

# **Great Eastern Country Zone Minutes**

**Thursday,  
13 February 2025**

**Hosted by the Shire of Kellerberrin  
Shire of Kellerberrin Recreation  
and Leisure Centre**

## ZONE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

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

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

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## ATTACHMENTS

The following are provided as attachments to the Minutes

1. Item 5 Shire of Yilgarn ('Virtual Host')
2. Item 6.1.1 Telstra presentation
3. Item 8.4 MRWA presentation - Operational Procedure 113: Operational Boundaries and Asset Maintenance Responsibilities, Rural Regions (OP 113)
4. Item 8.5 Water Corporation presentation

## 1. OPENING, ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

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### 1.1. OPENING

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The Chair opened the meeting at 9:35am.

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### 1.2. ATTENDANCE

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| <b>MEMBERS</b>                 | <b>2 Voting Delegates from each Member Council</b>         |
|--------------------------------|--|
| <b>Shire of Bruce Rock</b>     | President Cr Ram Rajagopalan                               |
|                                | Cr Stephen Strange ( <b>State Council Representative</b> ) |
|                                | Mr Mark Furr, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting          |
|                                |  |
| <b>Shire of Cunderdin</b>      | President Cr Alison Harris                                 |
|                                | Mr Stuart Hopley, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting      |
|                                |  |
| <b>Shire of Dowerin</b>        | President Cr Robert Trepp                                  |
|                                | Deputy President Cr Nadine McMorran                        |
|                                |  |
| <b>Shire of Kellerberrin</b>   | Deputy President Cr Emily Ryan                             |
|                                | Ms Morgan Ware, Governance Manager, non-voting             |
|                                |  |
| <b>Shire of Kondinin</b>       | Mr David Burton, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting       |
|                                |  |
| <b>Shire of Koorda</b>         | President Cr Jannah Stratford                              |
|                                | Mr Zac Donovan, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting        |
|                                |  |
| <b>Shire of Merredin</b>       | Mr Craig Watts, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting        |
|                                |  |
| <b>Shire of Mount Marshall</b> | President Cr Tony Sachse ( <b>Zone Chair</b> )             |
|                                |  |
| <b>Shire of Mukinbudin</b>     | President Cr Gary Shadbolt                                 |
|                                |  |
| <b>Shire of Narembeen</b>      | Cr Hannah Bald, non-voting                                 |
|                                | Ms Rebecca McCall, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting     |
|                                |  |
| <b>Shire of Nungarin</b>       | Deputy President Cr Gary Coumbe                            |

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| <b>Shire of Tammin</b>      | Deputy President Cr Tanya Nicholls                      |
|                             | Mr Andrew Malone, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting   |
|                             |   |
| <b>Shire of Trayning</b>    | President Cr Melanie Brown                              |
|                             | Mr John Merrick, A/ Chief Executive Officer, non-voting |
|                             |   |
| <b>Shire of Wyalkatchem</b> | President Cr Owen Garner                                |
|                             | Ms Sabine Taylor, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting   |
|                             |   |
| <b>Shire of Yilgarn</b>     | President Cr Wayne Della Bosca                          |
|                             | Mr Nic Warren, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting      |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>GUESTS</b>                           |  |
| <b>Main Roads WA</b>                    | Mr Mohammad Siddiqui, Regional Manager<br>Wheatbelt<br>Mr Suvrat Patel, Network Manager  |
| <b>Water Corporation</b>                | Ms Rebecca Bowler, Manager Customer &<br>Stakeholder – Goldfields & Agricultural Region<br>Ms Sandy Postlethwayt, Customer &<br>Stakeholder Senior Advisor |
| <b>Wheatbelt Development Commission</b> | Mr Rob Cossart, Chief Executive Officer  |

|                              |
|------------------------------|
| <b>MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT</b> |
| Nil                          |

|   |
|---|
| <b>WALGA</b>                                      |
| Mr Tony Brown, Executive Director Member Services |
| Mr Sam McLeod, Manager Commercial Services        |
| Ms Meghan Dwyer, Executive Officer Governance     |

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## 1.3. APOLOGIES

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### MEMBERS

|                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| <b>Shire of Dowerin</b>      | Mrs Manisha Barthakur, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting                        |
| <b>Shire of Kellerberrin</b> | Mr Raymond Griffiths, Chief Executive Officer (voting delegate)                   |
| <b>Shire of Kondinin</b>     | President Cr Kent Mouritz   |
| <b>Shire of Merredin</b>     | President Cr Donna Crook<br>Deputy President Cr Renee Manning<br>Cr Mark McKenzie |
| <b>Shire of Mukinbudin</b>   | Ms Tanika McLennan, A/Chief Executive Officer, non-voting                         |
| <b>Shire of Narembeen</b>    | President Cr Scott Stirrat  |
| <b>Shire of Nungarin</b>     | President Cr Pippa de Lacy<br>Mr David Nayda, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting |
| <b>Shire of Tammin</b>       | Cr Nick Caffell   |

### GUESTS

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Regional Development Australia WA</b> | Mr Josh Pomykala, Director Regional Development             |
| <b>CBH Group</b>                         | Ms Kellie Todman, Manager Governance and Industry Relations |

### MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

|  |
|--|
| Hon Martin Aldridge MLC, Member for Agricultural Region  |
| Hon Colin de Grussa MLC, Member for Agricultural Region  |
| Hon Steve Martin MLC, Member for the Agricultural Region |

### WALGA

|   |
|---|
| Ms Tracey Peacock, Regional Road Safety Advisor |
|---|

## 2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

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

### 3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

### 4. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The WALGA Great Eastern Country Zone would like to welcome Mr Sam McLeod the Zone's Executive Officer. Sam is Manager Commercial Services at WALGA. We very much look forward to working with him. WALGA has provided excellent support for our Zone over many years, and we are also able to provide good feedback and support to WALGA. The relationship continues to be very sound and constructive.

### 5. LOCAL GOVERNMENT 'VIRTUAL HOST'

A Zone member Local Government is invited to make a short (10 minutes) presentation on what is occurring in their Local Government.

President Cr Wayne Della Bosca, Shire of Yilgarn made a presentation (Attachment 1).

The **Shire of Wyalkatchem** is invited to make a presentation to next Zone meeting, in April.

### 6. GUEST SPEAKERS / DEPUTATIONS

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#### 6.1. SPEAKERS FOR THE APRIL ZONE MEETING

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##### 6.1.1. MR BOYD BROWN, TELSTRA

Mr Boyd Brown from Telstra presented on:

- Actions taken in the year since the storm cell incident
- Update on Automatic Transfer Unit deployment
- 3G network closure
- Coverage areas
- New technologies

The presentation is provided as an attachment (Attachment 2).

**Noted.**

### 7. MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

Nil.



## 8. AGENCY REPORTS

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

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The DLGSC report was not available at the time of publication of the Agenda. The report will be circulated when received.

The Zone requested WALGA follow up the attendance of a DLGSC representatives at Zone meetings.

**Noted**

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### 8.2. WHEATBELT DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

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*Rob Cossart, CEO*

Mr Cossart provided a verbal report to the meeting.

**Noted**

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### 8.3. REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AUSTRALIA WHEATBELT

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

Report was provided with the Agenda.

**Noted**

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### 8.4. MAIN ROADS WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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*Mohammad Siddiqui, Regional Manager Wheatbelt and Mr Suvrat Patel, Network Manager*

Mr Siddiqui provide a verbal update to the meeting.

Mr Patel provided a presentation on Operational Procedure 113: Operational Boundaries and Asset Maintenance Responsibilities, Rural Regions (OP 113) (Attachment 3).

**Noted**

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### 8.5. WATER CORPORATION

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*Rebecca Bowler, Manager Customer and Stakeholder and Sandy Postlethwayt, Customer & Stakeholder Senior Advisor*

The presentation is provided as an attachment (Attachment 4).

**Noted**

## 9. MINUTES

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### 9.1. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES FROM THE GREAT EASTERN COUNTRY ZONE MEETING HELD ON 14 NOVEMBER 2024

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The Minutes of the Great Eastern Country Zone meeting held on 14 November 2024 had been previously circulated.

#### RESOLUTION

**Moved:** Shire of Koorda  
**Seconded:** Shire of Trayning

**That the Minutes of the meeting of the Great Eastern Country Zone held on 14 November 2024 be confirmed as a true and accurate record of the proceedings.**

**CARRIED**

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### 9.2. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE GREAT EASTERN COUNTRY ZONE MEETING HELD ON 14 NOVEMBER 2024

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#### 9.2.1. NORTHAM HEALTH SERVICE UPGRADE - LETTER TO AVON-MIDLAND ZONE

The Zone resolved to provide a letter of support for the Avon-Midland Country Zone's (AMCZ) advocacy for the Northam Regional Hospital to be upgraded to a larger Regional Hospital.

The letter to the AMCZ has been sent.

#### Noted

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### 9.3. MINUTES OF THE GREAT EASTERN COUNTRY ZONE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 5 FEBRUARY 2025

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The Minutes of the Great Eastern Country Zone Executive Committee meeting held on 5 February 2025 were provided as an attachment to the Agenda.

#### RESOLUTION

**Moved:** Shire of Cunderdin  
**Seconded:** Shire of Trayning

**That the Minutes of the Great Eastern Country Zone Executive Committee meeting held on 5 February 2025 be received.**

**CARRIED**

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## 9.4. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE GREAT EASTERN COUNTRY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 5 FEBRUARY 2025

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Nil

## 10. ZONE BUSINESS

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### 10.1. DRAFT OPERATIONAL PROCEDURE 113: OPERATIONAL BOUNDARIES AND ASSET MAINTENANCE RESPONSIBILITIES: RURAL REGIONS

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*By Mark Bondiotti, Policy Manager, Transport and Roads and Max Bushell, Senior Policy Advisor, Road Safety and Infrastructure*

#### BACKGROUND

WALGA has received a draft copy of the MRWA *Operational Procedure 113: Operational Boundaries and Asset Maintenance Responsibilities, Rural Regions* (OP 113) (**Attachment 3**) for review and comment. The purpose of OP 113 is to provide principles and practical guidance for determining how the responsibility for maintaining the different parts of highways and main roads is to be allocated between Main Roads and Local Governments. As such, the document provides essential guidance for the limits of maintenance responsibilities for Local Governments and will be relied on to resolve disputes between the parties. It is therefore of high importance and careful scrutiny is encouraged.

OP 113 will effectively supersede the *Operational Responsibility for Public Roads in Western Australia, 2009* (OP 2009) which was the result of extensive negotiations between Main Roads WA, IPWEA and WALGA and covered both Metropolitan and Regional scenarios. This document was never formally adopted but has nevertheless guided decision making over the years.

