

State Council Agenda

3 December 2025

Ordinary meeting no. 5 of 2025 of the Western Australian Local Government Association State Council to be held at LV3 ONE70 Railway Parade, West Leederville at 4:15pm.

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1 OPENING, ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

1.1 OPENING

1.2 ATTENDANCE

This will be the first meeting of the new State Council, with Zones electing their State Councillors and Deputy State Councillors during the November round of Zone meetings.

Members	WALGA President - Chair	Karen Chappel AM JP
	WALGA Deputy President	Paul Kelly
	Central Metropolitan Zone	
	Avon-Midland Country Zone	
	Central Country Zone	
	Central Metropolitan Zone	
	East Metropolitan Zone	
	East Metropolitan Zone	
	Gascoyne Country Zone	
	Goldfields Esperance Country Zone	
	Great Eastern Country Zone	
	Great Southern Country Zone	
	Kimberley Country Zone	
	Murchison Country Zone	
	North Metropolitan Zone	
	Northern Country Zone	
	North Metropolitan Zone	
	North Metropolitan Zone	
	Peel Country Zone	
	Pilbara Country Zone	
	South East Metropolitan Zone	
	South East Metropolitan Zone	
	South Metropolitan Zone	
	South Metropolitan Zone	
	South Metropolitan Zone	
	South West Country Zone	
Ex Officio	The Rt. Hon. Lord Mayor – City of Perth	Bruce Reynolds
	LG Professionals WA President	Scott Wildgoose
Secretariat	Chief Executive Officer	Nick Sloan
	Executive Manager Member Services	Kirsty Martin
	Executive Manager Infrastructure	Ian Duncan
	Executive Manager Policy	Nicole Matthews
	Executive Manager Advocacy	Rachel Horton
	Chief Financial Officer	Rick Murray
	Manager Governance and Procurement	Felicity Morris
	Manager Association and Corporate Governance	Kathy Robertson
	State Council Governance Officer	Habiba Farrag

1.3 APOLOGIES

2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

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

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

3 ANNOUNCEMENTS

4 MINUTES

4.1 MINUTES OF THE STATE COUNCIL MEETING HELD 5 SEPTEMBER 2025

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That the Minutes of the WALGA State Council meeting held on [5 September 2025](#) be confirmed as a true and correct record of proceedings.

4.1.1 BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE STATE COUNCIL MEETING HELD 5 SEPTEMBER 2025

4.2 FLYING MINUTE – SUBMISSION FOR DRAFT GUIDELINES ON COMMUNITY BENEFITS FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That the [Flying Minute – Submission for Draft Guidelines on Community Benefits for Renewable Energy Projects](#) be confirmed as a true and correct record of proceedings.

4.2.1 BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE FLYING MINUTE – SUBMISSION FOR DRAFT GUIDELINES ON COMMUNITY BENEFITS FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS

4.3 FLYING MINUTE – COMMUNICATIONS AGREEMENT SUBMISSION

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That the [Flying Minute – Communications Agreement Submission](#) be confirmed as a true and correct record of proceedings.

4.3.1 BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE FLYING MINUTE – COMMUNICATIONS AGREEMENT SUBMISSION

4.4 FLYING MINUTE – WALGA SUBMISSION ON THE AMENDMENT REGULATIONS AND DRAFT CHAPTERS OF THE WA PLANNING MANUAL

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That the [Flying Minute – WALGA Submission on the Amendment Regulations and Draft Chapters of the WA Planning Manual](#) be confirmed as a true and correct record of proceedings.

4.4.1 BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE FLYING MINUTE – WALGA SUBMISSION ON THE AMENDMENT REGULATIONS AND DRAFT CHAPTERS OF THE WA PLANNING MANUAL

4.5 FLYING MINUTE – WALGA SUBMISSION ON PHASE 2 REFORMS TO WESTERN AUSTRALIA'S WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK LAW

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That the [Flying Minute – WALGA Submission on Phase 2 Reforms to Western Australia's Working with Children Check Law](#) be confirmed as a true and correct record of proceedings.

4.5.1 BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE FLYING MINUTE – PHASE 2 REFORMS TO WA'S WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK LAW

4.6 FLYING MINUTE – WALGA SUBMISSION TO THE EDUCATION AND HEALTH STANDING COMMITTEE INQUIRY INTO COMMUNITY USE OF WA PUBLIC SCHOOL FACILITIES

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That the [Flying Minute – WALGA Submission to the Education and Health Standing Committee Inquiry into Community Use of WA Public School Facilities](#) be confirmed as a true and correct record of proceedings.

4.6.1 BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE FLYING MINUTE – WALGA SUBMISSION TO THE EDUCATION AND HEALTH STANDING COMMITTEE INQUIRY INTO COMMUNITY USE OF WA PUBLIC SCHOOL FACILITIES

4.7 FLYING MINUTE – WALGA SUBMISSION TO THE FEDERAL SENATE ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS REFERENCE COMMITTEE INQUIRY INTO THE NATIONAL CULTURAL POLICY

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That the [Flying Minute – WALGA Submission to the Federal Senate Environment and Communications Reference Committee Inquiry into the National Cultural Policy](#) be confirmed as a true and correct record of proceedings.

4.7.1 BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE FLYING MINUTE – WALGA SUBMISSION TO THE FEDERAL SENATE ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS REFERENCE COMMITTEE INQUIRY INTO THE NATIONAL CULTURAL POLICY

5 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

6 EX OFFICIO REPORTS

6.1 CITY OF PERTH REPORT

City of Perth Lord Mayor, Bruce Reynolds, will provide an update at the meeting.

6.2 LG PROFESSIONALS REPORT

LG Professionals WA President, Scott Wildgoose, will provide an update at the meeting.

7 EMERGING ISSUES

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

8 MATTERS FOR DECISION

8.1 2025 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING RESOLUTIONS

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That:

1. the following resolutions from the 2025 WALGA Annual General Meeting be referred to the People and Place Policy Team for further work to be undertaken:
 - 7.1 Provision of Medical Services in Remote and Very Remote Local Governments
 - 7.2 Homelessness – Short-term Accommodation Solutions
2. the following resolution from the 2025 WALGA Annual General Meeting be referred to the Governance Policy Team for further work to be undertaken:
 - 7.3 Rating Exemption Advocacy Position
3. the following resolution from the 2025 WALGA Annual General Meeting be endorsed:
 - 7.5 Rateability of Miscellaneous Licences

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- WALGA's 2025 Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held on 23 September.
- The meeting resolved for WALGA to act in relation to four Member Motions:
 - Provision of Medical Services in Remote and Very Remote Local Governments
 - Homelessness – Short-term Accommodation Solutions
 - Rating Exemption Advocacy Motion
 - Rateability of Miscellaneous Licences
- The action proposed to be taken in relation to each of the resolutions has been summarised for State Council's consideration.

ATTACHMENT

- [WALGA 2025 Annual General Meeting Minutes](#)

BACKGROUND

The 2025 WALGA AGM was held on 23 September 2025. 220 Voting Delegates were in attendance, with 124 Local Governments represented.

Five Member Motions were considered, with four being supported by Members at the AGM, as follows.

7.1 Provision of Medical Services in Remote and Very Remote Local Governments

That WALGA calls on the Western Australian Government and WA Grants Commission to:

1. *increase the total funding and then the Medical Facilities Cost Adjuster component of the Financial Assistance to Local Governments; and*
2. *recalculate distributions to those Local Governments that are providing block cash payments to attract and retain general practitioners to allow affected Council to redirect ratepayer funds to Local Government responsibilities.*

7.2 Homelessness – Short-term Accommodation Solutions

That WALGA advocate to the State Government to provide culturally appropriate short-term accommodation options and wrap-around support services that provide sustainable homelessness solutions in all Local Governments across Western Australia.

7.3 Rating Exemption Advocacy Position

That WALGA, in addition to its current advocacy positions 2.1.1 and 2.1.2 relating to rating exemptions, advocate to the WA Government for the introduction of a reimbursement model, whereby the WA Government repays Local Government the greater of:

- 1. 75% of the value of rates lost in applying the charitable purposes exemption; or*
- 2. 1% of the total revenue of the Local Government.*

7.5 Rateability of Miscellaneous Licenses

That WALGA:

- 1. Formally oppose any move by the Local Government Minister to introduce amendments to the Local Government Act to restrict the application of rates on Miscellaneous Licences.*
- 2. Develop an advocacy position on sector consultation prior to any amendment to the Local Government Act.*
- 3. Undertake a financial analysis of the cost to the Mining Industry of the rating of Miscellaneous Licences compared to the benefit to the Local Government sector.*

COMMENT

Comment on each of the 2025 AGM resolutions is below.

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

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

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

7.1 Provision of Medical Services in Remote and Very Remote Local Governments

A revised Rural and Remote Healthcare Services Advocacy Position was endorsed by State Council on 5 September 2025. The AGM resolution and WALGA's ongoing advocacy align on the need for financial reimbursement for Local Government support for essential primary health care services. WALGA's approach does not specify how reimbursement to Local Governments should be undertaken, or which Local Governments should be eligible. This approach aims to provide flexibility to achieve the same outcome, such as utilising the upcoming renewal of the National Health Reform Agreement.

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

7.2 Homelessness – Short-term Accommodation Solutions

WALGA is currently reviewing the Homelessness Advocacy Position as part of a regular advocacy position review process. To inform the review, WALGA will survey Local Governments to gather information on the extent of Local Government engagement with homelessness and the extent of services, including accommodation options, available within their Local Government areas.

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

7.3 Rating Exemption Advocacy Position

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

7.5 Rateability of Miscellaneous Licenses

An Advocacy Position on Rating of Miscellaneous Licences was endorsed by State Council on 5 September 2025. WALGA will continue to advocate for a broad review on all rating exemption categories and oppose legislative amendments that seek to exempt occupied miscellaneous licence land from rating.

It is recommended that this resolution is endorsed.

8.2 2026 SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES TRIBUNAL REMUNERATION INQUIRY FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS AND ELECTED MEMBERS

By Kathy Robertson, Manager Association and Corporate Governance

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council endorse the submission to the 2026 Salaries and Allowances Tribunal Remuneration Inquiry for Local Government Chief Executive Officers and Elected Members.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Salaries and Allowances Tribunal (SAT) conduct an inquiry into Local Government Chief Executive Officer and Elected Member remuneration annually.
- In preparation for the Inquiry to be undertaken early next year, WALGA has prepared a draft submission to SAT that makes recommendations in relation to Elected Member fees and allowances, Chief Executive Officer remuneration, the Regional/Isolation Allowance and independent Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC) member fees.
- The 2026 submission recommends:
 - an increase to Elected Member fees and allowances (including maximum reimbursable expenses) of 3%;
 - an increase to Chief Executive Officer remuneration bands of 3%;
 - an increase to the Regional/Isolation Allowance payable for Local Governments that are particularly isolated, long distances from population centres, and lacking in amenities;
 - the publication of clear guidance to the Local Government sector outlining how the Regional/Isolation Allowance is applied in terms of methodology, criteria and weightings; and
 - an increase to the current fee range for independent committee members, including ARIC members and chairs; and
 - a higher fee range for independent ARIC chairs, in recognition of the additional skill, knowledge and time commitment of the role.
- SAT will publish its determination for 2026-27 in April 2026.
- The Governance Policy Team considered the submission at its meeting on 29 October and recommended that it be included in the December Agenda for State Council endorsement.

ATTACHMENT

- Draft WALGA submission to the 2026 Salaries and Allowances Tribunal Remuneration Inquiry – Local Government Chief Executive Officers and Elected Members

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The current Advocacy Positions relating to this submission are [Position 2.10 Elected Member Remuneration](#), [Position 2.2.3 Audit, Risk and Improvement Committees](#), [Position 2.10A Chief Executive Officer Remuneration](#), and [Position 2.10A.1 Regional/Isolation Allowance](#).

2.10 Elected Member Remuneration

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

- 1. Vibrant democracy and good governance: fees and allowances payable to Elected Members should be sufficient to ensure that a diversity of candidates from a range of backgrounds seek election to Local Government leadership positions;*
- 2. Demands of the role: as the complexity of Local Government increases, and community expectations placed upon Elected Members grow in the social media age, the remuneration paid to Elected Members for their significant time commitment must compensate them for the personal and opportunity costs of taking on significant community leadership positions;*
- 3. Skills and training: with the implementation of the State Government's universal Elected Member training policy and the increasing expectation for Elected Members to undertake training, the time that Elected Members spend on professional development should be recognised by the fees and allowances framework; and*
- 4. Economic conditions: Elected Member fees and allowances must be considered within the surrounding economic environment. The value of fees and allowances paid to Elected Members should keep pace with the increasing costs of living and rates of inflation, to ensure that the relative value of Elected Member fees and allowances does not erode over time.*

2.2.3 Audit, Risk and Improvement Committees

The Local Government sector:

- 1. supports Audit, Risk and Improvement Committees (ARIC) having a clearly defined role with an Elected Member majority;*
- 2. supports the option for smaller Local Governments to share ARIC to reduce the burden on their resources;*
- 3. does not support the requirement for the chair of the ARIC to be an independent member. The appointment of the chair should be at the discretion of the Local Government; and*
- 4. supports the payment of meeting fees or defined reimbursements to independent ARIC members. The fees payable should be set by the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal within a separate fee category and at a suitable level that recognises the skills and knowledge required for such a role.*

2.10A Chief Executive Officer Remuneration

The Local Government sector supports appropriate remuneration of Local Government Chief Executive Officers on the basis of:

- 1. Importance of the role: the role of the CEO within Local Government is undeniably one of importance. The efficient operations and accountability of Local Governments is dependent on the appointment of a suitably qualified CEO.*
- 2. Attraction and retention: Local Governments must compete in the broader labour market to attract and retain CEOs with the requisite qualifications and experience.*
- 3. Demands of the role: the skill, workload and time commitment required from the role of a Local Government CEO must be fairly compensated.*

2.10A.1 Regional/Isolation Allowance

The Local Government sector:

- 1. values the Regional/Isolation Allowance payable to Chief Executive Officers as an important means for Local Governments, particularly those that are remote or isolated, to supplement remuneration and attract suitably qualified Chief Executive Officers; and*
- 2. supports greater transparency regarding methodology of application for the Regional/Isolation Allowance.*

BACKGROUND

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

SAT are yet to invite submissions for the 2026 Inquiry, however in anticipation of the upcoming end of year closure period and noting that the next ordinary meeting of State Council will be in March, the submission has been drafted early for consideration by Zones and State Council.

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

The content and recommendations in this submission were shaped by existing advocacy positions, previous submissions and feedback from individual Members since the 2025 Determination was published earlier this year.

The 2025 SAT Determination broadly aligned with WALGA's submission on behalf of Members, including:

- 3.5% increase to CEO remuneration band ranges (plus the 0.5% additional Superannuation Guarantee);
- 3.5% increase to the fee band ranges and some allowances for Elected Members (exclusive of superannuation where relevant);
- reduction of the four band ranges for independent committee members to one band, with the range to be from \$0 to \$450; and
- for the first time, provision for reimbursement of expenses for independent committee members.

The Tribunal also made two commitments in relation to:

- conducting a comprehensive survey of Local Governments in the latter half of 2025, the results of which will assist SAT in reviewing the quantum and effectiveness of the Regional/Isolation Allowance; and
- determining the rates for the independent chair of the audit, risk and improvement committee at a future date, to coincide with the commencement of the legislative changes.

COMMENT

WALGA's submission for the 2026 Inquiry makes six recommendations:

1. That Elected Member Fees and Allowances (including maximum reimbursable expenses) are increased by 3%.
2. That the Chief Executive Officer remuneration bands are increased by 3%.

3. That the maximum payable Regional/Isolation Allowance be increased for Local Governments that are particularly isolated, long distances from population centres, and lacking in amenities.
4. That clear guidance be published to the Local Government sector outlining how the Regional/Isolation Allowance is applied in terms of methodology, criteria and weightings.
5. That the current fee range for independent committee members be increased to recognise the level of skill and knowledge required of independent audit, risk and improvement committee members, and to attract suitably skilled individuals to the role.
6. That a higher fee range be determined for independent chairs of audit, risk and improvement committees to recognise the additional skill, knowledge and preparation required to fulfil the role, and to attract suitably skilled individuals.

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

- Reiterates WALGA's current advocacy position.
- Points to the current economic conditions putting pressure on households, including those of Elected Members and potential candidates, which lends itself to an increase in fees and allowances. Noting that CPI is currently at 2.1% and WPI 3.7%

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

- Summarises WALGA's current advocacy position in relation to the importance of the role of Chief Executive Officer, including the skill, workload and time commitment required from the role, and the difficulties of attracting and retaining suitable candidates in a competitive labour market.

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

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

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

- Recognises the 2025 Determination went some way to help attract, retain and adequately compensate suitable individuals to the roles of member and chair of ARICs.
- Notes that the current maximum rate of \$450 is not adequately competitive when trying to recruit members and chairs within the broader labour market and should be increased.
- Reinforces WALGA's existing position that a separate, higher fee range needs to be established for ARIC independent chairs.

On 29 October, the Governance Policy Team considered the submission and recommended that it be included in the December State Council Agenda for endorsement.

Submission

2026 Salaries and Allowances Tribunal Remuneration Inquiry: Local Government Chief Executive Officers and Elected Members

December 2025

About WALGA

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

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

WALGA's vision is to be the authoritative voice and trusted partner for Western Australian Local Government.

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Summary

WALGA appreciates the opportunity to make a submission on behalf of our Members to inform the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal's Inquiry into Local Government Chief Executive Officer and Elected Member Remuneration for 2026-27.

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

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

WALGA acknowledges and supports the Tribunal's decision as part of the 2025 Determination to conduct a comprehensive survey of Local Governments to provide visibility as to the remuneration provided to CEOs, the Regional/Isolation Allowances provided to CEOs and the fees and allowances provided to Elected Members. The Regional/Isolation Allowance is important for our Members, particularly those remote and isolated Local Governments, to supplement remuneration and attract suitably qualified Chief Executive Officers. To this end, WALGA continues to recommend that the Tribunal look to increase the upper limit of the Allowance and provide greater transparency to the Local Government sector regarding the methodology of application for the Allowance.

Finally, whilst the Tribunal's decision last year to collapse the band ranges for independent committee members to one band, and to provide for reimbursement for expenses for those independent members has gone some way to aid in the attraction and recruitment of independent members and chairs, an increase to the upper limit of the fees is still needed.

Elected Member Fees and Allowances

WALGA would like to reinforce both the necessary and challenging nature of the role of Elected Members in Local Government. Elected Member fees and allowances need to continue to be set at a rate which appropriately compensates the prescribed role, on the basis of:

1. **Vibrant democracy and good governance:** fees and allowances payable to Elected Members should be sufficient to ensure that a diversity of candidates from a range of backgrounds seek election to Local Government leadership positions. Further, corporate governance literature suggests that diverse leadership groups make better decisions.
2. **Demands of the role:** as the complexity of Local Government increases, and the demands placed upon Elected Members grow in the social media age, the remuneration paid to Elected Members for their significant time commitment must compensate them for the personal and opportunity costs of taking on significant community leadership positions.
3. **Skills and training:** as Elected Members continue to undertake training (including compulsory Council Member Essentials training) the time that Elected Members spend on professional development should be recognised by the fees and allowances framework.
4. **Economic conditions:** Elected Member fees and allowances must be considered within the surrounding economic environment. Elected Members are not immune from broader economic conditions that may impact their ability to support themselves and their families. The value of fees and allowances paid to Elected Members should keep pace with the increasing costs of living and rates of inflation.

WALGA welcomed the Tribunal's decision to increase Elected Member remuneration by 3.5% in the 2025 Determination. Given the current economic conditions, including existing data on CPI and WIP, a similar increase is necessary for 2026-27.

In the year to June, Australian Consumer Price Index (CPI) increased 2.1%, the lowest level since March 2021. It is expected to rise in the coming quarters as the impact of electricity credits flows through the data. More relevant is the Trimmed Mean, which fell to 2.7% in June, down from 2.9% in March and is now comfortably inside the Reserve Bank of Australia's (RBA) 2% to 3% target band. The Trimmed Mean is preferred by the RBA as it filters out extreme price changes and provides a clearer view of underlying inflation.

Services inflation, which has been stubbornly slow to drop has now fallen to 3.3%, the lowest level in three years. Goods inflation remains low at 1.1%. Looking forward, the RBA remains cautious that inflationary pressures may persist due to elevated global trade tensions and a lack of productivity growth of particular concern.

In Western Australia however, the easing of inflation has been slower as the Perth CPI (+2.7%) continues to outpace the rest of the nation (+2.1%). Both Goods (+1.9%) and Services (+3.8%) prices have eased from recent highs but remain above the national figures. The increase in housing costs has also fallen at a slower rate than elsewhere in the country with New Dwellings (+5.5%) and Rents (+7.6%) still growing above the target range.

The value of fees and allowances paid to Elected Members must reflect the broader economic conditions and should keep pace with inflationary pressures. A similar increase to Elected Member remuneration for 2026-27 would ensure that serving on Council is not financially prohibitive for a diverse group of community leaders and potential candidates.

Recommendation

- 1. That Elected Member Fees and Allowances (including maximum reimbursable expenses) are increased by 3%.**

Chief Executive Officer Remuneration Bands

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

Local Governments looking to recruit and retain Chief Executive Officers must compete in the broader labour market, which is continuing to see growth, particularly in WA.

The Wage Price Index (WPI) in WA grew at the fastest pace in the nation, up 3.7% in the year to June, above the national figure of 3.4%. For the last three years, wages growth has sat above 3%. This is the most sustained period of wages growth since the mining boom. It is the same story when looking at private sector wages with three years of sustained wages growth. The public sector has seen more volatility in wages growth in recent years with wages initially slow to respond to the market conditions and now playing catch up as Enterprise Bargaining Agreements (EBAs) are renegotiated. Public sector wages in WA increased 5.4% in the year to June.

As the heat comes out of the labour market, it is expected that wages growth will continue to ease with the WA Treasury forecasting a fall from 3.5% in 2025-26 to 3.0% in 2026-27.

WALGA acknowledges the 3.5% increase (plus the 0.5% additional Superannuation Guarantee) to CEO remuneration bands in the 2025 Determination.

A similar band increase for 2026-27 is necessary to keep pace with the broader economic context and to ensure that Local Governments can attract and retain the best candidates to fill the essential role of Chief Executive Officer.

Recommendation

2. **That the Chief Executive Officer remuneration bands are increased by 3%.**

Regional/Isolation Allowance

Subject to the results of the survey conducted by the Tribunal in late 2025, WALGA encourages SAT to review and update the eligibility and quantum of the Regional/Isolation Allowance.

The availability and amount of the Allowance remain an issue of high importance for the WA Local Government sector, especially those Local Governments which are particularly isolated, long distances from population centres and lacking in amenities.

WALGA reiterates its recommendations to the 2025 Inquiry: our Members are seeking greater flexibility with the upper limit of the Allowance, and greater transparency regarding the methodology of application for the Allowance.

Recommendations

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

Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee Independent Chair

As detailed in our submission to the 2025 Inquiry, WALGA's current position in relation to remuneration for independent members and chairs of audit, risk and improvement committees (ARICs) is twofold:

1. That a new fee category for independent ARIC members be created without bands, and the fee be set at a suitable level to recognise the skills and knowledge required for such a role; and
2. That the new category provides for a fee for the independent chair position and an independent member position.

This position recognises that:

- Tranche 2 amendments to the *Local Government Act 1995* will mandate that ARICs have an independent chair, increasing the burden on Local Governments to attract and recruit suitably qualified individuals;
- The broadened role of ARICs will require independent members to possess substantial expertise in audit, risk and Local Government operations, making recruitment more challenging under current fee structures; and

- Existing fees are too low to attract and retain skilled professionals.

WALGA recognises the Tribunal's decision in the 2025 Determination to collapse the band ranges for independent committee members to one band, and to provide for reimbursement of expenses for those independent members. This will certainly go some way towards helping to attract, retain and adequately compensate suitable individuals to these roles.

WALGA also acknowledges that the Tribunal will determine the rates for the independent ARIC chair to coincide with the legislative changes, which we anticipate will come into effect later this year.

However, in the meantime, WALGA's position continues to be that the fees for independent members and chairs must be set at a level that reflects the complexity, strategic importance, and time commitment of the role. The skills necessary of an independent member will require Local Governments to attract professionals from the fields of risk, finance, auditing and law; all fields which are in high demand. WALGA's position is that the current maximum rate of \$450 is inadequate to attract suitable individuals in a highly competitive market.

Recommendation

5. **That the current fee range for independent committee members be increased to recognise the level of skill and knowledge required of independent audit, risk and improvement committee members, and to attract suitably skilled individuals to the role.**
6. **That a higher fee range be determined for independent chairs of audit, risk and improvement committees to recognise the additional skill, knowledge and preparation required to fulfil the role, and to attract suitably skilled individuals.**

8.3 TOURISM ADVOCACY POSITION UPDATE

By Saul Cresswell, Principal Policy Advisor Economic Development

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council replace Advocacy Position 3.9 Tourism with an updated position as follows:

WALGA calls on the State Government to:

- 1. Fund the implementation of the WA Visitor Economy Strategy and the supporting Tourism Destination Management Plans and Regional Tourism Development Strategies, including for:***
 - a. maintenance and renewal of Local Government assets and services that underpin a positive visitor experience***
 - b. new and existing tourism infrastructure***
 - c. improving telecommunications infrastructure***
 - d. measures to reduce the cost and improve the scheduling and routes of regional air services***
 - e. accredited Visitor Centres.***
- 2. Ensure that tourism destinations with a significant seasonal visitor influx have adequate medical and emergency services and reliable telecommunications.***
- 3. Articulate a clear tourism governance framework with defined roles and responsibilities to facilitate coordination and collaboration of tourism activities across the State.***
- 4. Adequately consult and consider Local Government when undertaking strategic tourism planning across Western Australia.***
- 5. Provide improved access to affordable, timely and granular data that delivers LGA-level insights on visitation, spend and event impacts.***

BACKGROUND

The visitor economy is an important driver of economic development for metropolitan and regional Local Governments in Western Australia. Comprising people travelling for leisure, business events, education, and those visiting friends and relatives, the visitor economy contributed \$18.3 billion to the Western Australian economy in 2023-24. Approximately 45 per cent of this spend took place in the regions.

In 2015, WALGA undertook research and consultation on tourism, developing a *Local Government and Tourism Discussion Paper* that included recommendations. As part of the recommendations, Advocacy Position 3.9 Tourism was endorsed by State Council in March 2017.

Local Governments are instrumental in maintaining the amenity of destinations, a critical factor in safeguarding tourism reputation and repeat visitation. There has been a growth in demands on Local Government resources to meet gaps in service delivery from other levels of Government or the private sector and to align with changes in community expectations (see [WALGA's submission on the Inquiry into Local Government Financial Sustainability](#)).

The WA Government's [Diversify WA](#) economic framework considers tourism and events a priority sector in the diversification of the state's economy. The *WA Visitor Economy Strategy* (WAVES) sets a vision for a \$25 billion visitor economy by 2033.

The State Government, through Tourism WA and the Regional Tourism Organisations, have developed regional tourism strategies, known as Tourism Destination Management Plans (TDMPs), to identify the challenges and opportunities across demand, supply and capability. TDMPs are the most informed articulation of a shared tourism vision undertaken to date, yet have no funding mechanism to implement them.

Tourism emerged as a key topic in WALGA's 2024 Economic Development Survey, with visitor attraction a focus area for Local Government economic development efforts. Responding to the findings, WALGA undertook a Tourism Survey in June 2025, which received 36 Local Government responses from a diversity of regions, with 92% of respondents stating that tourism had medium or high importance to their Local Government.

WALGA developed the *Role of Local Government in Tourism Discussion Paper*, which outlined the constraints and opportunities for Local Governments, and was distributed for Member and stakeholder feedback in September 2025. It also included a draft revised advocacy position. Feedback was received from 28 Local Governments, plus Tourism WA, Tourism Council WA and Regional Tourism Organisations. Local Government responses were received from each of the five tourism regions: Australia's South West, Australia's North West, Australia's Coral Coast, Australia's Golden Outback and Destination Perth.

The consultation provided unanimous support for the overarching intent of the draft advocacy position. Nearly half of respondents proposed amendments, which were considered and incorporated into the revised draft advocacy positions.

Key sector feedback during WALGA's consultation, included:

- