



Great Eastern Country Zone

Minutes

Kellerberrin Leisure Centre

**Commenced at 9:00am
Tuesday 27 August 2019**

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Great Eastern Country Zone

Meeting held at the Kellerberrin Leisure Centre
Commenced at 9.00am, Tuesday 27 August 2019

Minutes

1. OPENING AND WELCOME

2. ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

Shire of Bruce Rock	President Cr Stephen Strange Cr Ramesh Rajagopalan Mr Darren Mollenoyux Chief Executive Officer non-voting delegate
Shire of Cunderdin	Mr Stuart Hobley Chief Executive Officer non-voting delegate
Shire of Dowerin	President Cr Darrel Hudson Ms Rebecca McCall Chief Executive Officer non-voting delegate
Shire of Kellerberrin	President Cr Rodney Forsyth Mr Raymond Griffiths Chief Executive Officer non-voting delegate
Shire of Kondinin	Ms Mia Dohnt Chief Executive Officer non-voting delegate
Shire of Merredin	President Cr Ken Hooper Cr Mal Willis Mr Greg Powell Chief Executive Officer non-voting delegate
Shire of Mount Marshall	President Cr Tony Sachse Mr John Nuttall Chief Executive Officer non-voting delegate
Shire of Mukinbudin	President Cr Gary Shadbolt Mr Dirk Sellenger Chief Executive Officer non-voting delegate
Shire of Narembeen	President Cr Rhonda Cole - Chair Mr Chris Jackson Chief Executive Officer non-voting delegate
Shire of Nungarin	President Cr Eileen O'Connell Cr Bev Palmer (Observer) Mr Adam Majid Chief Executive Officer non-voting delegate
Shire of Tammin	Mr Neville Hale Chief Executive Officer non-voting delegate
Shire of Trayning	President Cr Melanie Brown Cr Geoff Waters Mr Brian Jones Chief Executive Officer non-voting delegate
Shire of Westonia	President Cr Karin Day

	Mr Jamie Criddle Chief Executive Officer non-voting delegate
Shire of Wyalkatchem	President Cr Quentin Davies
	Ms Taryn Dayman Chief Executive Officer non-voting delegate
Shire of Yilgarn	President Cr Onida Truran
	Cr Wayne Della Bosca
	Mr Peter Clarke Chief Executive Officer non-voting delegate
WALGA Representatives	Mr Nick Sloan, Chief Executive Officer
	Mr Tony Brown Executive Manager Governance & Organisational Development
	Rebecca Brown, Manager, Waste and Recycling

Guests

Mandy Walker, Director Regional Development, RDA Wheatbelt
 Karen Strange, RDA Wheatbelt
 Kathleen Brown, Electorate Officer, Mia Davies MLA Office
 Hon Laurie Graham MLC, Agricultural Region
 Rob Dickie, Government and Industry Relations Advisor, CBH
 Kirsty Martin, Principal Strategy Officer, DLGSC Representative
 Jenifer Collins, Regional Manager Wheatbelt, DLGSC Representative

Apologies

Shire of Cunderdin	President Cr Dennis Whisson Cr Alison Harris
Shire of Dowerin	Cr Brenton Walsh
Shire of Kellerberrin	Cr Scott O'Neill
Shire of Kondinin	President Cr Sue Meeking Cr Kent Mouritz
Shire of Koorda	President Cr Ricky Storer Cr Pamela WcWha Mr Darren Simmons, Chief Executive Officer
Shire of Merredin	Cr Julie Flockart
Shire of Mount Marshall	Cr Nick Gillett
Shire of Mukinbudin	Cr Sandie Ventris
Shire of Narambeen	Cr Kellie Mortimore
Shire of Nungarin	Cr Gary Coumbe
Shire of Tammin	Cr Glenice Batchelor Cr Tania Daniels
Shire of Westiona	Cr Bill Huxtable
Shire of Wyalkatchem	Cr Owen Garner
Water Corporation	Sharon Broad
Main Roads	Mr Craig Manton
Hon Martin Aldridge MLC, Member for the Agricultural Region	
Hon Mia Davies MLA, Member for Central Wheatbelt	
Ms Chantelle O'Brien, Governance Support Officer	

Attachments

The following were provided as attachments to the agenda:

1. Great Eastern Country Zone Minutes 27 June 2019.
2. Great Eastern Country Zone Executive Committee Minutes 8 August 2019.
3. Public Health of WA Info Overview Sheet
4. President's Report
5. RDA Wheatbelt Update

State Council Agenda – via link:

<https://walga.asn.au/getattachment/a846e7df-becb-4570-956e-cafec51afcb3/Agenda-State-Council-6-September-2019.pdf>

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Nil

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Nil

5. MINUTES

5.1 Confirmation of Minutes from the Great Eastern Country Zone meeting held Thursday 27 June 2019

The Minutes of the Great Eastern Country Zone meeting held on Thursday 27 June 2019 have previously been circulated to Member Councils.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Eileen O'Connell

Seconded: Cr Onida Truran

That the Minutes of the Great Eastern Country Zone meeting held Thursday 27 June 2019 are confirmed as a true and accurate record of the proceedings with an amendment to the attendance as follows:

Add Cr Mal Willis Shire of Merredin
Apology Cr Greg Powell Shire of Merredin

Add Cr Julie Chatfield Shire of Dowerin
Apology Cr Brenton Walsh Shire of Dowerin

CARRIED

5.2 Business Arising from the Minutes of the Great Eastern Country Zone Meeting Thursday 27 June 2019

Nil

5.3 Minutes from the Great Eastern Country Zone Executive Committee Meeting held Thursday 8 August 2019

The recommendations from the Executive Committee Meeting have been extracted for the Zones consideration.

