils

As of 1 November, there were 74 Local Governments registered as a RoadWise Council. 53 (or 72%) registered with a resolution of Council and 21 (or 28%) via a Declaration. There is a spread of RoadWise Councils across all 10 Regional Road Group regions. In terms of road safety activity, 86% (64) of registered RoadWise Councils recorded road safety activity between July and September.

RoadWise Recognised

The RoadWise Recognised Advisory Committee met in August. Points, which signify road safety actions undertaken, were allocated to 52 RoadWise Councils. The Points that were allocated reflected actions delivered across the different areas of the [RoadWise Framework](#). This then converted to Ribbons which were awarded in recognition of a holistic approach to road safety across governance, management, and operations. In this way, the allocation of Points and Ribbons is designed to encourage local road safety toward better and ultimately best practice.

11.1.3 REPORT ON KEY ACTIVITIES, MEMBER SERVICES PORTFOLIO

By Tony Brown, Executive Director Member Services

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Cr Stephen Strange
Seconded: President Chris Antonio

That State Council note the Key Activity Report from the Member Services Portfolio to the December 2024 State Council meeting.

RESOLUTION 108.5/2024

CARRIED

The Member Services Portfolio comprises the following work units:

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

The following outlines the activities of the Member Services Portfolio since the September 2024 State Council meeting.

1. ASSOCIATION AND CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

2024 Annual General Meeting

The WALGA Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held on 9 October as part of the 2024 Local Government Convention. 225 Delegates from 128 Local Governments participated in the AGM.

Six Member Motions were endorsed by the membership:

- Amendments to *Cat Act 2011*- Allow Local Governments to make local laws to contain cats to the owners' 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 GROH Houses, and
- Advocacy for Accessibility

The Minutes of the AGM are available on the WALGA website [here](#).

In accordance with the Constitution, these decisions are to be considered by State Council at [item 8.1](#) of the Agenda.

2. COMMERCIAL

WALGA Tax - Elected Member and Officer taxation guides

The WALGA Tax Service has released its Elected Member and Officer taxation guides for the 2024-25 tax year. These valuable resources support compliances. In particular the Elected Member taxation guide supports Councillors to manage their individual taxation obligations with respect to income, expenditure and deductions associated with their role.

Preferred Supplier Program (PSP) Development

WALGA is currently evaluating a Tender for 145 suppliers to be added to the PSP across all Panels, resulting from referrals from the new Member endorsement process. Member endorsements are assisting to pivot the PSP towards a more relevant and active supplier base. It is also resulting in more engagement with regional suppliers and Small to Medium Enterprise (SME).

A tender for a new category of supply for Architectural Services is currently being contracted with 32 suppliers being recommended. This activity will be followed by an enhancement to the Project and Operations Management category of PSP002 to support the sourcing of Project Managers, superintendents and related services to deliver construction projects.

A tender for a new category of supply for Aboriginal Heritage Surveys has been released to the market.

Energy Project

WALGA is currently evaluating a RFQ for phase two of the Sustainable Energy Project which will commence in April 2025. The new term of the project will involve 52 WALGA Members and incorporate a diversification strategy to further support sustainable energy infrastructure development. WALGA is also in the process of implementing a Carbon Reporting Tool to support the project analytics.

ARENA Future Fuels Grant Project

Under the ARENA EV and Charging Infrastructure grant program 21 WALGA Members are now sourcing 137 Battery Electric Vehicles (BEVs) and 105 charging stations. The project is currently on target to meet its milestone requirements. Through the project further opportunities are being sought to enhance the EV transition across the sector. WALGA has supply options available for EV charging infrastructure and related services.

3. EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

WALGA ER continues to represent the sector in a number of applications regarding the State awards in the WA Industrial Relations Commission (WAIRC). These matters include the following:

- Application CICS 5, 8 and 9 of 2023 - Union demarcation dispute. In response to sector feedback, WALGA successfully applied to intervene in these applications. These applications relate to a dispute over coverage of Local Government employees between three unions, the Western Australian Municipal, Administrative, Clerical and Services Union of WA (WASU), the Local Government, Racing and Cemeteries Employees Union (WA) LGRCEU and the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union (WA) (CFMEUW). Essentially the WASU is seeking an order that it cover Local Government outside employees to the exclusion of the CFMEUW. The matter is currently part heard and is sitting until 25 October, with a further period to be listed

at a later date. WALGA witnesses are anticipated to conclude their evidence in the current sitting period, and the CFMEUW will then commence its case.

- Application APPL 80 of 2023 –WASU and LGRCEU filed an application to increase the wages in the Municipal Employees (Western Australia) Award 2021 (ME Award). WALGA is representing those Local Governments named to the ME Award which have instructed WALGA to act as an industrial agent in their interests. A conciliation conference was held on 15 August. During the conference, in-principle agreement was reached and the proposed rates reflect the Level 1A rate being increased to the current State minimum wage of \$24.17 per hour, with the relativities applied to obtain the rates at all other levels. A letter from WAIRC has been sent to other Local Governments notifying of increase.
- Applications APPL 3 and 4 of 2023 – WALGA is responding to claims from the WASU for additional entitlements in the Local Government Officers' (Western Australia) Award 2021 (LGO Award) and the ME Award. The WASU sought discovery of documents from Local Governments and WALGA which was appealed to the Full Bench. This decision of this appeal (FBA 4 and 5 of 2024) was handed down on 2 July and dismissed WALGA's appeal. In compliance with the Order, WALGA subsequently made an application for further Directions to redact personal details, responses from Local Governments not party to the proceedings and information outside of the scope of this matter. This application was not successful and the substantive hearing has been listed for a seven day hearing in November.
- Application 90 of 2024 – The LGRCEU has applied to insert a disciplinary procedure clause into the ME Award. WALGA sought and has been granted leave to intervene in this matter in its own right. The WAIRC noted that "It is appropriate for the Commission to hear from WALGA as the recognised representative body for the Local Government sector in relation to the application to vary the Award. The LGRCEU has now discontinued this claim, and the matter is closed.

New IR Legislation

The Minister for Industrial Relations the Hon. Simone McGurk introduced the *Industrial Relations Legislation Amendment Bill 2024* (IRLA Bill 2024) into WA Parliament on 18 September.

The Bill passed through both Houses of Parliament on 6 November. The IRLA Bill 2024:

- Redefines the terms "employee" and "employer" and "casual employee".
- Establishes a fit and proper person test for a union official to obtain a right of entry permit under the *Industrial Relations Act 1979* (IR Act).
- Amends the *Minimum Conditions of Employment Act 1993 (WA)* (MCE Act) to increase the statutory minimum casual loading from 20 to 25% and amend public holiday minimums.
- Establishes new employee right to request a flexible working arrangement consistent with the *Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)* (FW Act).
- Enables the *Local Government (Long Service Leave) Regulations 2024* to be enforced under the IR Act.
- Introduces a new prohibition on sexual harassment in connection with work, as contained in the FW Act.
- Increases the penalties for contravening State employment laws. The maximum penalties will increase from \$65,000 to \$93,000 for a body corporate and \$13,000 to \$18,000 for an individual.

Most of the changes will come into effect 31 January 2025.

4. GOVERNANCE AND PROCUREMENT

Local Government Legislative Reform - Tranche 2

The *Local Government Amendment Bill 2024* is progressing through State Parliament and is expected to receive assent prior to the prorogue of Parliament toward the end of 2024.

The Bill includes the last of the Local Government Reforms that were announced in 2022, including :

- Office of the Local Government Inspector
- Local Government Monitors
- Clarified Roles and Responsibilities of Council, Council Members, Mayors and Presidents and CEOs
- Independent Member and Chair of Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee
- Confidentiality
- Clarified Regional Subsidiaries Provisions
- Unreasonable / Vexatious Complaints
- Superannuation for Council Members
- Development Assessment Panel (DAP) Functions

WALGA does not support the introduction of proposed provisions s.9.69B of the Act, providing for regulations that will permit the CEO or other authorised officer to undertake certain functions of a DAP without reference to Council.

Tranche 1 Reforms - Yet to be implemented

A number of amendments arising from the *Local Government Amendment Act 2023* have yet to be implemented, this includes the introduction of standardised meeting procedures. Consultation by the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries concluded in June with State Council endorsing WALGA's response by Flying Minute on 7 June. WALGA awaits an update from the Department on the development of draft regulations for ongoing consultation with the sector to ensure the new provisions result in efficient meetings and sound decision-making.

Other items are:

- Council Plans
- Communications Agreement
- Community Engagement Charter and Surveys
- Publication of CEO Performance Review
- New Lease and Contract Registers

5. TRAINING

The annual Training Directory for 2024/2025 was released at the WALGA Convention. The Training Directory is available in print or digital copy and can be downloaded from the [Training website](#). All public course dates are all listed on the Training Calendar, one for Elected Member and one for Officer training dates. These dates are regularly updated throughout the year.

At the WALGA AGM, the graduation of our Diploma of Local Government – Elected Member took place. It was an exciting moment, with 11 Graduates being presented with their qualification by President Karen Chappel OAM JP, celebrating their achievements and their hard work.

Training has enjoyed continued growth in a non-election year, with the following key growth trends of our new and popular WALGA Training courses:

- Procurement – The new Tender and Quotation course has been well received by the sector and WALGA has received excellent feedback on the content and the practical application of knowledge and skills to improve compliance understanding in practice.
- Planning – The new Residential Design Codes (R – Codes) is proving to be in high demand with one on site and two courses scheduled and near capacity at WALGA before Christmas.
- Delegation and Authorisation – WALGA has received positive comments on this new course with full enrolments received for the workshop in November. Participants enjoyed the dissection of this complex topic, learning the underpinning governance principles, that goes beyond the application of only delegation or authorisation.
- HR Toolkit for Managers & State Employment Law – Since July up to early December this course has been delivered five times on site and twice at WALGA.
- Effective Supervision is another outstanding performer. Since July and up to November, this course has been delivered six times on site and twice at WALGA, every time at full capacity.
- Introduction to Waste has enjoyed lots of interest and received high enrolment numbers in October.
- The Certificate III in Local Government has seen its largest intake in October, with nine new students starting their Local Government learning journey with WALGA Training.

6. REGIONAL CO-OPERATION

An updated edition of the Cooperation and Shared Services document has been produced.

WALGA, in consultation with the sector, has created this resource to illustrate the relationships between Local Governments, working collaboratively to maximise resources to deliver outcomes that would be difficult to achieve alone. It is a current representation of relationships being built across the State, driven by the desire to do the best for each community.

This is an evolving document that will be updated regularly. The electronic version is available [here](#). Cooperation & Shared Services - July 2024.

11.1.4 REPORT ON KEY ACTIVITIES, POLICY PORTFOLIO

By Nicole Matthews, Executive Manager Policy

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Cr Stephen Strange
Seconded: President Chris Antonio

That State Council note the Key Activity Report from the Policy Portfolio to the December 2024 State Council meeting.

RESOLUTION 108.5/2024

CARRIED

The Policy Portfolio comprises the following work units:

- *Economics*
- *Environment and Waste*
- *Planning and Building*
- *Emergency Management*
- *Community*

The following outlines the activities of the Policy Portfolio since the September 2024 State Council meeting.

1. ECONOMICS

Renewable Energy

WALGA is hosting a Large Scale Renewable Energy Forum on 27 November for Members to discuss the opportunities and challenges for Local Governments through the energy transition. This forum will be informed by the Renewable Energy Survey completed by 48 Members ([item 10.5](#)) and recently adopted advocacy positions.

Responding to Member feedback, WALGA has created a Microsoft Teams group for CEOs and Elected Members, to facilitate continued collaboration and knowledge sharing between Local Governments around Renewable Energy. Available in this group is WALGA's October renewable Energy in WA Research Paper.

WALGA continues its advocacy efforts with the State Government and has been in discussions with industry, government departments from other states and other key stakeholders to further inform ongoing research on renewable energy in WA.

Economic Briefing

WALGA's September Economic Briefing outlined the strength of the WA economy despite the slowest national economic growth in more than three decades. Strong population growth in WA has fuelled jobs growth but also has implications for the provision of infrastructure and services, in particular housing. Read the latest Economic Briefing [here](#).

Economic Development

WALGA and Economic Development Australia is hosting an in-person and online Economic Development Showcase on 28 November to highlight successful initiatives from WA Local Governments along with an update from the Small Business Development Corporation. The showcase is an opportunity for economic development professionals to learn from each other, network and share their experiences. This showcase will be delivered in-person and online. Further information can be found [here](#).

2. ENVIRONMENT AND WASTE

Polyphagous shot-hole borer

WALGA and Local Governments have continued to focus attention and advocacy on addressing the impact of the Polyphagous shot-hole borer (PSHB).

Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) response update

The PSHB Quarantine Area (QA) was expanded on 6 September. The new QA has more than doubled to cover the entire Perth metropolitan area and includes five additional Local Governments - Armadale, Kwinana, Mundaring, Rockingham and Serpentine Jarrahdale, taking the number of QA Local Government areas from 25 to 30. The QA is divided into Zone A, comprising inner Perth metropolitan area that have higher levels of infestation and Zone B, comprising outer metropolitan suburbs that have fewer or no infested trees. Zone B is intended to act as a 'buffer zone' between areas of higher infestations and the remainder of the State. Quarantine restrictions are in place to stop the movement of wood and plant material from Zone A into Zone B, and from Zone A and B to outside the QA.

DPIRD has completed 2.1 million individual tree inspections, with 3,679 trees removed, 952 trees pruned and nearly 3,500 sticky traps deployed. DPIRD has been providing signage to Local Government with 850 corflute signs and 500 posters distributed in September/October. During that time DPIRD has held 40 PSHB information sessions/events and their social media reach was 650,549 individual accounts reached in relation to Quarantine Area Awareness.

DPIRD is developing an updated national response plan. WALGA has not been consulted in the development of the updated plan to date.

Recovery Package

Following the concerted push in the media by WALGA and Local Government, and ongoing direct engagement and advocacy, the State Government [announced](#) a \$7.2 million recovery package. WALGA [welcomed](#) the package as a step in the right direction. The package will include funding for the community, Local Government and organisations with iconic locations (e.g. Perth Zoo) to apply for funding to replace impacted trees.

WALGA is working with the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER), which is delivering the grant, to ensure the package is fit for purpose for Local Government and share learnings from WALGA's administration of urban forest related grants. Further information is anticipated by the end of 2024/early 2025.

Progressing Research

WALGA, and Local Government, was invited to attend a meeting of the WA Agricultural Research Collaborative on 17 September to develop proposals to progress research projects relating to PSHB. The outcome of this meeting was a range of recommendations for Government about potential areas for research. This is a positive step to increasing knowledge and options regarding PSHB. Funding rounds for research proposals are anticipated imminently.

Public Awareness

WALGA has continued to advocate for a comprehensive public awareness campaign and signage to build awareness of the risks associated with transportation of wood outside the QA. DPIRD have indicated it is progressing a public awareness campaign, are working with Main Roads on signage for major highways and have deployed variable messaging boards.

3. PLANNING AND BUILDING

Housing Roundtable

On 30 October WALGA facilitated a roundtable between the State Government, the development industry and metropolitan growth Local Governments. The Roundtable followed correspondence from the Premier to all Local Governments seeking cooperation to accelerate approvals and reduce delays of housing and land to market.

The roundtable provided a valuable opportunity for a frank, constructive and collaborative discussion which identified a number of areas greater cooperation may alleviate immediate and longer term 'pain points' in the system. WALGA has written to the Premier, and Ministers Carey and Beazley following the roundtable.

Metropolitan Region Scheme (MRS) and draft Clause 28 Notice of Resolution

The State Parliament has passed the [Planning and Development Amendment \(Metropolitan Region Schemes\) Bill 2024](#) (MRS Bill). The scheme text has been modernised to be consistent with the more contemporary Peel and Greater Bunbury region schemes and clarifies the ability for the Western Australian Planning Commission (WAPC) to prepare and approve district structure plans, region planning scheme policies and to identify regional infrastructure plan areas.

To support the passage of the MRS Bill, the WAPC published a draft Clause 28 Notice of Resolution for consultation purposes. WALGA's response to the MRS Bill and draft Clause 28 Notice of Resolution can be found [here](#).

Planning Showcase

The third annual WALGA Planning Showcase was held alongside the 2024 WALGA Convention on 9 September. Over 200 delegates representing 38 Local Governments from across the State were addressed by the Hon. John Carey BA MLA. The Minister highlighted the importance of Local Government planning to WA and thanked them for their ongoing contributions to the planning industry.

Urban Forest Conference

Planning for the [2025 Urban Forest Conference](#), to be held at Murdoch University on 14 February 2025 is well underway. The theme of the Conference is 'Raising Resilience' in response to the three major threats facing our urban forests: development, climate change and biosecurity challenges, such as the polyphagous shot-hole borer. Tickets are now on sale [here](#).

Performance Monitoring Project

WALGA has commenced data collection for the 8th edition of the Planning and Building Performance Monitoring Project, with 49 Local Governments participating data due back to WALGA in early December. Once analysed the results will be displayed on the publicly accessible [Performance Monitoring Dashboard](#) and used to inform advocacy and policy development.

Local Planning Policy Guideline: Unhosted Short-Term Rental Accommodation

WALGA has developed a [Guideline](#) to assist Local Governments in preparing local planning policies, to facilitate a more consistent and transparent approach in the assessment and determination of development applications for unhosted short-term rental accommodation.

4. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

State Emergency Management Committee

The State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC) met on 2 October attended by WALGA CEO, Mr Nick Sloan. The SEMC Communique's are published [here](#).

National Higher Risk Weather Season Preparedness Summit

On 18-19 September, Rachel Armstrong, Policy Manager for Emergency Management, represented WALGA at the second [National Higher Risk Weather Season \(HRWS\) Preparedness Summit](#) in Canberra. This summit brought together 240 leaders from government, emergency management, private, and not-for-profit sectors, to prepare for the 2024-25 higher risk weather season. A key takeaway was that Australia is entering an era of complex, cascading, and concurrent events that will test our response capabilities. Collaboration, coordination, and communication are crucial.

State Hazard Plan consultation

Fire

The Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) has reviewed the State Hazard Plan - Fire (SHP - Fire) and is consulting on a revised draft via [Engage WA Emergency Management](#). Consultation closes on 9 December. A submission is included as [item 8.3](#) for decision in this Agenda.

Human Biosecurity

WALGA provided a submission to the Department of Health on the revised State Hazard Plan - Human Biosecurity (SHP – Human Biosecurity) aligned to WALGA's emergency management advocacy positions and incorporating feedback and lessons learned in the COVID-19 pandemic. The draft submission was endorsed by State Council via Flying Minute on 5 November ([item 10.10](#)).

State Level Recovery Arrangements

The Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) is currently reviewing state-level recovery arrangements in the WA State Emergency Management Framework to define how the State Government will provide recovery support to Local Governments and communities following emergencies. Under the *Emergency Management Act*, Local Governments are responsible for Community Led Recovery following an emergency impacting their district and are key stakeholders in this review. Amendments are expected to include a four-level State Model for Recovery Governance (R1-R4), to define increasing State involvement relative to the complexity of recovery and capacity of the Local Government, and will be released for a minimum three-month consultation period when finalised. WALGA

Emergency Management Team will support sector consultation and prepare a submission incorporating feedback from Local Governments for consideration by State Council

Consolidated Emergency Services Act (CES Act)

The Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) is coordinating a review of the *Fire Brigades Act 1942*, the *Bush Fires Act 1954* and the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1998*. The three Acts will be repealed and replaced with one comprehensive consolidated piece of legislation, referred to as the Consolidated Emergency Services Act (CES Act).

Timing for the Exposure Draft Bill is not confirmed, however WALGA is collating feedback from Local Governments to share with State Government prior to the consultation period, and to focus our feedback on the Exposure Draft Bill when it is released.

Local Emergency Management Arrangements (LEMA) Improvement Program

The LEMA Improvement Program will implement changes to LEMA processes, guidelines, and templates recommended by WA Local Governments. WALGA's Local Government LEMA Improvement Working Group, which comprises representation from City of Wanneroo, City of Kwinana, Shire of Derby West Kimberley, City of Rockingham, City of South Perth, Shire of Denmark, Shire of Victoria Plains, City of Cockburn, City of Bunbury and the Shires of Cranbrook, Gnowangerup and Kojonup have been meeting monthly to ensure a sector-led approach. The first LEMA Program Board was convened on 26 September and the Resilience and Recovery directorate has commenced the DFES policy/guidance work for the LEMA Improvement Program. WALGA will submit a LEMA Recommendations Report to DFES in October that will inform DFES's development of improved LEMA guidelines and online knowledge hub.

5. COMMUNITY

Public Health

On 2 October, WALGA provided a submission to the Department of Health on the draft objectives and priorities for the upcoming State Public Health Plan ([item 10.7](#)).

The Department of Health has also sought Local Government feedback on the [draft Public Health Planning Guide for Local Government](#) by 29 November. 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*.

WALGA strongly encouraged Local Governments to provide feedback on the draft guide directly to inform WALGA's submission on behalf of the sector.

Aboriginal Heritage

WALGA continues to facilitate Aboriginal Heritage Roundtable discussions between Zones and the Department for Planning, Lands and Heritage (DPLH). In November sessions were held for the Great Eastern Country Zone and South West Country Zone. The sessions aimed to raise awareness and build knowledge and a shared understanding of the requirements under the amended *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972* and foster working relationships between Local Governments and regional representatives of DPLH.

WALGA Public Libraries Forum

On 30 October WALGA facilitated a state-wide Public Libraries Forum, a commitment under the [WA Public Libraries Strategy 2022-2026](#). The annual forums aim to increase WA public librarians' capacity to develop community partnerships. The half-day event's theme of 'Foundations for Community Partnerships' gave public librarians the skills to engage with the WALGA State Election campaign, 'Renew our Libraries' and network with others in the sector. Presentations were provided by the Children Screening Unit and the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (DLGSC).

Child Safeguarding

The DLGSC, Child Safeguarding Implementation Unit (CSIU) have shared high-level results of the Local Government Child Safety self-assessment undertaken earlier in the year. 84 Local Governments completed the self-assessment. The results provide information on the varying levels of impact the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, child safe reforms will have on Local Governments. The self-assessment data will inform the CSIU's development of tailored resources and support for the sector, expected to roll out in the new year. The [self-assessment](#) remains open for Local Governments who wish to understand child-safe reforms.

Government Regional Officer Housing Program (GROH)

Following issues raised at the 10 July State Council Strategic Forum, WALGA hosted a Department of Communities workshop on 8 November with representatives of Local Governments, the Treasury and the DPLH. The workshop considered current and future GROH build-to-lease models in the context of the current WA construction market.

11.2 PRESIDENT'S REPORT

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Cr Stephen Strange
Seconded: President Chris Antonio

That the President's Report for December 2024 be received.

RESOLUTION 108.5/2024

CARRIED

11.3 CEO'S REPORT

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Cr Stephen Strange
Seconded: President Chris Antonio

That the CEO's Report for December 2024 be received.

RESOLUTION 108.5/2024

CARRIED

12 ADDITIONAL ZONE RESOLUTIONS

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Cr Haeden Miles
Seconded: President Paige McNeil

That the additional Zone Resolutions from the November 2024 round of Zones meetings as follows be referred to the appropriate portfolio for consideration and appropriate action.

RESOLUTION 109.5/2024

CARRIED

CENTRAL COUNTRY ZONE (Member Services Portfolio)

PetsWA Centralized Pet Registry Scheme Revenue

That the Central Country Zone request WALGA;

1. advocate to the Government of Western Australia that 100% of the revenue derived from pet registrations (both dogs and cats) continue to be returned directly to local governments to effectively administer the Dog Act 1976 and Cat Act 2011.
2. recommend that the new centralized PetsWA Pet Registry Scheme, administered by the State Government, should not retain any commission or portion of the registration fees for its operations, as the current fee structure does not adequately cover the costs associated with pet management at the local government level.

EAST METROPOLITAN ZONE (Member Services Portfolio)

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Governance

That the East Metropolitan Zone requests WALGA to:

1. Establish the fundamental principles and governance framework needed to ensure that Artificial Intelligence systems are developed and deployed ethically and responsibly across the Local Government sector; and
2. Develop risk and opportunity guidelines for Artificial Intelligence usage that prioritises fairness, accountability, transparency, and inclusivity.

GASCOYNE COUNTRY ZONE (Policy Portfolio)

Social Issues Ministerial Council Advocacy

The Gascoyne Country Zone request State Council to advocate with the State Government to establish a dedicated Social Issues Ministerial Council.

GOLDFIELDS ESPERANCE COUNTRY ZONE (Policy Portfolio)

Management of Whale Carcasses

Request WALGA to advocate for a government policy change to allow the towing of whale carcasses away before they wash ashore from populated areas to reduce significant impacts to community and costs involved to the landowners.

MURCHISON COUNTRY ZONE (Policy Portfolio)

Need for Accessible Medical Services in the Murchison Region

That the Murchison Country Zone request WALGA to make representation to the Minister for Health and lobby the State Government to implement the following:

1. Extended and On-Call Nursing Support: Establishing after-hours nursing support in the Murchison Region, either through rotating or on-call staff arrangements, to help address the gap in care over weekends and after hours, reducing the need for ambulance support in non-emergency cases.
2. Elderly and Aboriginal Care Services: Specialised services for elderly and aboriginal residents, such as regular home visits, monitoring for chronic conditions, medication management and to allow them to receive essential care without the need for travel or dependence on ambulance transport.
3. Relief for Volunteer St John Ambulance Services: Reducing reliance on St John Ambulance for routine care and transport services to alleviate some of the strain on the organisation's critically limited number of volunteers. Enhanced nursing and elderly support services would mean volunteers are only called upon for genuine emergencies, improving response times and resource availability.
4. Mobile Health Clinics: A mobile health service to provide essential care in various Murchison communities, addressing basic needs such as welfare care, wound redressing, and chronic disease management. This service would reduce travel and help bridge the gap when nursing posts are closed.
5. Telehealth and Remote Monitoring for Elderly Care: Equipping elderly residents with telehealth and monitoring devices to provide immediate support and enable healthcare professionals to remotely manage patients' needs, reducing the need for in-person care outside of emergency situations.

NORTH METROPOLITAN ZONE (Policy Portfolio)

State Planning Policy 3.6 - Infrastructure Contributions (Community Infrastructure Cap)

That WALGA advocate to the state government for indexation of the community infrastructure cap defined in State Planning Policy 3.6 (SPP3.6) – Infrastructure Contributions.

NORTH METROPOLITAN ZONE (Member Services Portfolio)

PetsWA Centralised Registration Database

That WALGA advocate to the State Government for the PetsWA Centralised Registration Database scope to be restricted to a centralised registration system (excluding complaints and infringements) that integrates with Local Government's existing corporate systems.

SOUTH METROPOLITAN ZONE (Policy Portfolio)

Service Stations/Sensitive Land Uses – Regulatory Framework

That the South Metropolitan Zone requests WALGA:

1. Supports the Review of *Environmental Protection Authority's (EPA) Guidance Statement No.3 - Guidance for the Assessment of Environmental Factors – Separation Distances between Industrial and Sensitive Land Uses No.3, June 2005 (GS3)* as it relates to Service Station proposals.
2. Advocates for the Review of GS3 to the Minister for Environment, Minister for Health and Minister for Planning, to ensure that the environmental, health and planning regulatory frameworks, as they relate to Service Station proposals and potential impacts on human health from benzene emissions are aligned.

SOUTH EAST METROPOLITAN ZONE (Member Services Portfolio)

Amendment to the *Local Government Act 1995* in relation to the Disqualification of Elected Members due to Criminal Convictions

That the South East Metropolitan Zone asks WALGA to advocate for an amendment to the *Local Government Act 1995* along the following lines:

That the *Local Government Act 1995* be amended to give the Minister for Local Government the power to:

1. Disqualify a person from membership of a Council if the person has been convicted of a criminal offence that, in the opinion of the Minister for Local Government, under the advice of the State Solicitor's Office, has the potential to damage the reputation of a local government or the local government sector more broadly;
2. Suspend an Elected Member who is charged with a criminal offence that has the potential to damage the reputation of a local government or the local government sector more broadly, until the charges are dealt with; and
3. Require a person to be paid fees and allowances until they are disqualified.

13 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next ordinary meeting of the WALGA State Council will be held in the Boardroom at WALGA, ONE70, 170 Railway Parade, West Leederville on Wednesday, 5 March 2025 commencing at 4:15pm.

The State Council meeting schedule for 2025 is as follows:

Date	Venue
Wednesday, 5 March	WALGA
Wednesday, 7 May	East Metropolitan Zone City of Swan
Wednesday, 2 July	WALGA
Thursday-Friday, 4-5 September	Goldfields Esperance Country Zone Shire of Dundas
Wednesday, 3 December	WALGA

14 CLOSURE

There being no further business the Chair declared the meeting closed at 1:06pm.

STATUS REPORT ON STATE COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS

MEETING	RESOLUTION	COMMENT	COMPLETION DATE	OFFICER RESPONSIBLE
<p>5 November Flying Minute</p> <p>Submission on the State Hazard Plan – Human Biosecurity</p>	<p>That State Council endorse WALGA’s submission on the State Hazard Plan – Human Biosecurity to be provided to the State Emergency Management Committee.</p>	<p>WALGA submission lodged on 8 November.</p> <p>Included in December State Council Agenda as an item for noting (item 10.10)</p>	December 2024	Nicole Matthews Executive Manager Policy
<p>8 October 2024 Flying Minute</p> <p>Submission on the Derbal Yiragan (Swan) Djarlgarro (Canning) Draft River Protection Strategy</p>	<p>That State Council endorse the Submission on the Derbal Yiragan (Swan) Djarlgarro (Canning) Draft River Protection Strategy.</p> <p>RESOLUTION 245.FM/2024</p>	<p>WALGA submission lodged on 9 October.</p> <p>Included in December State Council Agenda as an item for noting (item 10.9)</p>	December 2024	Nicole Matthews Executive Manager Policy
<p>1 October 2024 Flying Minute</p> <p>Submission on Draft Regional Education Strategy</p>	<p>That State Council endorse the Submission on the Draft Regional Education Strategy.</p> <p>RESOLUTION 244.FM/2024</p>	<p>WALGA submission lodged.</p> <p>Included in December State Council Agenda as an item for noting (item 10.8)</p>	December 2024	Nicole Matthews Executive Manager Policy
<p>4 September 2024</p> <p>Item 8.1 Local Government Elections</p>	<p>That WALGA advocate to the State Government:</p> <p><i>5. For an independent Local Government election audit, focusing on the Western Australia Electoral Commission’s (WAEC) <u>service delivery and cost allocation methods and costing applications used, to confirm that marginal cost recovery principles are</u></i></p>	<p>Advocacy Positions Manual updated.</p> <p>Letter sent to the Minister for Local Government and Electoral Commissioner advising of the Local Government Elections Analysis and</p>	October 2024	Tony Brown Executive Director Member Services

MEETING	RESOLUTION	COMMENT	COMPLETION DATE	OFFICER RESPONSIBLE
Analysis 2015-2023	<p><i>applied and that the costing program is being effectively managed.</i></p> <p>6. <i>For the requirement for the WAEC to develop and implement Service Level Agreements with Local Governments, similar to those agreements currently used in New South Wales and Victorian Local Government elections and that includes:</i></p> <p><i>d. transparency of costing methodology,</i></p> <p><i>e. direct engagement with Local Governments pre and post elections, and</i></p> <p><i>f. the roles and responsibilities of the WAEC and Local Governments in the conduct of elections.</i></p> <p>7. <u><i>For a review of the legislative framework that would allow for more than one election services provider to conduct Local Government elections.</i></u></p> <p>8. <i>For a mandated WAEC Report to Parliament specific to Local Government elections post each election cycle, outlining costs, results, voter turnout and matters for improvement both in the conduct of elections and the legislation, if relevant.</i></p> <p>RESOLUTION 065.4/2024</p>	inviting engagement to explore the opportunities for improving the conduct of Local Government Elections.		
4 September 2024 Item 8.2 Energy Transition Engagement and Community Benefit Framework Advocacy Position	<p>That State Council endorse a new Energy Transition Engagement and Community Benefit Framework Advocacy Position as follows:</p> <p><i>It is essential that the energy transition currently underway delivers economic opportunities, ensures reliable and affordable electricity, and the greatest possible benefits for the community.</i></p> <p><i>WALGA calls on the State Government to develop a comprehensive framework to manage the impact of the energy transition that includes local engagement</i></p>	Advocacy Positions Manual updated.		Nicole Matthews Executive Manager Policy

MEETING	RESOLUTION	COMMENT	COMPLETION DATE	OFFICER RESPONSIBLE
	<p><i>and the realisation of <u>local</u> community benefits from energy transition projects as a priority.</i></p> <p>RESOLUTION 066.4/2024</p>			
<p>4 September 2024 Item 8.3 Renewable Energy Facilities Advocacy Position</p>	<p>That State Council endorse a new Renewable Energy Facilities Advocacy Position as follows:</p> <p><i>The growth in the number, size, and complexity of renewable energy facilities across Western Australia is expected to continue as energy generation and other traditional industries de-carbonise their facilities and operations. The renewable energy state planning framework requires changes to ensure it is fit for purpose to guide the ongoing development of this sector.</i></p> <p><i>WALGA calls on the State Government to:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. Adopt a new State Planning Policy for renewable energy facilities, to replace the existing Position Statement: Renewable energy facilities, that:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>a. Facilitates the orderly development of renewable energy facilities across Western Australia;</i> <i>b. Outlines the key planning and environmental considerations, for the location, siting, design and operation of renewable energy facilities and their associated infrastructure;</i> <i>c. Provides a framework that clearly stipulates the minimum required documentation and technical reports that need to be submitted with proposals for renewable energy facilities;</i> <i>d. Supports the development of Local Planning Policies by Local Governments to further guide</i> 	<p>Advocacy Positions Manual updated.</p>		<p>Nicole Matthews Executive Manager Policy</p>

MEETING	RESOLUTION	COMMENT	COMPLETION DATE	OFFICER RESPONSIBLE
	<p><i>locally appropriate planning consideration of renewable energy facilities;</i></p> <p><i>e. Provides a clear relationship with:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>i. State Planning Policy 2.5 - Rural planning and Development Control Policy 3.4 - Subdivision of rural land, to ensure planning decisions adequately balance the need to protect and preserve rural land for rural purposes;</i> <i>ii. State Planning Policy 2.4 - Planning for Basic Raw Materials to ensure proposals for renewable energy facilities consider their impact on basic raw material supply at the earliest stage of the planning process; and</i> <i>iii. State Planning Policy 2.9 - Planning for Water to ensure water resources impacted by renewable energy facilities are identified and adequately managed.</i> <p><i>f. Includes policy measures to address:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>i. <u>possible negative impacts on or alienation of productive agricultural land;</u></i> <i>ii. <u>their proximity to lot boundaries with particular attention to potential negative impact on town sites and sensitive land uses;</u></i> <i>iii. <u>potential negative impacts on airport operations;</u></i> <i>iv. <u>their appropriateness in the 'General Industry' zone and impacts and suitable location on heavy industry sites;</u></i> <i>v. <u>the need for local engagement and the realisation of community benefits from the development of renewable energy facilities.</u></i> <p><i>2. Review the definition of 'renewable energy facility' considering the increasing size and scope of facilities and consider creating definitions based on</i></p>			

MEETING	RESOLUTION	COMMENT	COMPLETION DATE	OFFICER RESPONSIBLE
	<p><i>the scale of the facility (Utility-scale and other), and the form of facility (solar energy and wind energy).</i></p> <p>3. <i>Provide guidance to Local Governments on the consideration of green hydrogen production facilities on rural land where it is an incidental use to a renewable energy facility.</i></p> <p>RESOLUTION 067.4/2024</p>			
<p>4 September 2024 Item 8.4 Priority Agriculture Advocacy Position</p>	<p>That State Council endorse a new Priority Agriculture Advocacy Position as follows:</p> <p><i>The state planning framework should provide sufficient statutory protections for areas identified as high quality agricultural land.</i></p> <p><i>WALGA calls on the State Government to:</i></p> <p>1. <i>Amend the Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015 to:</i></p> <p>a. <i>Create a new model zone under Schedule 1, Part 3, Clause 16 for land identified as high quality agricultural land known as the 'Priority Agriculture' zone, with the following objectives:</i></p> <p>i. <i>to retain priority agricultural land for agricultural purposes; and</i></p> <p>ii. <i>limit the introduction of sensitive land uses which may compromise existing, future and potential agricultural production.</i></p> <p>b. <i>Define 'Priority Agriculture' zone under Schedule 2, Part 1, Clause 1 to align with the definition provided in State Planning Policy 2.5 - Rural planning.</i></p>	<p>Advocacy Positions Manual updated.</p>		<p>Nicole Matthews Executive Manager Policy</p>

MEETING	RESOLUTION	COMMENT	COMPLETION DATE	OFFICER RESPONSIBLE
	<p>2. Review the areas which have been identified by the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development as high quality agricultural land and expand the extent of mapping to address the whole of Western Australia.</p> <p>3. Undertake a 'health check' of State Planning Policy 2.5 - Rural planning and Development Control Policy 3.4 - Subdivision of rural land, in consultation with relevant stakeholders.</p> <p>RESOLUTION 068.4/2024</p>			
<p>4 September 2024 Item 8.5 Planning Principles and Reform Advocacy Position</p>	<p>That State Council:</p> <p>1. Retire Advocacy Position 6.2 Planning Reform; and 2. Replace Advocacy Position 6.1 Planning Principles with the following:</p> <p><i>6.1 Planning Principles and Reform</i></p> <p>1. <i>The Local Government sector supports an efficient and effective planning system guided by legislation, policy, and processes that:</i></p> <p><i>a. facilitates the creation of sustainable and liveable communities and places;</i></p> <p><i>b. has a focus on strategic planning that delivers on long-term objectives and outcomes that balance social, environmental, cultural, and economic interests;</i></p> <p><i>c. is easy to understand, accessible and transparent;</i></p> <p><i>d. recognises the diversity of Western Australia and ensures that local environment, context, communities and character are appropriately reflected in planning frameworks and decision making;</i></p>	<p>Advocacy Positions Manual updated.</p>		<p>Nicole Matthews Executive Manager Policy</p>

MEETING	RESOLUTION	COMMENT	COMPLETION DATE	OFFICER RESPONSIBLE
	<p><i>e. ensures decisions are made by the level of government closest to and most impacted by a planning proposal; and</i></p> <p><i>f. establishes consistent planning frameworks and streamlines planning processes where there is a demonstrated benefit in doing so.</i></p> <p><i>2. Reforms to the planning system should:</i></p> <p><i>a. be guided by the above principles;</i></p> <p><i>b. deliver community benefit;</i></p> <p><i>c. promote system efficiency, including through the use of technology;</i></p> <p><i>d. be evidence-based and informed by robust, transparent data;</i></p> <p><i>e. proceed at an appropriate pace to enable effective implementation;</i></p> <p><i>f. be informed by engagement with the community; and</i></p> <p><i>g. be amended only with WALGA involvement <u>and</u> consultation/involvement with Local Government.</i></p> <p>RESOLUTION 069.4/2024</p>			
<p>4 September 2024 Item 8.6 Product Stewardship Policy Statement and Advocacy Position</p>	<p>That State Council:</p> <p>1. Rescind the existing Extended Producer Responsibility Policy Statement and Advocacy Position 7.5 Extended Producer Responsibility.</p> <p>2. Endorse a new Product Stewardship Advocacy Position as follows:</p> <p><i>1. Industry should take responsibility (physical and/or financial) for the waste that it generates through the entire life cycle of the products it produces</i></p>	<p>Advocacy Positions Manual updated.</p>		<p>Nicole Matthews Executive Manager Policy</p>

MEETING	RESOLUTION	COMMENT	COMPLETION DATE	OFFICER RESPONSIBLE
	<p><i>through the implementation of effective product stewardship. Without effective Product Stewardship, there will be increasing costs for the community, resource recovery targets will be difficult to reach and a transition to a circular economy is unlikely.</i></p> <p><i>2. Effective Product Stewardship is characterised by:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>a. Producers and importers taking responsibility for post consumption product impacts.</i> <i>b. Schemes covering the entire cost of product recycling or recovery, including transport.</i> <i>c. Leveraging existing Schemes and collection locations.</i> <i>d. Being easy and convenient for the community to access.</i> <i>e. Having equitable national coverage and access for all, including regional and remote locations.</i> <i>f. Being evidence based.</i> <i>g. Consistent regulation and implementation across Australia using national Product Stewardship legislation.</i> <i>h. Timely action and industry cooperation during Scheme development and implementation.</i> <i>i. Being demand based and aiming to recover the maximum amount of material, rather than being limited by targets.</i> <i>j. No additional cost to consumers when the product is disposed of post consumption.</i> <p><i>3. Local Government calls on the Commonwealth Government to implement effective Product Stewardship schemes for all products that drive environmentally and socially sustainable outcomes through the design, manufacture and distribution of</i></p>			

MEETING	RESOLUTION	COMMENT	COMPLETION DATE	OFFICER RESPONSIBLE
	<p><i>products that can be more easily reused, repaired, recovered or recycled.</i></p> <p><i>4. If national action is not progressed within a reasonable timeframe, or in a way that meets the needs of the Western Australian community, then Local Government supports a State based approach to Product Stewardship.</i></p> <p>RESOLUTION 070.4/2024</p>			
<p>4 September 2024 Item 8.7 Submission on the Draft State Waste Strategy</p>	<p>That State Council endorse the Draft State Waste Strategy Submission.</p> <p>RESOLUTION 071.4/2024</p>	<p>WALGA submission lodged on 5 September 2024.</p>		<p>Nicole Matthews Executive Manager Policy</p>
<p>4 September 2024 Item 8.8 Shire of Ravensthorpe Application to Transfer Zones</p>	<p>That State Council approves the Shire of Ravensthorpe's application to transfer from the Goldfields Esperance Country Zone to the Great Southern Country Zone, in accordance with clause 14 of the Association Constitution.</p> <p>RESOLUTION 072.4/2024</p>	<p>WALGA advised the Shire of Ravensthorpe, Great Southern Country Zone and the Goldfields Esperance Country Zone that the application to transfer Zones was approved.</p>	<p>October 2024</p>	<p>Tony Brown Executive Director Member Services</p>
<p>4 September 2024 Item 8.9 Finance and Services Committee Minutes – 21 August 2024</p>	<p>That State Council endorse the Minutes of the Finance and Services Committee meeting held on 21 August 2024.</p> <p>RESOLUTION 073.4/2024</p>	<p>Finance and Services Committee items have been actioned, including the presentation of the Annual Report to the 2024 Annual General Meeting.</p>	<p>October 2024</p>	<p>Tony Brown Executive Director Member Services</p>
<p>4 September 2024 Item 8.11</p>	<p>That State Council:</p> <p>3. note the resolution contained in the 20 August 2024 Selection Committee Minutes; and</p>	<p>Selection Committee items have been actioned.</p>	<p>October 2024</p>	<p>Tony Brown Executive Director</p>

MEETING	RESOLUTION	COMMENT	COMPLETION DATE	OFFICER RESPONSIBLE
Selection Committee Minutes - 20 August 2024	4. endorse the recommendation contained in the 20 August 2024 Selection Committee Minutes. RESOLUTION 075.4/2024			Member Services
4 September 2024 Item 9.3 Infrastructure Policy Team Report	That State Council: 1. Note the report from the Infrastructure Policy Team to the 4 September 2024 meeting. 2. Determine to retire the following Advocacy Positions: a. 5.2.4 Seat Belt Legislation b. 5.8 Ports c. 5.12 Infrastructure WA RESOLUTION 079.4/2024	Advocacy Positions Manual updated.	September 2024	Ian Duncan Executive Manager Infrastructure
4 September 2024 Item 9.4 People and Place Policy Team Report	That State Council: 1. Note the report from the People and Place Policy Team to the 4 September 2024 meeting. 2. Determine to: a. retain the following Advocacy Positions with amendment: i. 3.2.1 Local Public Health Plans b. rescind the following Advocacy Position: i. 3.5 Crime Prevention RESOLUTION 080.4/2024	Advocacy Positions Manual updated.	September 2024	Nicole Matthews Executive Manager Policy
30 August 2024 Flying Minute Submission on the Draft Objectives and Priorities for the Upcoming State Public Health Plan	That State Council endorse WALGA's Submission on the draft objectives and priorities for the upcoming State Public Health Plan to be provided to the Department of Health. RESOLUTION 243.FM/2024	WALGA submission lodged Included in December State Council Agenda as an item for noting (see item 10.7)	December 2024	Nicole Matthews Executive Manager Policy

MEETING	RESOLUTION	COMMENT	COMPLETION DATE	OFFICER RESPONSIBLE
<p>8 August 2024 Flying Minute</p> <p>Submission to Main Roads WA on the Revised Main Roads Western Australia Traffic Signals Approval Policy and Process</p>	<p>That State Council endorse the Submission to Main Roads WA on the Revised Main Roads Western Australia Traffic Signals Approval Policy and Process.</p> <p>RESOLUTION 242.FM/2024</p>	<p>WALGA submission lodged 15 August.</p> <p>Included in December State Council Agenda as an item for noting (item 10.6)</p>	December 2024	Ian Duncan Executive Manager Infrastructure
<p>6 December 2023</p> <p>Item 7.1 2023 Annual General Meeting Resolutions</p>	<p>That the following resolutions from the 2023 WALGA Annual General Meeting be referred to the appropriate Policy Team for further work to be undertaken</p> <p>...</p> <p>5.2 Land Use Policy <i>That WALGA establish and promote policies 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.</i></p> <p>RESOLUTION 501.5/2023</p>	<p>Following the Environment Policy Team's consideration of WALGA's Research Paper at its February meeting, WALGA met with the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage (DPLH) and the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) to discuss progress with the various initiatives being undertaken at a State level to prioritise agricultural land.</p> <p>A Joint meeting of the Environment Policy Team and Infrastructure Policy Team considered three draft advocacy positions at its meeting held on 10 July. These positions were included in the September State Council agenda for consideration.</p>	September 2024	Nicole Matthews Executive Manager Policy

MEETING	RESOLUTION	COMMENT	COMPLETION DATE	OFFICER RESPONSIBLE
		<p>State Council endorsed the Priority Agriculture Advocacy Position at its September 4, 2024, meeting.</p> <p>Advocacy Positions Manual updated.</p>		
<p>6 December 2023 Item 7.1 2023 Annual General Meeting Resolutions</p>	<p>That the following resolutions from the 2023 WALGA Annual General Meeting be referred to the appropriate Policy Team for further work to be undertaken.</p> <p>5.4 Regional and Remote Housing <i>That WALGA advocates to the WA State and Commonwealth Governments to address the dire shortage of affordable key worker family housing options in regional and remote towns to encourage families to live and work in regional and remote towns. Social housing is addressed at both the State and Federal levels.</i></p> <p>RESOLUTION 501.5/2023</p>	<p>The Deputy Director General, Housing and Assets presented at the 10 July 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>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</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Nicole Matthews Executive Manager Policy</p>

MEETING	RESOLUTION	COMMENT	COMPLETION DATE	OFFICER RESPONSIBLE
		WALGA continues to advocate for State Government to optimise partnership opportunities with Local Government that make capital investment in housing supply viable.		
1 March 2023 Item 7.4 Submission on Draft Guideline Minimising Noise Impact from Outdoor Community Basketball Facilities	That WALGA: 1. Note that the Environment Minister has withdrawn the Draft Guideline: Minimising noise impact from outdoor community basketball. 2. Write to the Ministers for Environment, Local Government, Sport and Planning requesting the formation of a cross Government working group, including relevant representative bodies, to consider and develop solutions to balance urban density and infill, public recreation and noise management. RESOLUTION 422.1/2023	Awaiting response to request to the Minister's office on 29 July 2024.	Ongoing	Nicole Matthews Executive Manager Policy
7 December 2022 Item 5.1 2022 Annual General Meeting Resolutions	The following resolutions from the 2022 WALGA Annual General Meeting be referred to the relevant Policy Team for further work to be undertaken: ... 3.1 Road Traffic Issues <i>That WALGA advocate on behalf of the local government sector to the State Government and in particular, Main Roads, to increase importance and weight given to local knowledge and input regarding road traffic issues including requests for speed reduction, intersection treatments and overall preventative and traffic safety measures.</i> RESOLUTION 394.8/2022	The Infrastructure Policy Team resolved: <i>That efforts to increase the importance given to Local Government knowledge regarding traffic issues be deferred for consideration in mid-2023 after a clear Local Government advocacy position on speed management is developed and endorsed.</i> This matter is central to the new Speed Management Policy adopted by State Council in May 2023. Implementation strategy being considered.	Ongoing	Ian Duncan Executive Manager Infrastructure

MEETING	RESOLUTION	COMMENT	COMPLETION DATE	OFFICER RESPONSIBLE
<p>7 December 2022 Item 5.1 2022 Annual General Meeting Resolutions</p>	<p>The following resolutions from the 2022 WALGA Annual General Meeting be referred to the relevant Policy Team for further work to be undertaken: ...</p> <p>3.2 Car Parking and Traffic Congestion Around Schools <i>That WALGA engages with the State Government on behalf of Local Government to review issues associated with car parking and traffic congestion around school sites including but not limited to:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Reviewing car parking standards for schools;</i> 2. <i>Ensuring sufficient land is set aside for the provision of parking on school sites;</i> 3. <i>Reviewing the co-location of schools to avoid issues being exacerbated;</i> 4. <i>Restricting school access from major roads;</i> 5. <i>Developing plans to enable schools to manage school traffic;</i> 6. <i>Develop programs to educate drivers; and</i> 7. <i>Develop options and implement initiatives to encourage alternative modes of transport to school.</i> <p>RESOLUTION 394.8/2022</p>	<p>The Infrastructure Policy Team resolved: <i>That WALGA uses its role at the Safe Active Travel to School Working Group to advocate for these outcomes and provide advice back to the Local Government sector.</i></p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Ian Duncan Executive Manager Infrastructure</p>
<p>7 December 2022 Item 5.1 2022 Annual General Meeting Resolutions</p>	<p>The following resolutions from the 2022 WALGA Annual General Meeting be referred to the relevant Policy Team for further work to be undertaken:</p> <p>3.3 Proposal for Regional Road Maintenance Contracts with Main Roads WA <i>That WALGA assist Local Governments and work with the Hon Minister Rita Saffioti to introduce a similar program that is currently in play in Queensland and introduce a sole invitee Program for Local</i></p>	<p>The Infrastructure Policy Team resolved: <i>That the opportunities and interest in contracting Local Governments to undertake maintenance and minor works on the State road network be explored in discussion with Main Roads WA.</i></p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Ian Duncan Executive Manager Infrastructure</p>

MEETING	RESOLUTION	COMMENT	COMPLETION DATE	OFFICER RESPONSIBLE
	<p><i>Governments to engage in a Road Maintenance Performance Contract with Main Roads WA.</i></p> <p>RESOLUTION 394.8/2022</p>			
<p>7 December 2022 Item 5.1 2022 Annual General Meeting Resolutions</p>	<p>The following resolutions from the 2022 WALGA Annual General Meeting be referred to the relevant Policy Team for further work to be undertaken:</p> <p>...</p> <p>3.4 Northern Australia Beef Roads Program <i>That WALGA work with the Hon Madeleine King MP Minister for Resources and Minister for Northern Australia to make Beef Road Funding available to all Australian Local Governments north and south, or establish a Southern Australia Beef Road Funding Program to allow for equitable support across Australia's beef and agriculture industries.</i></p> <p>RESOLUTION 394.8/2022</p>	<p>The Northern Australian Beef Roads Program was launched in 2016 specifically targeted to northern Australia. All 18 projects have completed construction. This program no longer exists.</p>	To be removed	Ian Duncan Executive Manager Infrastructure
<p>1 December 2021 Item 5.3 2021 Annual General Meeting</p>	<p>That the following resolutions from the 2021 WALGA Annual General Meeting be endorsed for action:</p> <p>Cost of Regional Development <i>That WALGA makes urgent representation to the State Government to address the high cost of development in regional areas for both residential and industrial land, including the prohibitive cost of utilities headworks, which has led to market failure in many regional towns.</i></p> <p>...</p> <p>RESOLUTION 294.7/2021</p>	<p>In March 2023 the State Government announced the establishment of a new Infrastructure Development Fund that includes a stream to support the delivery of regional worker accommodation with applications open until September 2023. This is an infrastructure investment program to address infrastructure constraints in the water, wastewater and electricity network at a precinct or strategic site scale impacting the delivery of regional worker accommodation. Full details can be found here.</p>	Ongoing	Ian Duncan Executive Manager Infrastructure