In 2019, *Operational Procedure 112: Operational Boundaries and Asset Responsibilities, Metropolitan Region* was published by Main Roads after consultation with Metropolitan Regional Road Groups and WALGA. Operational Procedure 112 and 113 draw heavily on the content of the 2009 document and will effectively supersede it.

The document outlines the limits of responsibilities in the following situations:

- Highways in Built Up Areas
- Highways in Rural Areas
- Bridges, Pathways, and Drainage Structures
- Stormwater Infrastructure
- Lighting
- Public Transport Facilities
- Roadside Facilities
- Signs & Traffic Control Devices
- Fences
- Graffiti
- Vegetation Control in Built Up Areas
- Vegetation Control in Rural Areas.

Indicative drawings are also provided, indicating limits of responsibility.

## COMMENT

The principles set out OP 2009 were broadly agreed by all parties at the time and WALGA has therefore reviewed OP 113 relative to OP 2009. Much of the text in OP 113 has been drawn directly from OP 2009 and the documents are in general alignment. However, WALGA has noted some discrepancies and concerns summarised below:

### 1. Introduction

Refers to additional works to be funded from the SRFLGA. Additional works are not defined, and any funding changes would be for SAC approval. WALGA recommends this principle be removed.

### 1.7 Maintenance Responsibility Guidelines

The draft OP 113 states that the "tangent point area" of a Local / State Road intersection will remain the responsibility of the LG. This principle was previously disputed and has not been tested. If the parties agree that Main Roads will maintain this area in accordance OP 113, then there is no necessity to include this statement.

Point (3) refers to funding for reseal works of the tangent area to be provided from the SRFLGA. Any changes to funding arrangements would be for SAC approval. For certain specified projects, funding could be allocated through Strategic Initiatives.

### 2.1.4 & 2.2.5 Driveways

States that Main Roads is not responsible for the maintenance of private driveways. Main Roads is responsible for approvals and the private owner is responsible for maintenance. In built up areas Local Governments may be responsible to issue work permits. This clause needs to be expanded to confirm the role of Local Government.

### 2.5 Lighting

Add an additional section stating the costing arrangements as per OP 2009. In particular the principle that Main Roads will subsidise 50% of the installation, maintenance and operating cost when Local Governments install lighting on ordinary highways in built up areas.

### 2.6.2 Bus Passenger Facilities

Part (2) add "in accordance with the partnership agreement between WALGA and the PTA"

### Figures 6,7,8,9,10,11,12 &13

The key to these figures states, "Main Roads Responsibility (resurfacing)", resurfacing to be replaced with "maintenance". According to the text and definitions, maintenance is defined as all works of any description required to keep the road serviceable, not just resurfacing.

## NEXT STEPS

Zones are requested to scrutinise OP 113 and provide feedback to WALGA in the following areas:

- Does current and desirable practice correspond to the principles outlined in the OP 113?
- Are there any areas of responsibility or principles not addressed in the OP 113?
- Do any of the proposed allocations of responsibility entail substantial budgetary impacts to Local Governments?
- Any additional concerns or comments.

Discussion at the Zone meeting is encouraged. Any written feedback should be provided by Friday, 28 February, to [infrastructure@walga.asn.au](mailto:infrastructure@walga.asn.au).

This document and draft OP 113 have also been provided to all regional CEOs and Infrastructure Directors providing opportunity for feedback directly to WALGA.

Following the February 2025 round of Zone meetings, WALGA will collate all feedback and provide a consolidated submission back to Main Roads WA.

## **RESOLUTION**

**Moved: Shire of Cunderdin**

**Seconded: Shire of Yilgarn**

**That the Great Eastern Country Zone:**

- 1. Notes Operational Procedure 113: Operational Boundaries and Asset Management Responsibilities, Rural Regions.**
- 2. Notes that Local Governments may submit written feedback directly to WALGA for consideration by 28 February 2025.**
- 3. Concur with the WALGA comments on the text in parts 1. Introduction, 1.7 Maintenance Responsibility Guidelines, 2.1.4 & 2.2.5 Driveways, 2.5 Lighting, 2.6.2 Bus Passenger Facilities and Figures 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 & 13 of Operational Procedure 113: Operational Boundaries and Asset Maintenance Responsibilities.**

**CARRIED**

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## **10.2. GREAT EASTERN COUNTRY ZONE CONFERENCE 2025**

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The Zone Conference had been scheduled for Friday, 21 February.

In late 2024, the Subcommittee become aware that the CBH Member Forum, AGM and Sundowner had been scheduled for the same date.

The Conference Subcommittee met on 13 January and determined a new date of Friday, 28 March 2025.

- Invitations to speakers and an MC have all been issued.
- Invitations have been issued to two potential sponsors to partner with the Zone.
- Venue arrangements (AV, catering, set up etc) are all progressing well.

A final program will be distributed in late February/early March and registrations will open at this time.

A further meeting of the Subcommittee will be arranged prior to finalising the program.

**Noted**

## RESOLUTION

**Moved:** Shire of Bruce Rock

**Seconded:** Shire of Cunderdin

**That all candidates for the Federal Election for the electorate of Durak and O'Connor be invited to attend the GECZ Forum (no speaking opportunity to be provided).**

**CARRIED**

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### 10.3. LOCAL GOVERNMENT CYBER SECURITY PILOT PROJECT

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WALGA has been reviewing the opportunity of seeking Government funding to uplift Local Government cyber security capabilities by provisioning dedicated resources in the Office of Digital Government (DGov) operations centre to detect and respond to cyber risks.

WALGA has been in communication with DGov as a potential future stakeholder, to explore the potential for WALGA to facilitate Local Government access to the WA Cyber Security Unit, operated by DGov. In addition, LGIS is providing a service around cyber security and the Essential 8 program.

Also the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (DLGSC) is partnering with the Office Of Digital Government (DGov) to deliver a 2-year pilot program that will help smaller local governments learn how to better prevent and manage cyber security risks.

Four of five Class 3 and 4 local governments have been invited to participate in the pilot program, working closely with DLGSC and DGov to analyse cyber security issues and what actions should be taken to address them. The Cyber Security Pilot Project will also see new online training and information resources developed for all local governments and published on the DLGSC website.

WALGA has also been researching the possibility of providing an ICT service for the sector.

All of the above are being considered for WALGA to determine the most appropriate way forward in this area.

**Noted**

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## 10.4. 2025 LOCAL GOVERNMENT HONOURS AWARDS

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

There are five awards in the 2025 Program:

1. Local Government Medal
2. Life Membership
3. Eminent Service Award
4. Merit Award
5. Young Achievers Award

All Local Government Elected Members and officers are eligible for nomination for each award.

Nominations opened on Tuesday, 4 February and will close at **5:00pm on Friday, 18 April 2025**.

Details on the 2025 Honours Program, including the nomination form and guidelines for preparing nominations, are available on the [WALGA website](#).

All awards will be presented at the WALGA Local Government Awards event, to occur on 19 July (venue to be announced).

For more information contact Meghan Dwyer, Executive Officer Governance, on 9213 2050 or via email at [honours@walga.asn.au](mailto:honours@walga.asn.au).

### Noted

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## 10.5. CONSULTATION AND GRANT FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

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### 10.5.1. LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEGISLATIVE REFORM: CONSULTATION ON REGULATIONS FOR CEO KPIS AND PUBLIC REGISTERS

*By Tony Brown, Executive Director Member Services*

The *Local Government Amendment Act 2023* (Tranche 1) was assented to in May 2023. A number of the Tranche 1 provisions are yet to commence.

The Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries recently commenced a consultation process on the introduction of Tranche 1 amendments relating to CEO Matters and Online Registers. In addition to the Consultation document, the Department released the [Local Government Regulations Amendment Regulations 2024](#) that will give effect to the amendments.

The Department's Consultation process includes commentary on CEO Matters and Online Registers, which are summarised below.

CEO Matters include:

- CEO Selection Panel
- CEO Recruitment, Termination and Certification
- CEO KPIs

Online Registers include:

- Leasing Register
- Grants and Sponsorship Register
- Development / Applicant Contributions Register
- Goods and Services Contracts Register

WALGA seeks feedback from Local Governments to assist in the composition of a sector-wide response to the Department's Consultation. WALGA circulated an Infopage to CEOs on 29 January, including brief Discussion Paper summarising the proposed regulatory amendments, together with commentary for each Local Government's consideration.

To inform an item for the May 2025 meeting of State Council, feedback is requested by **19 March 2025**. Local Governments will also be able to provide feedback through the April round of Zone meetings.

**For more information, please contact Tony Brown on 9213 2051 or Felicity Morris on 9213 2093 and responses to [governance@walga.asn.au](mailto:governance@walga.asn.au)**

**Noted**

### **10.5.2. DISASTER READY FUND: ROUND THREE**

Round Three of the DRF will provide up to \$200 million of Australian Government investment in 2025-26. The DRF is currently the most significant funding source for Local Government disaster resilience and risk reduction projects.

The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) has introduced changes for Round Three, summarised on the [DFES website](#). Local Governments should review the [Round Three Guidelines](#), Application How-to-Guide and the other various resources available on the DFES website to prepare strong applications.

DFES is the Lead Agency for DRF Applications from WA and the Indian Ocean Territories (IOT) for Round Three. Project Proposals must be submitted via the [online application portal](#) by 5PM (AWST) on Wednesday, 2 April. Late submissions will not be accepted.

In Round Two, WA Local Governments secured funding for 26 projects, including fire danger rating signage, community communications, and evacuation centre improvements.

Local Governments are also encouraged to contact Department of Communities to discuss opportunities for applying to DRF to improve evacuation facilities via [erspartners@communities.wa.gov.au](mailto:erspartners@communities.wa.gov.au).

**Noted**



## 11. ZONE REPORTS

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### 11.1. CHAIR REPORT

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*President Cr Tony Sachse*

Welcome to the first meeting for 2025. Special welcome to Mr Sam McLeod Manager Commercial Services at WALGA. Sam is our Executive Officer and look forward very much to working with you. Also welcome back to Ms Meghan Dwyer, Executive Officer Governance at WALGA.

The Zone Executive met on Wednesday, 5 February 2025. The minutes of the meeting are attached.

Today the one Guest speaker is Mr Boyd Brown from Telstra. Boyd has presented to our Zone previously, the last occasion being 12 months ago. Communications is one of the key areas for us and we appreciate Boyd giving an update and taking questions today.

The State government is in caretaker mode and with the election coming up. However, any Federal politicians can present as normal today.

Thank you to all the Agency representatives for sending in their respective reports. We look forward to hearing all the updates.

The Great Eastern Country Zone Conference 2025 planning is progressing well. Thanks to all those on the Zone Conference Planning Subcommittee and WALGA staff for their support. Thanks also to the Shire of Bruce Rock for offering to host the conference. There has been a change of date due to a conflict with the new date being Friday, 28 March 2025.

As 2025 rolls out we need to continue our good work for the region and our communities. Thanks to the Shire of Kellerberrin for hosting us today.

### **RESOLUTION**

**Shire of Wyalkatchem**

**Shire of Trayning**

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

**CARRIED**

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## 11.2. WHEATBELT DISTRICT EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (DEMC)

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*President Cr Tony Sachse*

The last meeting of the Wheatbelt DEMC was on 11 December 2024. At the time of writing the minutes are not yet available.

Agenda items included:

- 6.1.1. Christmas Period – update of agency on call arrangements and staffing structure.
- 6.1.2. Emergency Management Districts – SEMC Response Policy Subcommittee.
- 6.1.3. Review of DEMC Membership – Terms of Reference and membership types, onboarding of new members for 2025.
- 6.1.4. District EM 2025 Outlook – newsletter, webinars, LG onboarding, meeting dates, LG EM days, DEMC exercises.
- 7. District Emergency Management
  - 7.1. Pre-emptive OASG's – feedback
  - 7.2. Pre-season Forum – feedback
- 8. District Updates
  - 8.1. Local EM committee reports / updates – using reporting template
    - 8.1.1. Any preset LGs
    - 8.1.2. WALGA Zone Reps
  - 8.2. Agency reports / updates – using reporting template

You should have been receiving all the adverse weather reports and preparedness information over recent months. You should also have received the first District Emergency Management News Wheatbelt January 2025. You should receive this every second month. It's a key engagement tool and gives a good briefing on current topics. The January 2025 edition included information on the DEMC Strategic Plan and other DEMC news, upcoming Webinars, Funding Grants and Awards, a Monthly Preparedness Topic, State News and Additional Resources.

The next meeting of the Wheatbelt DEMC is scheduled for 12 March 2025.

The Wheatbelt Operational Area Support Group (OASG)/ISG is now meeting on an as needed basis. There have been some meetings due extreme fire weather and heatwaves in the region.

### **RESOLUTION**

**Moved: Shire of Nungarin**

**Seconded: Shire of Yilgarn**

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

**CARRIED**

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### 11.3. REGIONAL HEALTH ADVOCACY GROUP

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#### **Comment**

President Cr Alison Harris provided the final report of the Group at the August 2024 Zone meeting.

At the November Zone meeting, it was requested a report be presented to the Executive Committee to determine future actions regarding the Group. This report is being prepared and will be submitted to a future Executive Committee meeting.

#### **Noted**

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### 11.4. WALGA ROADWISE

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

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

#### **Noted**

## 12. WALGA STATE COUNCIL EXECUTIVE REPORTS

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### 12.1. WALGA PRESIDENT'S REPORT

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The WALGA RoadWise report was provided as an attachment to the Agenda. Mr Tony Brown, WALGA Executive Director Member Services spoke to the President's Report.

#### **RESOLUTION**

**Moved: Shire of Bruce Rock**

**Seconded: Shire of Narembeen**

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

**CARRIED**

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### 12.2. STATE COUNCILLOR REPORT

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*Cr Stephen Strange*

#### **RESOLUTION**

**Moved: Shire of Wyalkatchem**

**Seconded: Shire of Cunderdin**

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

**CARRIED**

### 12.3. STATUS REPORT

| <b>Zone Resolution</b>  | <b>WALGA Response</b>  | <b>Update</b>  | <b>WALGA Contact</b>  |
|---|--|--|---|
| <p><b>11 April 2024 Zone Agenda Item 9.1.2 Agricultural Land Use</b><br/><b>That the Great Eastern Country Zone recommend that WALGA</b></p> <p>1. In considering Agricultural Land Use, establishes and promotes policy templates to guide Local Governments for their individual adoption to protect and prioritise the preservation of agricultural land against its displacement by non-agricultural activities that lead to a net reduction of the State’s productive agricultural land.</p> <p>2. Within the Policy includes such uses but not limited to tree planting for offsets or carbon, renewable energy generation and transmission.</p> <p>3. Investigates potential impacts to local government rates on rural land, that has approved long term tree planting for different purposes, for example but not limited to planting for carbon offsets, planting for clearing offsets, or planting for renewable fuels; and renewable energy investments.</p> <p>4. Provides advice to local government on what Policies or Special Area Rates should be considered for the land affected.</p> | <p>State Council endorsed the Renewable Energy Facilities Advocacy Position at its meeting of 4 September, 2024. This position calls for the State Government to develop a renewable energy facility state planning policy that would provide greater guidance to applicants and decision makers.</p> <p>In respect to the rating issues, it is noted that the land remains rateable land. In WA, rural property is generally based on Unimproved Value (UV) unlike NSW and Victoria which use Capital Improved Value as the basis. Also in Victorias there is Payment in Lieu of Rates (PiLoR) system. Established under section 94(6A) of the Electricity Industry Act 2000 (EI Act), the Payment in Lieu of Rates (PiLoR) framework allows for councils and electricity generators to negotiate annual payments.</p> <p>The methodology combines a fixed charge with a variable charge based on the capacity of the power station in megawatts.</p> <p>WALGA is currently scoping a piece of work to research the rating system and other charging regimes.</p> | <p><b>November 2024</b></p><br><br><br><p><b>February 2025</b></p> | <p><b>Nicole Matthews</b><br/><b>Executive Manager Policy</b><br/><b>nmatthews@walga.asn.au</b><br/><b>9213 2039</b></p><br><br><p><b>Tony Brown</b><br/><b>Executive Director, Member Services</b><br/><b>9213 2051</b><br/><b>tbrown@walga.asn.au</b></p> |

|   |  |                             |   |
|---|--|-----------------------------|---|
| <p><b>13 June 2024 Zone Agenda Item 7.2<br/>Wheatbelt Development Commission<br/>(Housing Needs within the Wheatbelt Region)</b></p> <p>The Great Eastern Country Zone request that WALGA lobby the State Government to fund the Wheatbelt Development Commission to conduct feasibility studies for programs (including Government Regional Officer Housing) to meet housing needs within the Wheatbelt region (including Great Eastern Country Zone Local Governments).</p> | <p>In January, the Labor Party made a \$145 million election commitment to boost regional housing. The commitment includes a \$25 million Regional Housing Support Fund to unlock land and housing projects, \$104 million for the GROH new build program, and stamp duty relief for first time buyers. The Liberal Party election commitment includes a \$100 million regional housing infrastructure program, and the Nationals have committed to a \$1 billion regional headworks fund. WALGA will work with the incoming Government to ensure sector engagement and consultation in the implementation of any housing commitments.</p> | <p><b>February 2025</b></p> | <p><b>Nicole Matthews<br/>Executive Manager Policy<br/>nmatthews@walga.asn.au<br/>9213 2039</b></p> |
|---|--|-----------------------------|---|

**Noted**

## 13. WALGA STATE COUNCIL AGENDA

### 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.

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

The full State Council Agenda is attached (Attachment 6), and can be found on the [WALGA website](#).

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### 13.1. MATTERS FOR DECISION

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#### 13.1.1. CLIMATE CHANGE ADVOCACY POSITION (STATE COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM 8.1)

*By Jade Mains, Senior Policy Advisor Environment*

#### WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council replace the 2018 Climate Change Policy Statement Advocacy Position 4.1 Climate Change with the following advocacy position:

*Climate Change significantly impacts Local Governments' operations and responsibilities, as well as their communities.*

*Local Government is committed to taking climate action, including by:*

- *reducing operational emissions in line with Australian and Western Australian Government 2050 net zero targets*
- *providing leadership and support to their communities to reduce carbon emissions*
- *embedding climate risk management into their operations to enhance adaptation and build community resilience to the impacts of climate change*
- *working with other levels of Government and key stakeholders to ensure policy and on-ground programs are effective, equitable and targeted.*

*WALGA calls on the Australian and Western Australian Governments to provide the necessary climate leadership, coordination, and action to:*

1. *Ensure Australia and Western Australia meet net zero emissions targets through:*
  - a. *enacting legislation which sets clear, measurable targets for emission reduction*
  - b. *developing and funding coordinated emissions reduction policies, guidance and programs*
  - c. *acknowledging the role of Local Government as an implementation partner in emissions reduction policy and planning.*

2. *Empower Local Government to accelerate adaptation and build resilience in their communities through:*
  - a. *ensuring the roles and responsibilities set out under the Council of Australian Governments Roles and Responsibilities for Climate Change Adaptation in Australia are implemented and adequately resourced*
  - b. *providing up to date, consistent and accessible data to enable evidence-based decision making and investment*
  - c. *developing national guidance on adaptation responses to facilitate coordinated and equitable planning and implementation.*
3. *Provide funding and resources and support to Local Government to enable on-ground implementation, including for:*
  - a. *the implementation of the Regional Climate Alliance Program across Western Australia*
  - b. *the establishment and maintenance of corporate emission inventories and action plans*
  - c. *providing transformational investment to facilitate emission reduction activities*
  - d. *undertaking climate risk assessments and the development of adaptation action plans*
  - e. *a dedicated adaptation fund to address localised climate risks and build climate resilience.*

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- WALGA's current climate change [Policy Statement](#) and [Advocacy Position](#) were endorsed by State Council in 2018.
- There have been significant legislative and policy changes at both the Australian and State Government level since that time. The impacts of climate change are also being increasingly felt across Western Australia, putting Local Government in a challenging position with limited resources and support to mitigate emissions and adapt.
- Feedback from the sector through climate surveys, undertaken every two years, and targeted consultation confirms that significant resourcing and funding gaps exist for Local Government to effectively respond to climate change.
- The updated Advocacy Position focuses on the urgency and scale of climate impacts and calls for a comprehensive framework, and action, to enable Local Government to manage the impacts of climate change and build resilient communities.
- The Environment Policy Team endorsed the Advocacy Position at their 11 December 2024 meeting.

## **ATTACHMENT**

- [Climate Change Legislative and Policy Context](#)

## **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

The revised advocacy position is intended to be an overarching sector position on climate change. Other advocacy positions, including Urban Forest (4.5), Renewable Energy (6.16, 6.17, 6.18), Emergency Management (8.1, 8.2, 8.11) and Coastal Planning (6.8) provide a sector position on specific climate related matters.

The **existing** [Policy Statement](#) and [Advocacy Position](#) is:

#### **4.1 Climate Change**

*Local Government acknowledges:*

1. *The science is clear: climate change is occurring and greenhouse gas emissions from human activities are the dominant cause.*
2. *Climate change threatens human societies and the Earth's ecosystems.*
3. *Urgent action is required to reduce emissions, and to adapt to the impacts from climate change that are now unavoidable.*
4. *A failure to adequately address this climate change emergency places an unacceptable burden on future generations.*

*Local Government is committed to addressing climate change. Local Government is calling for:*

1. *Strong climate change action, leadership and coordination at all levels of government.*
2. *Effective and adequately funded Commonwealth and State Government climate change policies and programs.*

It is proposed that the current advocacy positions be **replaced** with:

#### **Climate Change**

*Climate Change significantly impacts Local Governments' operations and responsibilities, as well as their communities.*

*Local Government is committed to taking climate action, including by:*

- *reducing operational emissions in line with Australian and Western Australian Government 2050 net zero targets*
- *providing leadership and support to their communities to reduce carbon emissions*
- *embedding climate risk management into their operations to enhance adaptation and build community resilience to the impacts of climate change*
- *working with other levels of Government and key stakeholders to ensure policy and on-ground programs are effective, equitable and targeted.*

*WALGA calls on the Australian and Western Australian Governments to provide the necessary climate leadership, coordination, and action to:*

1. *Ensure Australia and Western Australia meet net zero emissions targets through:*
  - a. *enacting legislation which sets clear, measurable targets for emission reduction*
  - b. *developing and funding coordinated emissions reduction policies, guidance and programs*
  - c. *acknowledging the role of Local Government as an implementation partner in emissions reduction policy and planning.*
2. *Empower Local Government to accelerate adaptation and build resilience in their communities through:*
  - a. *ensuring the roles and responsibilities set out under the Council of Australian Governments Roles and Responsibilities for Climate Change Adaptation in Australia are implemented and adequately resourced*
  - b. *providing up to date, consistent and accessible data to enable evidence-based decision making and investment*
  - c. *developing national guidance on adaptation responses to facilitate coordinated and equitable planning and implementation.*



3. *Provide funding and resources and support to Local Government to enable on-ground implementation, including for:*
  - a. *the implementation of the Regional Climate Alliance Program across Western Australia*
  - b. *the establishment and maintenance of corporate emission inventories and action plans*
  - c. *providing transformational investment to facilitate emission reduction activities*
  - d. *undertaking climate risk assessments and the development of adaptation action plans*
  - e. *a dedicated adaptation fund to address localised climate risks and build climate resilience.*

## **BACKGROUND**

There have been significant legislative and policy changes since WALGA's 2018 Climate Change Policy Statement and Advocacy Position were endorsed. The Australian Government enacted the *Climate Change Act 2022*, setting targets for greenhouse gas emissions: a 43% reduction below 2005 levels by 2030 and net zero by 2050. The WA Government introduced the Climate Bill 2023, aiming for an 80% reduction in WA Government emissions by 2030 and a state target of net zero by 2050. The State and Australian Governments have also released a suite of policies addressing mitigation and adaptation action.

Climate science and projections are also becoming clearer about the risks posed by climate change and the need for action. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) [2023 Report](#) states that climate change poses a significant threat to human well-being and planetary health, emphasising the need for urgent action to secure a sustainable future and an integrated adaptation and mitigation effort.

Local Governments and their communities are on the frontline of dealing with increasing climate risks and the associated impacts. 60 WA Local Governments are signatories to the [WALGA Climate Change Declaration](#) which represents over 87% of the State's population. Making a declaration demonstrates a Local Government's ongoing commitment to locally appropriate climate action to both mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

However, Local Government continues to face substantial challenges in addressing climate change due to limited funding and support from the Australian and State Governments. Funding and capacity constraints can make undertaking emissions reduction and adaptation actions particularly challenging for smaller regional Local Governments, whose assets and communities may be more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, such as extreme weather events.

In 2021-23, WALGA was successful in securing State Government funding to deliver a [Regional Climate Alliance \(RCA\) Pilot Program](#), an initiative under the [Western Australian Climate Policy](#). Modelled on successful programs in other jurisdictions, two groups of Local Governments, the South Coast Alliance and Goldfields Voluntary Regional Organisation of Councils focused on accelerating climate action at the regional scale. WALGA continues to [advocate to the State Government](#) to reinstate the program and expand it statewide.

To develop the updated Advocacy Position, WALGA ran a workshop with Local Government officers to establish the parameters for the review. Climate Change survey data, collected in 2020, 2022 and 2024, also informed the development of the updated Advocacy Position. WALGA also participated in an evaluation of the RCA Pilot Program with State Government. The themes from the survey data, consultations and Pilot evaluation, were:

- in addition to signing WALGA's Climate Change Declaration, many Local Governments are embedding climate change considerations into their strategic community plans, policies and operations
- of the 139 WA Local Governments, 110 (80% of Local Governments) are taking at least one significant action relating to climate change
- the biggest barrier to accelerating action at the local level is the lack of targeted funding and support. This is particularly significant for regional Local Governments.

The draft updated Advocacy Position was provided to relevant Local Government officers for comment and their feedback was incorporated.

### **COMMENT**

The updated Advocacy Position builds on the 2018 position, acknowledging the substantial shift in policy development and public sentiment on climate change. The updated Position therefore focuses on the practical actions that will enable a coordinated and strategic framework to reduce emissions and respond to the impacts of climate change.

Local Governments continue to demonstrate leadership in climate action by responding and managing impacts at a local scale, however, the position reflects the need for greater funding and support from the Australian and State Governments.

The updated Advocacy Position, together with climate change-related advocacy positions in the areas of emergency management, urban forests, renewable energy, coastal planning, and water resources (upcoming), will provide a sound basis for WALGA's ongoing climate change advocacy and policy development.

### **13.1.2. WASTE MANAGEMENT LEGISLATION ADVOCACY POSITION (STATE COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM 8.2)**

*By Rebecca Brown, Policy Manager Environment and Waste*

#### **WALGA RECOMMENDATION**

That State Council replace the Waste Management Legislation Policy Statement and Advocacy Position 7.1 Waste Management Legislation with the following advocacy position:

1. *Local Government supports Australian and State Government waste management legislation which:*
  - a. *includes requirements for national and state waste strategies which support Local Governments to implement the strategies and achieve targets*
  - b. *focuses on coordinated action and clear roles and responsibilities*
  - c. *establishes a lead agency for waste management*
  - d. *establishes and maintains a regulated product stewardship framework for all products entering the Australian market*
  - e. *includes provisions to optimise market development and participation in waste processing.*
2. *Local Government calls for the Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Act 2007 to be amended to include:*
  - a. *Waste education in the definition of Waste Services*
  - b. *Circular Economy principles.*

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- WALGA's current [Waste Management Legislation Policy Statement](#) and [Advocacy Position](#) were adopted in 2004.
- The Policy Statement outlines Local Government's position on waste management legislation in Western Australia and sets out the key objectives waste management legislation should achieve.
- WALGA used the Waste Management Policy Statement to inform advocacy on the development, and reviews, of the *Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Act 2007* (WARR Act).
- The current Advocacy Position, and many of the elements in the policy statement, are no longer relevant as they have been achieved.
- The revised Advocacy Position focuses on both Australian and State Government legislation and reflects the shift in focus from traditional waste management towards a circular economy approach.
- The Municipal Waste Advisory Council endorsed the new Advocacy Position at its meeting on 11 December 2024.

## **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

The existing [Policy Statement](#) and [Advocacy Position](#) is:

*Local Government supports waste management legislation that references the principles of Sustainability and the Waste Hierarchy.*

*To be effective, waste management legislation should include the following primary objectives:*

- 1. Protection of human health and the natural environment;*
- 2. Minimise resource consumption;*
- 3. Minimise waste; and*
- 4. Effect the transition to a waste-free society.*

It is proposed that the current advocacy positions be **replaced** with:

- 1. Local Government supports Australian and State Government Waste Management Legislation which:*
  - a. includes requirements for national and state waste strategies which support Local Governments to implement the strategies and achieve targets*
  - b. focuses on coordinated action and clear roles and responsibilities*
  - c. establishes a lead agency for waste management*
  - d. establishes and maintains a regulated product stewardship framework for all products entering the Australian market*
  - e. includes provisions to optimise market development and participation in waste processing.*
- 2. Local Government calls for the Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Act 2007 to be amended to include:*
  - a. Waste education in the definition of Waste Services*
  - b. Circular economy principles.*

## **BACKGROUND**

WALGA used the Waste Management Legislation Policy Statement as a reference point in the development, and both reviews, of the *Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Act 2007* (WARR Act). There have not been any significant changes to the WARR Act since it was enacted.

The national waste legislation, the *Recycling and Waste Reduction Act 2020* (RaWR Act), is being reviewed currently. The development of an updated Advocacy Position will assist in providing input to the review.

The Municipal Waste Advisory Council endorsed the new Advocacy Position at their meeting on 11 December 2024.

## **COMMENT**

Local Government feedback, through both reviews of the WARR Act and in the development of this Advocacy Position, identified key areas to include in the revised position. These areas reflect the changes in approach to waste management since 2007, when the WARR Act was introduced, including a shift of thinking in relation to waste management, particularly with

the advent of circular economy principles, and the increased understanding of the importance of waste education and behaviour change.

The Advocacy Position focuses on the importance of waste strategies (at the national and state level), coordinated action, clear roles and responsibilities, a lead agency for waste management and effective product stewardship provisions. Specifically, for the WARR Act, amendments are suggested to include waste education and circular economy principles.

## **RESOLUTION**

**Moved: Shire of Mukinbudin**

**Seconded: Shire of Nungarin**

**That the Zone supports all WALGA recommendations in the Matters for Decision as contained in the 5 March 2025 State Council Agenda and as listed above.**

**In respect to the Climate Change Advocacy Position, the Zone requests that WALGA remains open minded to further conversations on climate change.**

**CARRIED**

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## 13.2. POLICY TEAM AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

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### 13.2.1. INFRASTRUCTURE POLICY TEAM REPORT (STATE COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM 9.1)

*By Ian Duncan, Executive Manager, Infrastructure*

#### WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council:

1. Note the report from the Infrastructure Policy Team for the 5 March 2025 meeting.
2. Determine to:
  - a. Delete Advocacy Position 5.2.8 (Towards Zero Road Safety Strategy 2008 – 2020).
  - b. Amend the title of Advocacy Position 5.2.7 from Road Safety Strategy (Imagine Zero) to Driving Change Road Safety Strategy 2020-2030.
  - c. Delete the fourth dot point in Advocacy Position 5.2.7 "...the retention of WA's Default Open Speed Limit at 110 km per hour and opposes the proposed reduction to 100 km per hour..."

*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 27 November 2024.

#### **1. MATTERS FOR STATE COUNCIL DECISION**

WALGA's advocacy positions are reviewed and updated to ensure that they remain contemporary. The Towards Zero Road Safety Strategy 2008 – 2020 was superseded with "Driving Change, Road Safety Strategy for Western Australia 2020 – 2030". Advocacy Position 5.2.7 refers to this, the current strategy.

Advocacy Position 5.2.7 was endorsed by State Council during the consultation phase of the current road safety strategy. At that time the name of the strategy had not been determined. The proposed title change reflects the final name of the strategy.

In May 2023 WALGA's State Council adopted advocacy position 5.2.3 Speed Management Reform which provides a set of principles for guiding WALGA's advocacy on the many and varied aspects of the complex topic of travel speeds in the context of the road networks managed by the 139 Local Governments in WA. It is proposed that this May 2023 advocacy position replaces the previous position in scope, currency and utility.

The previous position was established on the basis of consultation and feedback (by a consultant on behalf of the WA Government) from some Local Governments in the early 2000s. Both the consultation question and the position are narrow and specific in scope.

## **2. MATTERS FOR STATE COUNCIL NOTING**

The Policy Team progressed actions and advocacy in relation to:

- Regional telecommunications service levels, including impact of closure of the 3G network.
- Development of contemporary advocacy positions relating to active transport.

### **13.2.2. PEOPLE AND PLACE POLICY TEAM REPORT (STATE COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM 9.2)**

*By Nicole Matthew, Executive Manager Policy*

#### **WALGA RECOMMENDATION**

That State Council note the People and Place Policy Team meeting report for the 5 March 2025 meeting.

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

- *Community*
- *Emergency Management*

The People and Place Policy Team have not had a meeting since the last State Council meeting in December 2024.

### 13.2.3. GOVERNANCE POLICY TEAM REPORT (STATE COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM 9.3)

*By Tony Brown, Executive Director Member Services*

#### WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council note the Governance Policy Team meeting report for the 5 March 2025 meeting.

*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*

The Governance Policy Team have not had a meeting since the last State Council meeting in December 2024.

The next meeting is scheduled for March.



### 13.2.4. ENVIRONMENT POLICY TEAM REPORT (STATE COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM 9.4)

*By Nicole Matthews, Executive Manager Policy*

#### WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council note the Environment Policy Team meeting report to the 5 March 2025 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 meeting held on 11 December 2024.

#### **1. MATTERS FOR STATE COUNCIL DECISION**

The Environment Policy Team agreed to recommend that State Council replace WALGA's existing Advocacy Position 4.1 Climate Change (see [item 8.1](#)).

#### **2. MATTERS FOR STATE COUNCIL NOTING**

[Item 10.5](#): Polyphagous shot-hole borer Update

The Policy Team discussed the following matters referred by Zones:

- **Whale carcass management:** Goldfields Esperance Country Zone requests that WALGA advocate for a government policy change to allow towing of whale carcasses before they wash ashore. WALGA notes the feedback and will investigate if there is further action on the issue.
- **Service Stations / Sensitive Land uses:** South Metropolitan Zone requests that WALGA supports the review of the EPA and advocates for the review of the GS3. WALGA will raise the need for a review of this Guideline through its representation on the EPA Stakeholder Reference Group, then consider further advocacy on this matter.
- **State Planning Policy 3.6 - Infrastructure Contributions (Community Infrastructure Cap):** North Metropolitan Zone recommends that WALGA advocate to the State Government for indexation of the community infrastructure cap defined in the State Planning Policy. WALGA made a submission strongly opposing the introduction of a contribution cap. WALGA is also working with the Growth Alliance Perth and Peel Local Governments to develop a set of advocacy positions in relation to the development contribution plan arrangements.

### **3. PORTFOLIO UPDATES**

WALGA staff provided the Policy Team with updates on:

- Polyphagous shot-hole borer
- Review of the DAP advocacy position
- Avian Influenza (H5 Clade 2.3.4.4b)
- National Water Agreement.

The Policy Team also noted that the development of an updated Water Advocacy Position is underway.

### **13.2.5. MUNICIPAL WASTE ADVISORY COUNCIL (MWAC) REPORT (STATE COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM 9.5)**

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

#### **WALGA RECOMMENDATION**

That State Council note the Municipal Waste Advisory Council report to the 5 March 2025 meeting.

This report provides an update on matters considered since the last State Council meeting by the Municipal Waste Advisory Council (MWAC), at a meeting held on 11 December 2024.

#### **1. MATTERS FOR STATE COUNCIL DECISION**

MWAC agreed to replace the Waste Management Legislation Policy Statement and Advocacy Position 7:1 Waste Management Legislation (see [item 8.2](#)).

#### **2. MATTERS FOR STATE COUNCIL NOTING**

MWAC considered the following matters:

- Circular Economy Advocacy Position: WALGA's advocacy in relation to circular economy has identified that action is required from all levels of Government. The development of an advocacy position on Circular Economy is far broader than the waste management considerations. Comprehensive consultation on the advocacy position is planned for 2025.
- E-Cigarette Collection Study: Following the successful completion of the Collection Study, MWAC discussed advocacy options to ensure the community access to safe disposal/recycling avenues for e-cigarettes, with a focus on minimising risks to waste management collection and processing infrastructure.
- Waste Processing Contingency Planning: WALGA has consistently advocated for effective contingency planning for waste management, most recently as part of the review of the State Waste Strategy. Several recent issues have highlighted the challenges facing the sector and the limited options for processing of some materials. MWAC discussed governance models and contingency planning options for Western Australia.

#### **3. UPDATES**

MWAC noted the following updates:

- Policy Statement Review Update
- Better Practice Document Review Update
- Review of DWER Waste Education
- Review of Recycling and Waste Reduction Act
- Review of Local Government Waste Reporting Requirements
- Queensland Fruit Fly (Qfly) Outbreak
- MWAC 30 Year Anniversary.

## RESOLUTION

**Moved: Shire of Mukinbudin**

**Seconded: Shire of Dowerin**

**That the Zone:**

- 1. notes all Policy Team and Committee Reports as contained in the 5 March 2025 State Council Agenda; and**
- 2. supports the WALGA recommendations in the Infrastructure Policy Team Report as contained in the March 2025 State Council Agenda and as listed above.**

**CARRIED**

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### 13.3. MATTERS FOR NOTING/INFORMATION

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- 2025 Federal Election (State Council Agenda item 10.1)
- 2025 State Election (State Council Agenda item 10.2)
- Large Scale Renewable Energy Update (State Council Agenda item 10.3)
- 2024 CoastWA Local Government Survey (State Council Agenda item 10.4)
- Polyphagous Shot-Hole Borer Update (State Council Agenda item 10.5)
- December 2024 Economic Briefing (State Council Agenda item 10.6)
- Flying Minute Submission on the Productivity Commission Inquiry – Opportunities in the Circular Economy (State Council Agenda item 10.7)

## RESOLUTION

**Moved: Shire of Cunderdin**

**Seconded: Shire of Tammin**

**That the Zone notes all Matters for Noting/Information as contained in the 5 March 2025 State Council Agenda.**

**CARRIED**

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## 13.4. KEY ACTIVITY REPORTS

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### 13.4.1. REPORT ON KEY ACTIVITIES, ADVOCACY PORTFOLIO (STATE COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM 11.1.1)

*By Rachel Horton, Executive Manager Advocacy*

#### WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council note the Key Activity Report from the Advocacy Portfolio to the March 2025 State Council meeting.

*The Advocacy Portfolio comprises the following work units:*

- *Marketing*
- *Communications*
- *Media*
- *Events*

The following outlines the activities of the Advocacy Portfolio since the December 2024 State Council meeting.

#### **1. ADVOCACY**

WALGA's combined State Election Campaign through paid and earned media and political engagements has been successful in securing commitments for a number of important initiatives aligned with WALGA's advocacy in The West at its Best policy platform.

Paid media has resulted in 4.6m impressions served across social, digital, out of home and outdoor media across WA.

The dedicated election campaign microsite has received 37,210 visits over the reporting period, driven from paid advertising and direct visits.

In terms of issues, the public has resonated strongly with four of the five issues that the paid campaign has focussed on (Connected and Inclusive Communities - with Sport & Recreation achieving the highest interest, Safer Roads, Climate Resilience and Disaster Ready). Low Carbon has received the least engagement across the social and programmatic campaign and are the least searched key words in Google.

WALGA's 2025 Federal Election Priorities has been developed and distributed to Members of Parliament, Elected Members and other key stakeholders.

Please see [item 10.2](#) for more detail on the State Election Campaign and commitments made by major parties in line with WALGA's advocacy.

## **2. MARKETING**

### **Brand**

The internal graphic design resource is providing enormous value enhancing the quality of materials, increasing the speed of production and driving brand consistency. Over 50 documents and reports have been published in the reporting period including the Federal Election Priorities document, Road Safety reports and refreshed Western Councillor magazine.

All WALGA e-newsletters have been re-branded to be consistent with the main WALGA corporate news (the LG Direct), enhancing our brand narrative around our key pillars of Influence, Support and Expertise plus providing cross promotion opportunities between newsletters.

### **Website**

The WALGA website has performed well over the reporting period. Comparing quarterly statistics there has been a 13% increase in active users and a 41% increase in direct traffic. As the only variable for direct traffic, this is likely due to the Election Campaign driving interest in the WALGA website.

Another highlight is the number of WALGA newsletter subscriptions. There was a 26% increase from 673 to 846 over the last quarter.

## **3. COMMUNICATIONS**

Multiple internal and external communications were published throughout the reporting period including:

- Twelve LG Direct weekly newsletters distributed to over 2,000 Elected Members and senior staff
- The November 2024 edition of the Western Councillor Magazine
- Q4 Tailored Quarterly Report compiled and distributed to all Members
- WALGA's 2025 Federal Election Priorities.

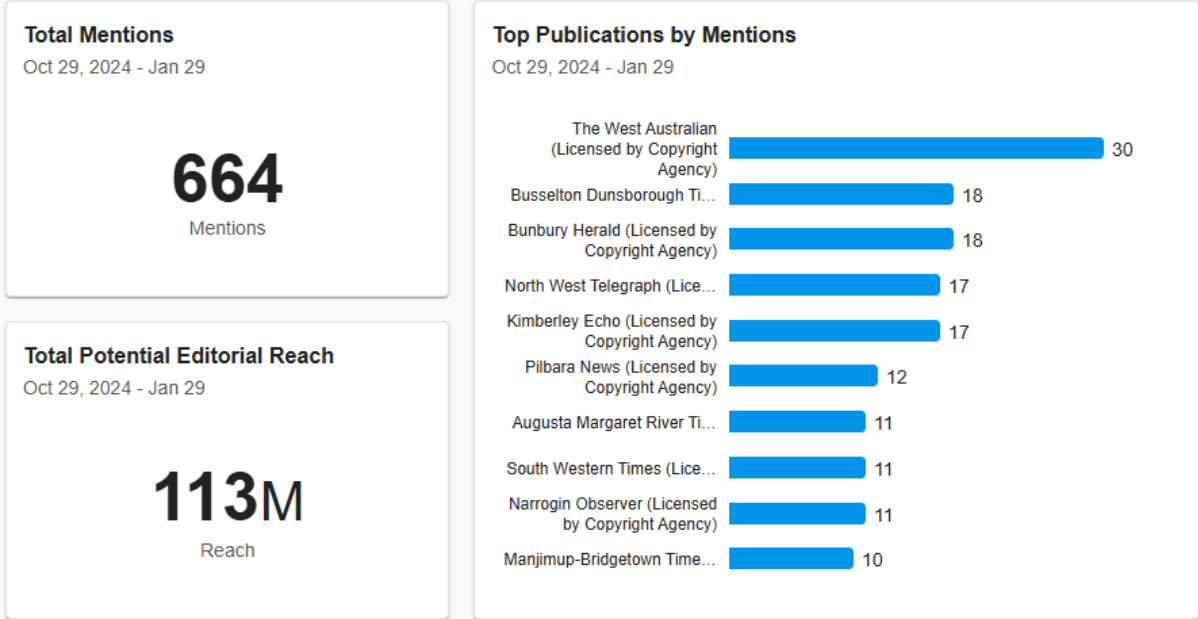
### **EARNED MEDIA**

WALGA has generated significant media activity throughout the reporting period with 664 mentions of WALGA and President Karen Chappel. This equates to seven mentions a day.

One of the online articles with the highest reach (5.6m) was WALGA's response to Premier Roger Cook's negative comments on the Local Government sector including the headline comment from the WALGA President, "Unbecoming of the Premier."

Items that gained publicity in response to WALGA press releases include Renewable Energy, the Polyphagous Shot-Hole Borer, plus Showcase in Pixels and Local Government Elections.

The media has sought comment from WALGA on sector issues over 30 times including on issues such as Population Growth, First Past the Post Voting, Coastal Management and the Polyphagous Shot Hole Borer.



### Media Releases & Opinion piece

- [Local heroes showcased through community art – 29 November 2024](#)
- [WALGA welcomes the Nationals commitment to Emergency Services funding – 13 December 2024](#)
- [Karen Chappel: Local must have input in renewable plans and the answer is blowing in the Wind \(WALGA Renewable Op-ed\) - 5 January](#)
- [WALGA welcomes Nationals' renewable energy announcement – 14 January](#)
- [Labor responds to WALGA's call to rebuild our urban forest – 15 January](#)
- [WALGA commends Labor's commitment to women's sport and urges long-term sporting investment – 17 January 2025](#)
- [WALGA welcomes Labor funding commitment to improve regional road safety – 24 January](#)
- [WALGAs response to Nationals CSRFF announcement – 30 January](#)
- [WALGA's advocacy reflected in new elected member superannuation provisions – 31 January](#)

### Social Media:

200 social media posts were placed in the reporting period across LinkedIn, Facebook and Instagram. (This is separate to paid campaign posts.) A decrease was seen in engagement across all channels so this will be monitored as it could indicate too many posts are being placed. Over 2,000 engagements were achieved on LinkedIn which is encouraging as the key professional platform, and despite lower engagement, brand awareness has benefited from serving 150,000+ impressions across the three major platforms.

## LinkedIn:

### Top posts



Yesterday, WALGA hosted Local Government Minister Hon Hannah Beazley MLA, Housing and Planning Minister Hon John Carey MLA and Urban Development Institute of Australia WA CEO Tanya Steinbeck as they joined CEO Nick

**1,313** clicks



On Wednesday 18 December, WALGA hosted our end-of-year 'WALGA Wrap' event at Perth City Farm. The event provided an opportunity to celebrate a great year of delivering better outcomes for WA Local Governments and

**1,038** clicks



"Thanks to Shane, we're going to build a great \$600,000 fire shed for our town brigade..." Shane Harris, a Community Emergency Services Manager (CESM) who serves the Shires of Cranbrook, Gnowangerup, and

**589** clicks

- 71 posts
- 2,093 post reactions (8% increase)
- 118,177 post impressions (5% increase)
- 7.1% post engagement rate (18% decrease)

## Facebook:

- 56 Posts
- 18,922 post reach (20% decrease)
- 20,116 post impressions (23% decrease)
- 5.89% post engagement rate (4% decrease)

## Instagram:

- 11,224 post reach (16% decrease)
- 11,752 post impressions (13% decrease)
- 4.55% post engagement rate (8% increase)

## PAID MEDIA

The 2025 State Election campaign is gaining strong engagement through targeted advertisement placements and messaging across social media, digital, out of home and outdoor media, generating a combined reach of 4.6 million.

## Social Media

2.4m of the total 4.6m impressions have been served through carousels, stories and polls on social media. Carousels displaying the 'under stress' and swipe right to see 'at its best' messaging has the highest engagement with people commenting and 'liking' posts (56,000+).

Polls running on Safer roads and Urban Canopy have the highest Click Through Rate (CTR). In terms of engagement by issue, Climate Resilience and Safer Roads have gained the most interaction in terms of comments, but when voting for action from the State via the polls, 'Better sports facilities' has gained the highest votes from the public with 98% of respondents supportive, followed by 'More support for Volunteer firies' with a supporter rate of 92%.

## Programmatic Display Advertising

The custom segments responding to display advertising are those classified as 'Green Living', 'Family Focussed' and 'interested in Local/Political news'. That said, all segments are outperforming benchmarks with a CTR of 0.7 compared to an average of 0.06 for



standard display advertising. (Display click through rates are typically much lower as the user isn't actively seeking the product/advert, it is being displayed in a passive manner.) The strongest results have been generated from the Safer Roads keywords at 0.9% CTR and Climate Resilience with a 0.74% CTR.

### **Google Search Engine Marketing**

In terms of words actively searched in Google, the strongest results have been policy-searches related to the election, for example 'Regional Sporting Election' which achieved a CTR of 14.9% (benchmark 3%). The highest engagement in Google is from the 25-34 year old age group. From a geographic perspective, the highest volume of keyword searches is being generated in Belmont, Vincent, Victoria Park and Stirling.

### **Out Of Home Media (OOH)**

Approximately 1.2m impressions have been served across OOH media (predominantly in the Perth Metropolitan area), including billboards in high traffic areas (e.g. Leach Highway). Other OOH placements include shopping centres, bus shelters and health care centres.

### **Campaign Microsite**

There has been a relatively similar number of page visits to three of the issues sponsored through the paid campaign, with Disaster Ready, Climate Resilience and Safer Communities generating an average of 33% of traffic each. 'Connected and Inclusive' has seen the least microsite page visits at 1% of traffic. However, microsite page visits are not reflective of engagement with topics across the board, with issues under the 'Connected and Inclusive' category achieving significant engagement through polls and Google search engine marketing.

## **4. EVENTS**

### **WALGA Wrap**

The WALGA Wrap end of year function held at Perth City Farm on 18 December, provided an opportunity to highlight the successes of 2024 and thank the 150 stakeholders and suppliers in attendance for their partnership throughout the year.

A themed menu showcased local produce from around Western Australia, with dishes dedicated to The Goldfields, The Coral Coast, The Wheatbelt and The South West together with music from WAAPA Alumni Evan Ayers.

### **Urban Forest Conference**

The 2025 Urban Forest Conference is sold out with 365 main registrations and 57 registrations for field tours.

The event will be hosted at the Boola Katitjin building at Murdoch University, creating a unique indoor/outdoor presentation for the main sessions and Sundowner. New initiatives this year include the 'Village Green' where key suppliers and stakeholders can exhibit in the greening space, plus a dedicated Field Tour program held the day prior to the main conference.

Planning is now also underway for the 2025 Aboriginal Engagement Forum on 10 April and the 2025 Local Government Awards.

### **13.4.2. REPORT ON KEY ACTIVITIES, INFRASTRUCTURE PORTFOLIO REPORT (STATE COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM 11.1.2)**

*By Ian Duncan, Executive Manager Infrastructure*

#### **WALGA RECOMMENDATION**

That State Council note the Key Activity Report from the Infrastructure Portfolio for March 2025.

*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 last State Council meeting.

#### **1. ROADS**

##### **Local Government Transport and Roads Research and Innovation Program**

Guidelines for the use of crumbed rubber modified asphalts, sprayed seals, reclaimed asphalt pavement and a catalogue of standard pavement profiles are scheduled for publication in the next quarter. Work has commenced on an investigation into available technologies for best practice road condition assessments and data collection and the development of a road safety rating tool for intersections.

##### **Condition Assessment of Roads of Regional Significance**

The condition assessment survey of significant roads in the Pilbara and Gascoyne regions is nearing completion. The condition survey work for the Kimberley region will commence in March/April 2025, following the wet season in the Kimberley region.

##### **Road Rail Interface Agreements**

Rail Interface Agreements are a requirement under the *Rail Safety National Law (WA) Act 2015*. Each metropolitan Local Government with road/rail crossings with PTA electrified network was recently sent an Interface Agreement for review and execution. All nine Local Governments have now signed this updated agreement. For road/rail interfaces on the Arc Infrastructure network, 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, once the *pro forma* agreement has been finalised.

### **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 February.

### **Operational Boundaries and Asset Responsibilities in Rural Regions**

Main Roads have released a draft policy document that defines the operational and maintenance boundaries between State and Local Roads outside of the Metropolitan Region (a policy for the Metropolitan Region was published in 2020). WALGA has initiated a sector consultation process and will provide feedback to Main Roads.

## **2. ROAD FUNDING**

### **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. Six out of nine Regional Road Groups have commenced the MCA revision process, while the remaining three Regional Road Groups will begin the process in the upcoming months.

## **3. TRANSPORT**

### **Bus Stop Infrastructure**

WALGA State Council sought some amendments to the draft Bus Stop Infrastructure Partnership Agreement 2025 to 2029 at the December 2024 meeting. The Public Transport Authority has provided an initial response to these matters and further discussions are progressing.

### **Active Transport and Micromobility-Discussion Paper**

The discussion paper has now been completed. WALGA proposes to host a forum and workshop with Elected Members and key stakeholders, followed by a workshop with the Local Government Active Transport Reference Group. The aim of these sessions is to engage high-level strategic stakeholders in shaping actionable and strategic policy positions for WALGA in active transport. This forum presents a valuable opportunity to collaboratively develop practical and effective policy outcomes that address Active Transport challenges at the local, state, and national levels.

## **4. ASSET MANAGEMENT**

### **Road Assets and Expenditure Report Update Project**

Tango IT has completed a final report detailing the current processes used to develop the RAE Report and identifying options for improvement in data collection, interpretation, and presentation. The consultant has also prepared final Request for Proposal documentation for WALGA to use in going to market to undertake the suggested improvement works.

## 5. UTILITIES

### **Underground Power**

A template Co-funding Agreement between a Local Government and Western Power was completed and has been distributed to Local Governments with projects in the current Targeted Underground Power Program. This Agreement deals only with funding. Other project related matters such as consultation and communications protocols need to be addressed using an MOU or exchange of letters. The diverse needs of Local Governments meant that this was too difficult to address in a common template.

Representatives from Local Governments with projects in the Targeted Underground Power Program met during December to provide feedback on the template and discuss a range of other matters arising during program development.

The Targeted Underground Power Program Steering Committee received a presentation on the modelled costs to the State Government, Western Power and property owners of options to reduce the risk of projects failing due to high costs. Currently costs of converting to underground power vary significantly between suburbs. The Committee is examining options including capping the property owner contribution. Work on a guide to the Pensioners and Seniors Rebate schemes is also progressing.

### **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. The Association 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. Both programs of work are at risk of delay as a result of caretaker provisions prior to the State Government election.

## 6. ROAD SAFETY

### **RoadWise Councils**

As of 1 January, there were 74 Local Governments registered as a RoadWise Council. There is a spread of RoadWise Councils across all ten Regional Road Group regions. In terms of road safety activity, 81% (60) of registered RoadWise Councils recorded 237 local road safety activities in the period October and December 2024.

### **RoadWise Recognised**

The RoadWise Recognised Advisory Committee last met in November 2024. Points, which signify road safety actions undertaken, were allocated to 62 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.

### **13.4.3. REPORT ON KEY ACTIVITIES, MEMBER SERVICES PORTFOLIO (STATE COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM 11.1.3)**

*By Tony Brown, Executive Director Member Services*

#### **WALGA RECOMMENDATION**

That State Council note the Key Activity Report from the Member Services Portfolio to the March 2025 State Council meeting.

*The Member Services Portfolio comprises the following work units:*

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

The following outlines the activities of the Member Services Portfolio since the December 2024 State Council meeting.

#### **1. ASSOCIATION AND CORPORATE GOVERNANCE**

##### **WALGA Strategic Plan 2025-2029**

At the last meeting in December 2024, State Council endorsed a new organisational Strategic Plan for WALGA. 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.

Development of the Strategic Plan was an involved process of consultation and discussion over the course of the past year. Supported by Keogh Consulting, key inputs into the development of the Strategy included facilitated workshops with State Council and WALGA staff, targeted consultation with a sample of Members at the CEO and Mayor/President level and individual engagement with external stakeholders including Directors General and senior public sector decision makers.

The new Strategic Plan has been distributed to all Members and is available to view on the WALGA website [here](#).

#### **2. COMMERCIAL**

##### **Preferred Supplier Program (PSP) Development**

Approximately 120 new Preferred Suppliers across all panels are being contracted to the program, to be completed by February. 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). The next Preferred Supplier tender is currently scheduled for release in March.

New categories for Architectural Services (32 suppliers) and Aboriginal Heritage Surveys (7 suppliers) have been implemented.

Enhancements to PSP categories are being made for Recycled Construction & Demolition Materials, Project and Operations Management, and Leisure Centre Equipment Supplies.

New PSP category development and development research is being undertaken in the areas of:

- PSP008 - Facilities management
- PSP005 – Mobility and Accessibility Equipment supplies
- PSP005 – Swimming Pool inspection services
- PSP005 - Provision of HACC and social services
- PSP002 – Environmental Health consultants
- PSP003 – Building Inspection Services

A legal review of the current Member Conditions will be undertaken. A focus on enhancing the presence of Aboriginal business on the PSP panels will also be progressed.

With many Members currently engaged in Council Business System and ERP reviews and procurement, WALGA's PSP Panel for Business Systems Software and Services has contractual options available. Resources to raise awareness and support the use of the Panel are under development.

Phase two of the WALGA Sustainable Energy Project is currently being contracted for a new three year term commencing in April. The new term of the project involves 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.

Preliminary research and scoping for an investment services project will progress during 2025

### **ARENA Future Fuels Grant Project**

WALGA has been working with 22 participating Members to complete delivery the final Electric Vehicles and charging infrastructure in line with contracted milestones. The project then moves into an evaluation and knowledge-sharing phase, extending for approximately 12 months. Work is also continuing to explore potential further opportunities for similar initiatives. 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 in the WA Industrial Relations Commission (WAIRC):

- Applications 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 Employees (WASU), Local Government, Racing and Cemeteries Employees Union (LGRCEU) and the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union of Workers (CFMEUW). Essentially the WASU is seeking an order that it cover Local Government outside employees to the exclusion of the CFMEUW. The matter is ongoing and has had 20 hearing days in July and October, with the CFMEUW evidence still to be completed. During the hearing in October 2024 the CFMEUW made a number of applications. One application was to dismiss the matter, which the Commission rejected and dismissed. Another application was for discovery of documents from WALGA and the WASU, which the Commission ordered and WALGA and WASU complied with. The CFMEUW also made a second application for discovery of documents from WALGA, WASU and the LGRCEU. A directions hearing on this second application was held on 16 December 2024 and the parties were directed to file any formal applications to dismiss the CFMEUW's second application and written submissions by 14 February, with this matter to be determined on the papers (without oral argument). Following the Commission's decision with respect to the CFMEUW's second application, the matter will be listed for a further directions hearing to determine next steps and list the substantive application for further hearing dates.

- Applications APPL 3 and 4 of 2023 – concerned award variations sort by the WASU to the Local Government Officers' (WA) Award 2021 (LGO Award) and the Municipal Employees Award (WA) 2021 (ME Award) as follows:
  - increase casual loading from 20% to 25%;
  - conversion of casual employees who have worked for more than 12 months to permanent employment;
  - increased regional redundancy entitlements for employees working outside Perth;
  - an additional week of entitlement to annual leave for shift workers;
  - preferential treatment of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander persons in Local Government employment processes;
  - up to 5 days of Cultural and Ceremonial Leave for Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander persons in the LGO Award; and
  - inclusion of Flexible Working Arrangements.

As a result of new State IR legislation, a consent position was reached in relation to the 25% casual loading and flexible working arrangements. The matter was heard over 6 days concluding on 29 November 2024 before Commissioner Walkington and the decision has been reserved.

- Application APPL 164 of 2024 has been made by the WASU through s80BH of the *Industrial Relations Act 1979* (WA) (IR Act) to be named to the Local Government Industrial Award – Industrial Agreement (LGIA-IA) which is an instrument that transitioned to the State Industrial Relations system. If WASU is named to the LGIA-IA it is then able to take action to enforce the instrument, but more importantly the WASU could 'retire' it under s. 41(7) of the IR Act and the state awards (LGO and ME Awards amongst others) would then apply. Sixty Local Governments have been named to APPL 164 of 2024 and WALGA will be directly representing the Shire of Dundas (lead Local Government) as their industrial agent in this matter and assisting other Local Governments with their responses to oppose the application on the ground that it does not correctly identify the LGIA-IA and that some Local Governments were incorrectly named to the Application because they do not apply the LGIA-IA. The decision for WALGA to only directly represent the lead Local Government was taken so that WALGA did not get 'conflicted out' of the proceedings as has occurred in other matters. The Commission granted an extension of time for

filing of responses to 24 January, and most Local Governments have already filed their responses.

### **New IR Legislation**

The Minister for Industrial Relations the Hon. Simone McGurk introduced the *Industrial Relations Legislation Amendment Bill 2024* into WA Parliament 18 September 2024. It was passed by WA Parliament on 6 November 2024 and received Royal Assent on 13 November 2024 (IRLA Act)

IRLA Act is part of the Government's review of the State IR system that commenced with the 2018 Ministerial review. The IRLA Act will amend the:

- *Industrial Relations Act 1979* (IR Act)
- *Minimum Conditions of Employment Act 1993* (MCE Act)
- *Health Services Act 2016*
- *Public Sector Management Act 1994*

The IRLA Act:

- 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 a 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 came into effect 31 January. WALGA held a webinar for Local Governments on 3 December 2024 to prepare for the changes and will continue to provide resources and assistance.

## **4. GOVERNANCE AND PROCUREMENT**

### **Local Government Legislative Reform**

The Local Government Amendment Bill 2024 was Assented to on 6 December 2024.

Some of the items have come into effect immediately are:

- Clarified Roles and Responsibilities of Council, Council Members, Mayors and Presidents and CEOs
- Local Law Reforms
- Unreasonable / Vexatious Complaints
- Changes to Local Government Borrowing Powers.



Regulations relating to Superannuation for Elected Members have recently been gazetted. It is worth noting that Superannuation came into effect on 1 February 2025 as discretionary for Local Governments. Local Governments will need to make a decision by Absolute Majority if they wish to pay superannuation to Elected Members.

The regulation to mandate Bands 1 and 2 to pay superannuation to Elected Members will take effect from 19 October 2025.

Therefore, those Band 1 and 2 Local Governments that have not resolved to pay superannuation, will be required to pay superannuation from 19 October 2025.

Other items will require regulations and further work: including:

- Development Assessment Panel (DAP) Functions
- Office of the Local Government Inspector
- Local Government Monitors
- Independent Member and Chair of Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee
- Clarified Regional Subsidiaries Provisions

In addition, regulations relating to Tranche 1 amendments are still required:

Amendments yet to commence include:

- Council Plans
- Standardised Meeting Procedures
- Communications Agreement
- Community Engagement Charter and Surveys
- Publication of CEO Performance Review (consultation has commenced)
- New Lease and Contract Registers (consultation has commenced)

In respect to CEO Matters and Online Registers, WALGA circulated an Info Page and Discussion paper, seeking feedback on draft regulations. Responses are requested by 19 March and will inform a State Council Agenda item to go through the April round of Zone meetings.

## **5. TRAINING**

The Training Team has recently undertaken the validation of our nationally recognised program. The team held validation meetings over 4 full days with relevant trainers/assessors and subject matter experts to ensure that all our training resources and assessment tools are up to date. Identified changes are then checked, improved and implemented throughout the relevant resources and assessments on our Student Portal. Accurate recording of those changes is a key RTO compliance requirement which has been overseen by the RTO Compliance team.

The February intake of the Certificate III in Local Government has received good enquiries so far and we are currently enrolling students for a 5 February start. We also prepare for the virtual Graduation ceremony on 25 February where we celebrate the achievement of six successful graduates.

2025 has started with a bang for on-site training with eight workshops confirmed for delivery across WA before April. Short course enrolments are starting to come in with the new Residential Design Codes (R – Codes) being very popular again followed by a range of Governance and Employee Relations workshops.

We are working to launch the Diploma of Local Government for Officers, including the specialisation for Planning with the first delivery starting in late April/ early May.

We are also working with our Training Council, the Financial, Administrative and Professional Services WA and the State Training Borad to have the Diploma of Local Government made available as an existing worker Traineeship.

#### **13.4.4. REPORT ON KEY ACTIVITIES, POLICY PORTFOLIO (STATE COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM 11.1.4)**

*By Nicole Matthews, Executive Manager Policy*

##### **WALGA RECOMMENDATION**

That State Council note the Key Activity Report from the Policy Portfolio to the March 2025 State Council meeting.

*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 December 2024 State Council meeting.

### **1. ECONOMICS**

#### **Economic Briefing**

In December, WALGA released its latest [Economic Briefing](#) (see [item 10.6](#)). The next Economic Briefing will be released in March.

#### **Renewable Energy**

WALGA is progressing its advocacy and initiatives to support Local Governments since State Council endorsed three energy transition advocacy positions in September 2024 (see [item 10.3](#)).

### **2. ENVIRONMENT AND WASTE**

#### **Native Vegetation**

WALGA is progressing with actions identified in the Native Vegetation Issues Paper considered by Zones in December 2024, including the development of a range of capacity-building activities and advocacy to the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation regarding challenges impacting Local Government. Three more Field Days are being planned to assist Local Governments with managing native vegetation in road reserves.

#### **E-waste Transport Rebates**

Following the commencement of the e-waste landfill ban on 1 July 2024, WALGA has been successful in securing State Government funding to assist regional and remote Local Governments in the cost of e-waste transportation for recycling. The [E-waste Regional Transportation Support Scheme](#), (ERTSS) administered by DWER, will provide rebates for eligible Local Governments of up to 50 per cent of transport costs. \$766,000 has been allocated for the ERTSS, which will run until 30 June 2025.

### **Polyphagous Shot Hole Borer**

WALGA having escalated PSHB advocacy and political engagement over the last year, is currently preparing a submission to the National Consultative Committee on key priorities for inclusion in the PSHB Response Plan (see [item 10.5](#)).

## **3. PLANNING AND BUILDING**

### **Urban Forests**

#### *WALGA 2025 Urban Forest Conference*

Tickets for the WALGA 2025 [Urban Forest Conference](#) being held on 14 February at Murdoch University have sold out, with more than 380 registered to attend. The theme of the Conference is **Raising Resilience**, focusing on the unprecedented threats to urban forests from clearing for development, climate change, pests and disease. The Minister for Energy; Environment; Climate Action, Hon Reece Whitby MLA and the Shadow Minister for the Environment Hon Neil Thomson MLC will address the Conference.

#### *Urban Greening Grants*

Round Three recipients of Urban Greening Grants were [announced](#) in December 2024. A total of \$1.6 million was awarded to 16 Local Governments: Bayswater, Belmont, Cambridge, Canning, Cottesloe, Fremantle, Gosnells, Joondalup, Kalamunda, Kwinana, Melville, Mundaring, Murray, Rockingham, Serpentine Jarrahdale and Swan. These Local Governments will plant over 5,400 trees and 238,700 understorey species in winter 2025.

The Urban Greening Grant Program has now closed. A total of 26 Local Governments secured funding under the Program to plant over 33,000 trees and 260,000 understorey plants by winter 2025.

#### *Labor Election Commitment*

[WALGA's 2025 State Election campaign](#), calls for an additional \$40 million over the next decade for an expanded, statewide urban forest program.

WA Labor has committed to double Perth's tree canopy cover to 30% by 2040, including a new urban canopy growth program (\$10 million) and 'treebates' to encourage Western Australians to plant native trees (\$6.9 million) if re-elected.

While welcoming the announcement, WALGA stressed that these programs should be extended statewide and that the Government must take measures to address the loss of existing trees on private land as part of its promised Urban Greening Strategy (see WALGA's media statement [here](#)).

### **Coastwest Grants**

Applications for the [2025-26 Coastwest grants](#) opened in January. WALGA will host an information session for eligible Local Governments on 12 February in partnership with the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage and the Department of Transport. Grant applications close on 14 April.

## 4. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

### Disaster Ready Fund Round Three

\$200 million is available under Round Three of the Australian Government's [DRF](#) which opened on 22 January. DRF is a significant funding opportunity for the sector, with 17 WA Local Government projects receiving more than \$23 million in Round Two, including for fire danger rating signage, community education, evacuation centre improvements and infrastructure projects.

Local Governments are encouraged to review the [guideline changes for Round Three](#) before submitting their project proposals. Proposals must be submitted to DFES via the [online application portal](#) by 5pm (AWST) on 2 April.

### Emergency WA App

The State Government [launched the Emergency WA App](#) on 21 December 2024. The App, available in the [App Store](#) or [Google Play](#), delivers instant notifications of warnings, incidents, Total Fire Bans and elevated Fire Danger Ratings on mobile devices. Users can set multiple custom watch zones for their homes and locations important to them and opt-in to receive push notifications relevant to them. This will be extremely helpful for both the community and visitors to stay in the know about hazards near them.

### Local Emergency Management Arrangements Improvement Program

WALGA has submitted its LEMA Recommendations Report to DFES which will inform the development of new LEMA guidelines and resources. WALGA is leading a Local Government LEMA Working Group, with representatives from 10 diverse Local Governments co-designing fit-for-purpose LEMA templates and supporting resources to be tested in a 2025 pilot program.

### Bushfire Risk Management Coordinators

WALGA will continue to host two Bushfire Risk Mitigation Coordinators (BRMCs) until June 2028 under a funding agreement with DFES. BRMCs work with WALGA, DFES and Local Governments to develop and implement Local Government bushfire mitigation programs, focusing on building capacity for Local Governments with limited capacity and expertise to manage their ongoing mitigation program using in-house resources.

### State Emergency Management Committee

The SEMC met on 4 December 2024, attended by WALGA CEO, Nick Sloan. The meeting communique can be found [here](#).

### State Bushfire Advisory Committee

WALGA Executive Manager Policy, Nicole Matthews is a member of the State Bushfire Advisory Committee, which met on 3 December 2024. The meeting communique can be found [here](#).

### Election Commitments

The Nationals and Labor have made a number of election commitments aligned with WALGA's emergency management State election priorities (see [item 10.2](#))

## 5. COMMUNITY

### **WALGA 2025 Aboriginal Engagement Forum**

The WALGA 2025 Aboriginal Engagement Forum will be held on 9 April at the State Reception Centre in Kaarta Gar-up (Kings Park), with the theme "Stepping Up: Taking local Aboriginal engagement and Reconciliation to the next level". Program planning is underway and being informed by a reference group of Elected Members and officers. State Council members are strongly encouraged to attend and promote the event within their zones.

### **Public Health Act**

Consultation on the [draft State Public Health Plan 2025-2030](#) was held in early February. WALGA made a submission aligned to previous submission relating to the implementation of Stage 5 of the Public Health Act. The submission emphasised the role Local Government provide in the protection and enhancement of health and well-being within their communities across various responsibilities and functions. The submission also stated the need to ensure sufficient support and expertise within State agencies to support the preparation of Local Public Health Plans, especially in relation to the new climate change priority. The development of the submission was guided by the WALGA Public Health Plans Reference Group.

### **Regional Primary Health Services**

Following its tabling at the December 2024 State Council meeting, the Local Government Primary Healthcare Survey Report has been shared with Local Government CEOs. WALGA's advocacy on this issue is being informed by the survey results and additional feedback from Band 4 Local Governments who have collectively identified access to GP services as a key priority. Advocacy to the Australian and State governments is focussed on measures to increase access to GP services in areas of need and reduce the financial impost on Local Government, particularly in the context of the upcoming state and federal elections and the renegotiation of the National Health Reform Agreement and bilateral agreement between WA and the Commonwealth.

### **Access and Inclusion**

#### *Most Accessible Community Western Australia (MACWA) Awards*

On 5 December, WALGA joined the Hon Don Punch MLA, Minister for Disability Services, the Department of Communities and the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (DLGSC) at the annual [MACWA Awards](#) celebrating Local Government's efforts to create accessible and inclusive communities. Award winners included the Shires of Augusta Margaret River and Pingelly and the cities of Kalamunda, Swan and Greater Geraldton.

#### *WALGA Forum*

On 20 February WALGA will host an Access and Inclusion Forum, a commitment under the [State Disability Strategy 2020 - 2030, Second Action Plan](#). The Forum theme is 'Building on your Disability Access and Inclusion Plan - embedding awareness across Local Government functions to respond to emerging issues'. The Forum aims to support sector building capacity and increase collaboration across the broad remit of Local Government.

### **Child Safeguarding**

WALGA hosted a Child Safeguarding CEO Breakfast on 12 December. The DLGSC session, facilitated by the Western Australian Council of Social Services (WACOSS), focused on the role of CEOs in managing child safeguarding risks and promoting child safety and wellbeing within Local Governments. The session forms part of DLGSC's commitment to delivering tailored child safeguarding resources and support for the Local Government sector over the coming year.

### **Arts and Culture Infrastructure Grants**

The State Government launched [Creative WA: A 10 year vision to grow and sustain our creative ecosystem](#) in December which includes \$30 million towards refurbishment and equipment needs for arts and culture centres. Local Governments can apply now through [Lotterywest](#).

### **RESOLUTION**

**Moved: Shire of Bruce Rock**

**Seconded: Shire of Nungarin**

**That the Zone notes all Key Activity Reports as contained in the 5 March 2025 State Council Agenda.**

**CARRIED**

## 14. EMERGING ISSUES

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### 14.1. WA TELSTRA AUTOMATIC TRANSFER UNIT PILOT DEPLOYMENT PROGRAM

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#### RESOLUTION

**Moved:** Shire of Koorda  
**Seconded:** Shire of Wyalkatchem

**That the Great Eastern Country Zone requests WALGA organise a roundtable with WALGA, Telstra, Department of Fire and Emergency Services and Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development to discuss the drafting of Community Support Agents Agreement for the implementation of the WA Telstra Automatic Transfer Unit Pilot Deployment Program.**

**CARRIED**

## 15. NEXT MEETING

The next Executive Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, 1 April 2025 commencing at 8:00am, via MSTeams.

The next Great Eastern Country Zone meeting will be held on Thursday, 10 April 2025 commencing at 9:30am. This meeting will be hosted by the Shire of Merredin.

## 16. CLOSURE

There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting at 1.15pm.