5.3.1 (Item 5.1) 2020 Wheatbelt Conference

Background:

At the last Great Eastern Country Zone, Executive Committee meeting, the following was resolved:

That the Great Eastern Country Zone position on the Wheatbelt Conference be;

- 1. There is value in holding Wheatbelt Conferences;*
- 2. Not hold a Wheatbelt Conference in 2020 and look to hold a conference in 2021;*
- 3. Request the three (3) Wheatbelt Zone Executive Committees to meet and discuss the future of Wheatbelt conferences during the 2019 Local Government convention.*

CARRIED

Comment:

A meeting of the three Wheatbelt Zone Executive Committees has been scheduled for 12.30pm on 8 August to discuss the future of Wheatbelt Conferences.

The Financial Statement from the 2018 Wheatbelt conference is considered in item 5.2.

For Discussion

Executive Committee Resolved

The Great Eastern Country Zone remain with the position endorsed at the June Zone meeting as per above.

Following the June Zone meeting, there was a meeting held of the three Zone Executive Committees to discuss the future of the Wheatbelt Conference. It was resolved that the Zone Executive Committee's go back and discuss with their Zones as to whether they want a Wheatbelt Conference and what focus should it have if so.

Zone discussed that this matter would be best considered after the 2019 Local Government Elections as there may be some turnover in Elected Members.

Resolved

That the Great Eastern Country Zone consider the future of the Wheatbelt Conference after the October 2019 Local Government Elections.

5.3.2 (Item 5.5) Appointment of New Auditors for the Next Three Years

Executive Officer Comment:

External auditors AMD Chartered Accountants have completed their agreed term.

At its June meeting the Committee resolved that the Executive Officer seek Expressions of Interest for the audit of the Great Eastern Country Zone of WALGA for the 30 June years ending 2019, 2020 and

2021 from the following three local firms; RSM Bird Cameron, Byfields and CRC for Tabling at the next meeting for a decision.

Only Byfields submitted an expression of Interest.

CRC (Community Resource Centre) provide a listing of local suppliers which only included Byfields and Bird Cameron. RSM Bird Cameron declined advising that audits are only done out of their Perth Office and that they are not in a position to do this one.

Byfields Expression of Interest

Byfields while only completing audits out of their Perth office have submitted an expression of interest.

As advised in their attached letter, Byfields have 30 years audit experience and the Engagement Director Leanne Oliver is a Registered Company Auditor and a public practice certificate.

The quoted fee for 2018/19 is as follows:

2018/19 \$2,000 & disbursements
2019/20 \$2,100 & disbursements
2020/21 \$2,200 & disbursements

Note GST is refundable so the net amounts will be the cost to the GECZ.

The proposed 2018/19 fee of \$2,000 plus disbursements is significantly higher than the 2017/18 audit cost of \$1,560.

Through my recent involvement on two selection panels for audit services, I have been surprised to see that audit firms are becoming more selective in which engagements they submit for. This is also reflected in the refusal to quote by RSM Bird Cameron and may be a shift away from engagements considered unprofitable. Byfields only submitted on the understanding that the GECZ audit can be completed in November to January period which is their quiet season.

Acknowledging that this fee is higher, seeking a new contract with AMD may result in a similar increase and will see the audit completed out of Bunbury.

Executive Committee Recommendation

Moved: Cr Stephen Strange

Seconded: Cr Tony Sachse

That the Executive Committee recommends that the Zone appoint Byfields as auditors for the Great Eastern Country Zone of WALGA for the 30 June years ending 2019, 2020 and 2021 for fees quoted above.

CARRIED

ZONE RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Stephen Strange

Seconded: Cr Wayne Della Bosca

That the Executive Committee recommends that the Zone appoint Byfields as auditors for the Great Eastern Country Zone of WALGA for the 30 June years ending 2019, 2020 and 2021 for fees quoted above.

CARRIED

5.3.2 (Item 5.6) Strategic Priorities for the 2019/20 Year

Background:

As the new financial year progresses, new Strategic Priorities are to be discussed by the Executive Committee to identify the key issues for the next 12 months.

At this corresponding meeting last year, the Executive committee had identified the following 13 issues to consider for prioritising;

1. Health
2. Telecommunication
3. Recycling opportunities
4. Roads/Rail
5. Wheatbelt education
6. Local Government viability
7. Economic Development
8. School Buses
9. Community Resource Centres
10. Volunteerism (Pressure on too few)
11. Ambulance transfer costs
12. Aged Care
13. CSRFF Program – Need to change the focus

The committee and then subsequently the Zone endorsed the following topics as priorities for the 2018/2019;

- i. Local Government Act Review
- ii. Economic Development
- iii. Telecommunication
- iv. Wheatbelt Education

At an Executive Committee meeting earlier this year a further subject was added being Transport – Heavy Vehicle issue.

The initial four (4) priority topics have all had guest speakers during the previous year.

Discussion required on setting strategic priorities for 2019/2020

For Discussion

The Executive Committee had considered discussion on the Zones priorities for the next 12 months.

Executive Committee Resolved

The following topics be listed as the priority issues for the 19/20 Zone year;

1. Transport – Heavy Vehicle issue – Permit system, CA07 permits, Agricultural Pilot vehicles, Lime Haulage.
2. Health – NDIS, Age care packages, Hospital doctor shortages.
3. Government Regional Officer Housing (GROH) – Affordable Housing for Government Officers.
4. Future Drought Fund - Information on what assistance is available.

ZONE RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Tony Sachse
Seconded: Cr Rodney Forsyth

The following topics be listed as the priority issues for the 19/20 Zone year;

1. Transport – Heavy Vehicle issue – Permit system, CA07 permits, Agricultural Pilot vehicles, Lime Haulage.
2. Health – NDIS, Age care packages, Hospital doctor shortages.
3. Government Regional Officer Housing (GROH) – Affordable Housing for Government Officers.
4. Future Drought Fund - Information on what assistance is available.
5. Training – Officer Level – Career Path for Local Government Officers (Work with LG Professionals)

CARRIED

5.3.2 (Item 5.7) Guest Speakers 2019/20
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Background

In 2018/19 the scheduled guest speakers followed the priority topics identified by the Zone.

The Committee had identified the need for relevant speakers to be sourced for Zone meetings and to ensure speakers come to the Zone with a purpose.

Following requests to the previous meeting, the following guest speakers have been scheduled for the August 2019 Zone meeting:

August 2019 Meeting

- Rob Dickie, Government and Industry Relations Advisor, CBH Group
- Rebecca Brown, Manager Waste and Recycling, WALGA, (Container Deposit Scheme)

WALGA CEO Nick Sloan will also be attending the August Zone meeting. In addition Laurie Graham MLC, has advised that he will be attending the meeting. This is timely as Laurie Graham is a member of the Select Committee into Local Government.

Other meetings

The only outstanding speaker topic from last year is on the issue of “Transport – Heavy Vehicles”

The Executive Committee may wish to consider potential guest speakers for 2019/2020.

Executive Committee Resolved

- 1) That the following speakers present at the August meeting;
 - Rob Dickie, Government and Industry Relations Advisor, CBH Group
 - Rebecca Brown, Manager Waste and Recycling, WALGA, (Container Deposit Scheme and on the 3 bin rubbish collection system)
- 2) Guest speakers for the remainder of the year be sourced against the priority topic issues; and
- 3) Politicians be continued to be invited to present at Zone meetings.

ZONE RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Karin Day
Seconded: Cr Onida Truran

- 1) That the following speakers present at the August meeting;
 - Rob Dickie, Government and Industry Relations Advisor, CBH Group
 - Rebecca Brown, Manager Waste and Recycling, WALGA, (Container Deposit Scheme and on the 3 bin rubbish collection system)
- 2) Guest speakers for the remainder of the year be sourced against the priority topic issues;
and
- 3) Politicians be continued to be invited to present at Zone meetings.

CARRIED

5.3.2 (Item 5.9) Zone Executive Officer – Key performance Indicators

Background:

The Zone resolved at its April meeting as follows;

That the Zone endorse WALGA to continue the executive support for the Great Eastern Country Zone for the next 2 years (19/20 and 20/21) and that suitable Key Performance Indicator's be put in place.

CARRIED

Executive Committee Resolved

The following Key Performance Indicators be adopted by the Zone of the Executive Officer;

- Attracting speakers in line with Zone priorities
- Advocating for the Zone on priority issues and implementing zone decisions in a timely manner;
- Agenda and minutes to be distributed 7 days prior and following Zone and Executive Committee Meetings;
- Finance – Clean and timely audit received

ZONE RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Eileen O'Connell
Seconded: Cr Geoff Waters

The following Key Performance Indicators be adopted by the Zone of the Executive Officer;

- Attracting speakers in line with Zone priorities
- Advocating for the Zone on priority issues and implementing zone decisions in a timely manner;
- Agenda and minutes to be distributed 7 days prior and following Zone and Executive Committee Meetings;
- Finance – Clean and timely audit received

CARRIED

5.3.3 Minutes of the Executive Committee 8 August 2019

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Onida Truran

Seconded: Cr Geoff Waters

That the remaining items contained in the Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting of the Great Eastern Country Zone held Thursday 8 August 2019 be endorsed.

CARRIED

6. ZONE BUSINESS

6.1 Office of Auditor General – Auditing of WA Local Governments – Survey Results

By Executive Officer, Tony Brown

Background

WALGA had received a request from WEROC to review the impact of the recent compliance changes on the sector.

The Office of the Auditor General assumed responsibility for Local Government financial audits and performance audits in 2017.

To understand the impact that these changes have had on the sector, WALGA conducted a survey of its members during May and June 2019.

Tony Brown provided a presentation on the Auditor General survey to the Zone. Please refer to attached summary sheet within these minutes for information. (*Attachment A*)

Noted

6.2 Request to Present - Office of the Auditor General

By Executive Officer, Tony Brown

A request has been received from the Office of the Auditor General to attend the next Great Eastern Country Zone meeting on 28 November 2019.

A representative from the Officer of the Auditor General, would like to provide an update on Local Government auditing so far including a look at some of their latest financial and performance audits.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Eileen O'Connell

Seconded: Cr Geoff Waters

That a representative from the Office of the Auditor General attend the 28 November 2019 Great Eastern Country Zone meeting to provide an update on Local Government auditing so far including a look at some of their latest financial and performance audits.

CARRIED

6.3 Select Committee into Local Government Submission

By Executive Officer, Tony Brown

Background

The Zone is aware that the Legislative Council in WA has established a Select Committee into Local Government with the following terms of reference:

- (1) That a Select Committee into Local Government is established.
- (2) The Select Committee is to inquire into how well the system of Local Government is functioning in Western Australia, with particular reference to —

Whether the *Local Government Act 1995* and related legislation is generally suitable in its scope, construction and application;

the scope of activities of Local Governments;

the role of the Department of State administering the *Local Government Act 1995* and related legislation;

the role of Elected Members and Chief Executive Officers/employees and whether these are clearly defined, delineated, understood and accepted;

the funding and financial management of Local Governments; and

any other related matters the Select Committee identifies as worthy of examination and Report.

- (3) The Select Committee shall comprise five Members.
- (4) The Select Committee shall report by no later than 12 months after the motion for its establishment is agreed to and may, if it sees fit, provide interim reports to the House.

The Select Committee, which has a 12 month timeframe to finalise its Inquiry, was originally seeking submissions to be provided to the committee with a closing date of 23 August 2019. WALGA successfully requested the submission date be extended to 13 September 2019 to allow all Local Governments to consider a submission in their monthly meeting cycle.

WALGA has prepared a submission on behalf of the sector.

In addition WALGA will be attending a private hearing with the committee on 2 September 2019 where the committee has requested information on WALGA and what activities it carries out.

It is appropriate for the Zone to prepare a submission to the Select Committee with a focus on issues for the 16 member Local Governments.

A draft submission was circulated prior to the meeting.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Tony Sachse

Seconded: Cr Stephen Strange

The Draft Great Eastern Country Zone submission to the Select Committee into Local Government be endorsed with the following additions:

- **Secondary Freight Group project**
- **Audit cost increases**

CARRIED

6.4 Public Health Advocacy Institute of Western Australia

By Executive Officer, Tony Brown

Background

Jo Malcom, Senior Research Officer from Curtin University has requested to provide an information sheet to Local Governments in regards to some funding that has been made available to Public Health Advocacy Institute of WA to assist and mentor Local Governments in developing their Public Health Plans.

Attached with the Agenda was some further information on this matter.

Noted

7. ZONE REPORTS

7.1 Zone President Report

By Cr Rhonda Cole

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Gary Shadbolt
Seconded: Cr Geoff Waters

1. Highlighted the need to encourage nominations for candidates at the 2019 Election.
2. Integrity of the Sector is important – Mentoring of neighbours is important
3. Rural Water Council - input from all Zone members required.

That the Zone President's Report be received.

CARRIED

7.2 Local Government Agricultural Freight Group

By Cr Rod Forsyth

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Stephen Strange
Seconded: Cr Rodney Forsyth

That the Local Government Agricultural Freight Group Report be received.

CARRIED

Minutes from the 4 July 2019 Agricultural Freight Group are attached. (Attachment 1).

7.3 Wheatbelt District Emergency Management Committee

By Cr Tony Sachse

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Tony Sachse

Seconded: Cr Onida Truran

That the Wheatbelt District Emergency Management Committee Report be received.

CARRIED

Unconfirmed Minutes from the 20 June 2019 District Emergency management Committee meeting are attached. (Attachment 2)

8. WESTERN AUSTRALIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION (WALGA) BUSINESS

8.1 State Councillor Report

Cr Stephen Strange

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Stephen Strange

Seconded: Cr Wayne Della Bosca

July 2019 State Council Meeting – Key Issues

Emerging Issue – Regional Road Group Projects: Finalisation Payments

An emerging issue was discussed at the July meeting relating to the process for Local Governments to finalise their claims for Regional Road Group projects. Local Governments cannot make final claims until all costs are finalised, but there can be delays in finishing and invoicing the line-marking work.

State Council resolved that WALGA would write to Main Roads seeking an urgent meeting to change the procedures for finalisation of claims. Further, State Council resolved that projects that are delayed in finalisation due to line marking should be considered complete in the 2018-19 year.

National Redress Scheme

State Council endorsed in principle support for the Local Government sector to participate in the National Redress Scheme. It should be noted that there will be further consultation in relation to the redress scheme in the coming months.

September 2019 State Council Meeting

The upcoming meeting of State Council will be held as a regional meeting in Shark Bay, hosted by the Gascoyne Country Zone.

This will be the final State Council meeting before the October Local Government elections. At the November Zone meetings elections for State Council positions will be held.

State Council/Zone Structure and Process Review

I have attended all 3 of the State Council and Zone Structure and Process Working Group meetings. A report is being prepared for the State Council meeting on September 6 in Shark Bay after which it will go out to the sector for consultation.

WALGA Annual Convention

WALGA appreciates any feedback or suggestions from members on the convention that can assist in our preparation for next year.

That the State Councillor Report be received

CARRIED

8.2 WALGA Status Report to be updated

By Tony Brown, Executive Officer

BACKGROUND

Presenting the Status Report for August 2019 which contains WALGA's responses to the resolutions of previous Zone Meetings.

Zone	Agenda Item	Zone Resolution	WALGA Response	Update	WALGA Contact
Grt Eastern C	2019 June 27 Zone Agenda Item 12.1 Government Regional Officer Housing	That the Zone request WALGA to advocate on the impact of Government Regional Officer Housing on retaining public sector professionals (Doctors, nurses, teachers) in the Great Eastern Country Zone.	In May 2019, the McGowan Government deferred a planned increase to GROH rents in 2019-20. The next increase of \$30pw was due to come into effect 1 July 2019. https://www.mediastatements.wa.gov.au/Pages/McGowan/2019/05/McGowan-Government-temporarily-defers-increase-to-GROH-rents.aspx WALGA notes and includes the Zones Recommendation in its advocacy for GROH and greater service support for regional and remote Western Australian Local Governments, acknowledging the importance of this topic in the coming months.	Ongoing	Joanne Burges Executive Manager, People and Place jburges@walga.asn.au 9213 2018
Grt Eastern C	2019 June 27 Zone Agenda Item 7.1 WALGA Advocacy Regarding Greenfinch Mine Expansion	That the Great Eastern Country Zone 1. Supports the Shire of Westonia's position to seek clearing and mining approval for the proposed Greenfinch mining operation. 2. Requests WALGA to raise the issue with relevant authorities to ensure that the Greenfinch Project has every chance of success.	WALGA has liaised with the Shire and also raised it with the Shadow Minister for the Environment. It is understood that a revised clearing application is currently being assessed by the DWER. Ongoing.	August 2019	Mark Batty Executive Manager Environment and Waste Mbatty@walga.asn.au 9213 2078
Grt Eastern C	2018 November 29 Zone Agenda Item 7.4 Water Corporation - New management and billing structure for standpipes	That the Great Eastern Country Zone request WALGA to advocate opposing the WA Water Corporation proposed fee structure in remote parts of the eastern Wheatbelt and; 1. Request the Water Corporation look to possible subsidised billing to remote user standpipes for users without any other possible means of potable water; Write to the Department of Water suggesting that as a result of the increased Standpipe water costs that they re-introduce the Farm Water Grants to allow effected landholders the ability to create on-farm water storage and water connections	Considered by the Infrastructure Policy Team at its March meeting and further follow-up with Councils requested with feedback to the next meeting.	September 2019	Ian Duncan Executive Manager Infrastructure iduncan@walga.asn.au 9213 2031

Grt Eastern C	2019 March Zone Agenda Item 12.3 Telstra – Power Outages Effecting Communications	1. Requests WALGA to advocate through the State Emergency Management Committee for action in respect to power outages effecting telecommunications and the eligibility for Local Governments to turn generators on.	<p>WALGA have written to the SEMC to request action in respect to power outages effecting telecommunications.</p> <p>WALGA have advocated to the SEMC and the SEMC have included this item on their agenda at the meeting to be held 2 August 2019.</p> <p>WALGA tabled this issue at the August SEMC meeting requesting SEMC to formally write to the District Emergency management Committees and to provide WALGA with advice on this matter. SEMC have taken this as an action.</p> <p>The Zone will be provided with a copy of SEMC's response when received.</p>	August 2019	Joanne Burges Executive Manager, People and Place jborges@walga.asn.au 9213 2018
Grt Eastern C	2018 November 29 Zone Agenda Item 7.3 Container Deposit Scheme Locations	<p>That the Great Eastern Country Zone requests that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> All Local Governments be guaranteed, as a minimum, one flexible refund point in their area. A flexible access point should be defined as a refund point which, as a minimum, is open 16 hours each two week period, including at least 8 hours at weekends <p>The State Government provide appropriate funding for the refund points.</p>	<p>The Scheme commencement date has now been announced – 2 June 2020, and the procurement process for refund points has commenced.</p> <p>The Scheme Coordinator, WA Return Recycle Renew (WARRR) has actively engaged with WALGA and will be hosting workshops around the state for Local Governments and other organisations interested in setting up refund points as part of the Scheme. WALGA hosted a workshop on 14 August to assist Local Governments with their applications to become refund points.</p>	August 2019 Ongoing	Mark Batty Executive Manager Environment and Waste Mbatty@walga.asn.au 9213 2078
Grt Eastern C	2019 March Zone Agenda Item 12.2 Office of the Auditor General (OAG) Audit Fee Increase	The Zone request WALGA to undertake research into the audit costs including why the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) fees have increased significantly and what is the criteria for the fee increases.	<p>WALGA carried out a survey of Local Governments on their experiences with the Office of the Auditor General carrying out financial and performance audits on WA Local Governments.</p> <p>A summary of the survey results will be provided at the August Zone meeting</p>	September 2019	Tony Brown Executive Manager Governance and Organisational Services 9213 2051 tbrown@walga.asn.au

ZONE COMMENT

This is an opportunity for Member Councils to consider the response from WALGA in respect to the matters that were submitted at the previous Zone Meeting.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Karin Day

Seconded: Cr Rodney Forsyth

That the Great Eastern Country Zone WALGA August 2019 Status Report be noted.

CARRIED

8.3 Review of WALGA State Council Agenda – Matters for Decision
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BACKGROUND

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

The full State Council Agenda can be found via link: <https://walga.asn.au/getattachment/a846e7df-becb-4570-956e-cafec51afcb3/Agenda-State-Council-6-September-2019.pdf>

The Zone is able to provide comment or submit an alternative recommendation that is then presented to the State Council for consideration.

5.1 Interim Submission - Draft Position Statement: Fibre Ready Telecommunications Infrastructure

WALGA Recommendation

That the interim submission to the WA Planning Commission on the draft Position Statement: Fibre Ready Telecommunications Infrastructure, be endorsed.

5.2 Interim Submission on the WA Motorsport Strategy

WALGA Recommendation

That the interim submission on the WA Motorsport Strategy be endorsed.

5.3 Interim Submission on the State Strategy to Respond to the Abuse of Older People (Elder Abuse)

WALGA Recommendation

That the interim submission on the State Strategy to Respond to the Abuse of Older People (Elder Abuse) is endorsed.

5.4 WA Public Libraries Strategy Forum

WALGA Recommendation

That WALGA:

1. Supports the proposed repurposing of the accounting treatment of existing capital funds to recurrent funding.
2. Supports the proposed transfer of ownership of stock from State to Local Governments for Tier 1 Local Governments.
3. Requests State Library WA to advise the Local Government sector of the State Government corporate budget schedule and expedite annual funding allocation notifications to Local Government as soon as possible in the new financial year.

5.5 Submission on the Draft Compliance and Enforcement Policy

WALGA Recommendation

That the submission to the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation relating to the draft Compliance and Enforcement Policy be endorsed.

5.6 Submission on the Environmental Protection Authority's Greenhouse Gas Emissions Guidance

WALGA Recommendation

That the WALGA submission on the Environmental Protection Authority's proposed Greenhouse Gas Emissions Guidance be endorsed.

5.7 Road Safety Strategy for WA Beyond 2020

WALGA Recommendation

That the submission to the Road Safety Council, for consideration in developing the next road safety strategy for Western Australia, be endorsed.

5.8 Interim Submission - Revitalising Agricultural Region Freight Strategy

WALGA Recommendation

That the interim submission to the Department of Transport on the draft Revitalising Agricultural Region Freight Strategy be endorsed.

5.9 Policy Templates: (1) Works in the Local Government Road Reserve; and (2) Events in the Local Government Road Reserve

WALGA Recommendation

That the following Policy Templates be endorsed:

1. Works in the Local Government Road Reserve; and
2. Events in the Local Government Road Reserve

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Onida Truran

Seconded: Cr Eileen O'Connell

That the Great Eastern Country Zone supports all Matters for Decision as listed above in the State Council Agenda.

CARRIED

8.4 Review of WALGA State Council Agenda – Matters for Noting / Information

- 6.1 Submission to the Select Committee into Local Government**
- 6.2 Cooperation and Shared Services**
- 6.3 Draft Terms of Reference for an Inquiry into Local Government Fees and Charges**
- 6.4 Public Health Advocacy Plan**
- 6.5 Completion of the Managing Alcohol in Our Communities Guide**
- 6.6 Local Government Coastal Hazard Planning – Issues Paper**
- 6.7 Climate Resilient Councils – Preparing for the Impacts of Climate Change**
- 6.8 Report Municipal Waste Advisory Council (MWAC)**

8.5 Review of WALGA State Council Agenda – Organisational Reports

- 7.1 Key Activity Reports**
 - 7.1.1 Report on Key Activities, Environment and Waste Unit**
 - 7.1.2 Report on Key Activities, Governance and Organisational Services**
 - 7.1.3 Report on Key Activities, Infrastructure**
 - 7.1.4 Report on Key Activities, People and Place**

8.6 Review of WALGA State Council Agenda – Policy Forum Reports

- 7.2 Policy Forum Reports**
 - 7.2.1 Mayors/Presidents Policy Forum**
 - 7.2.2 Mining Community Policy Forum**
 - 7.2.3 Container Deposit Legislation Policy Forum**
 - 7.2.4 Economic Development Forum**

8.7 WALGA President's Report

The WALGA President's Report was attached with the Agenda.

Nick Sloan introduced himself and advised on his background and career highlights together with the WALGA President's Report.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Gary Shadbolt
Seconded: Cr Onida Truran

That the Great Eastern Country Zone notes the following reports contained in the WALGA State Council Agenda.

- Matters for Noting/Information
- Organisational Reports
- Policy Forum Reports; and
- WALGA President's Report

CARRIED

9. GUEST SPEAKERS / DEPUTATIONS

9.1 CBH Group Update

Rob Dickie, Government and Industry Relations Advisor, presented to the Zone on the progress of the Network Strategy. Presentation is attached. (*Attachment 3*)

9.2 Container Deposit Scheme and 3 Bin Collection System

Rebecca Brown, Manager Waste and Recycling from WALGA presented to the Zone on the Container Deposit Scheme and the 3 bin rubbish collection system. Presentation is attached. (*Attachment 4*).

10. AGENCY REPORTS

10.1 Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries

Kirsty Martin from the Department of Local Government, Sport & Cultural Industries provided an update to the Zone.

10.2 Main Roads Western Australia

Mr Craig Manton was an apology for this meeting and will provide an update to the next Zone meeting.

10.3 Wheatbelt RDA

Mandy Walker, Wheatbelt RDA presented to the Zone.

11. MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

Hon. Laurie Graham MLC, Member for the Agricultural Region, presented to the Zone on the following:

- Select Committee into Local Government
- Legislation – Voluntary Assisted Living and Residential Tenancies Act

12. GENERAL BUSINESS

12.1 Rail Retention Group – Money Retained

Shire of Narembeen suggested winding up their allocated funds to the Secondary Fright Group project.

12.2 Mr Bill Price – Shire of Westonia

The Zone noted that Bill Price was found not guilty of the alleged charges pertaining to his employment at the Shire of Exmouth.

The Zone offers its full support to Bill.

12.3 Retiring Councillors

The Chair, Rhonda Cole, on behalf of the Zone wanted to say thank you to all Elected Members and extended to those re-standing for Council or retiring the Zones best wishes.

12.4 Wheatbelt Regional Health Forum

NEWROC are holding a Wheatbelt Regional Health forum in Training on 20 September 2019. Everyone is encouraged to attend.

13. URGENT BUSINESS

Nil

14. DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETINGS

The next meeting of the Great Eastern Country Zone will be held in Merredin on Thursday 28 November, commencing at 9.30am.

15. CLOSURE

There being no further business the Chair declared the meeting closed at 11.45am.

ATTACHMENT A

Local Government Auditor General Survey

On 28 October 2017, the Local Government Amendment (Auditing) Act 2017 was proclaimed, giving the Auditor General the mandate to audit Western Australia's Local Government and Regional Councils. The Act allows the Auditor General to conduct performance audits of Local Governments, as well as assuming responsibility for the annual financial audits of Local Governments as their existing audit contracts expire.

To understand the impact these changes have had on the sector to date, WALGA conducted a survey of its members during May and June 2019.

Some 77 Local Governments responded to the survey, representing Local Governments of all sizes and from across both metropolitan and regional WA. The composition of respondents by the size of their rates base is shown in Table 1 below.

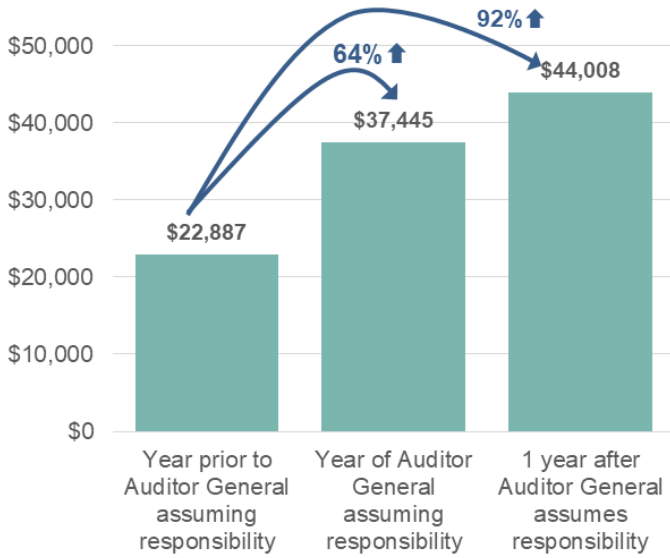
Table 1

Rates base	Survey respondents	All Local Governments in WA
\$0 - \$2.5m	28%	35%
\$2.5m - \$5m	26%	22%
\$5m - \$15m	21%	16%
Above \$15m	25%	27%

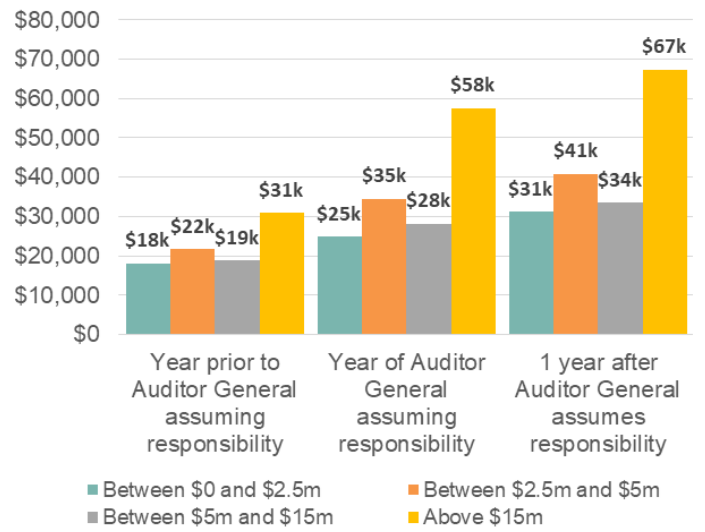
A summary of the survey results is provided below.

- The average financial audit costs of respondents was just under \$23,000 in the year prior to the Auditor General assuming responsibility for financial audits. In the year that the Auditor General assumed responsibility, the average financial audit costs across respondents increased by 64% to \$37,445. In the second year of the Auditor General assuming responsibility, the average financial audit costs across respondents was even higher at \$44,008. This represents an increase of 92% across the two year period.
 - Local Governments with rate bases above \$15 million experienced the greatest increase in financial audit costs (in total dollar and percentage terms) – from an average of \$31,000 in the year prior to the Auditor General assuming responsibility to \$58,000 in the year that the Auditor General assumed responsibility, and then \$67,000 in the second year of the Auditor General assuming responsibility. This represents an increase of 118% over the two year period.
 - Local Governments with rate bases less than \$2.5 million experienced the lowest increase in financial audit costs (in total dollar and percentage terms) – from an average of \$18,000 in the year prior to the Auditor General assuming responsibility to \$25,000 in the year that the Auditor General assumed responsibility, and then \$31,000 in the second year of the Auditor General assuming responsibility. This represents an increase of 72% over the two year period.

Average financial audit costs of respondents

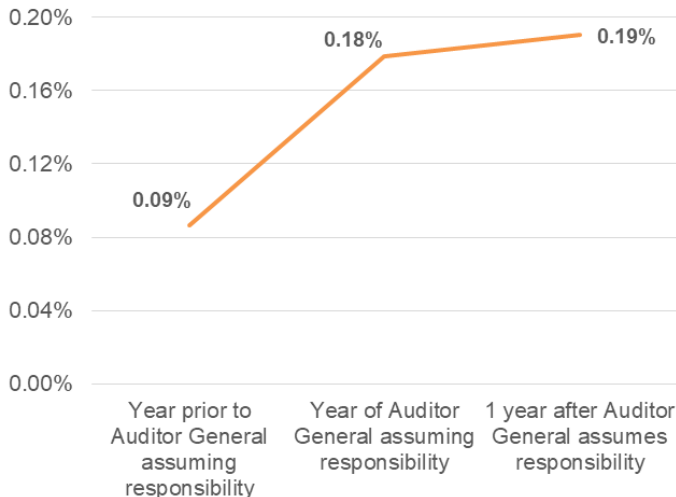


Average financial audit costs of respondents, by size of respondent rates base

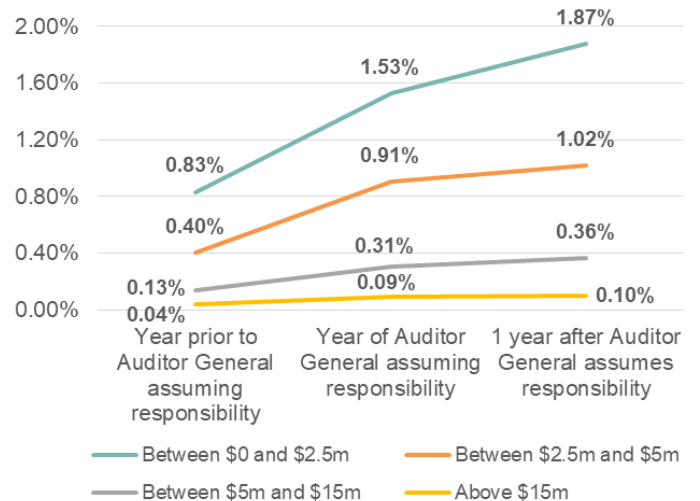


- Financial audit costs represented 0.09% of the respondent rates base (on average) in the year prior to the Auditor General assuming responsibility for financial audits. This increased to 0.18% in the year that the Auditor General assumed responsibility for financial audits, and then 0.19% in the second year of the Auditor General assuming responsibility.
 - Respondents with rates bases below \$2.5 million have seen financial audit costs as a proportion of their rates base increase from 0.83% in the year prior to the Auditor General assuming responsibility, to 1.53% in the year that the Auditor General assumed responsibility and then 1.87% in the second year of the Auditor General assuming responsibility. This compares unfavourably to larger Local Governments, with financial audit costs representing just 0.1% of their rates base in the second year of the Auditor General assuming responsibility.
- The majority of respondents (61% or 47) indicated that the Auditor General assuming responsibility for financial audits has required them to supply more evidence and information in order to substantiate their financial audit. There were, however, 21% of respondents (or 16) who thought the level of evidence and information required has been the same since the Auditor General assumed responsibility, while 18% (or 14) were unsure.

Average financial audit costs of respondents as a proportion of their rates base, by year



Average financial audit costs of respondents as a proportion of their rates base, by year



- Some 88% of respondents indicated that the Auditor General had contracted out the responsibility for their financial audit to a private sector organisation. The majority of these contracted out audits (62%) were performed by the same company that previously conducted their financial audits.
- Some respondents believed there were benefits associated with the Auditor General assuming responsibility for their financial audits, including:
 - staff development (12% of respondents selecting this option);
 - a better perception from rate payers (14% of respondents selecting this option)
 - systems improvement (26% of respondents selecting this option); and
 - other types of procedural improvements.

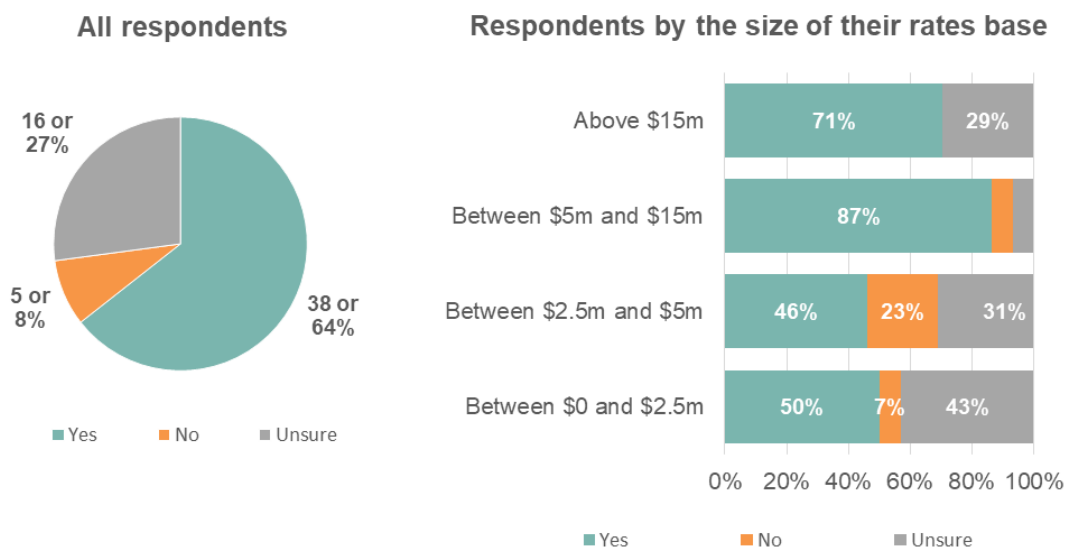
There were 29% of respondents, however, who did not think that the Auditor General assuming responsibility for their financial audits had led to any benefits. These respondents were typically those with a rates base less than \$2.5 million.

A number of respondents also commented that it was too early to tell whether the changes made will lead to any benefits.

- Just 30% of respondents (or 23) had been subject to a performance audit from the Auditor General. In terms of the type of performance audits undertaken, most were in relation to the timely payment of suppliers. The majority of respondents (64% or 38) who had been subject to a performance audit saw them as beneficial for their Local Government, with the type of benefits identified including the development of best practice go-to-guides and the development of appropriate benchmarks that Local Governments can refer to in the future.

A comment made by numerous respondents, however, was that while the performance audits were potentially beneficial, the auditors didn't seem to have knowledge of the diversity of the Local Government sector, and the challenges that regional and smaller Local Governments faced.

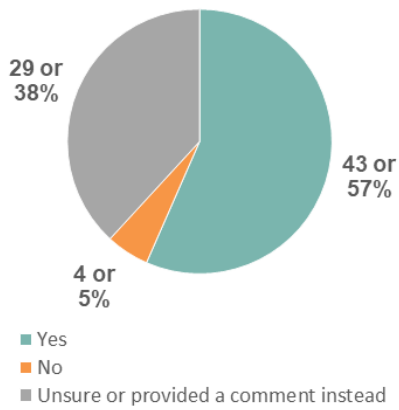
Respondents who believe performance audits are beneficial for their Local Government



- In addition to being beneficial for their own individual Local Governments, the majority of respondents (57% or 43) also believed that performance audits were beneficial for the broader sector as well. Nevertheless, a common theme reported across respondents was that while performance audits could provide benefits, there needs to be more understanding and support in terms of:

- there being acceptable and realistic timeframes for the implementation of any recommended changes; and
- support being provided to implement any recommended changes, which includes financial assistance.

All respondents



Respondents by the size of their rates base

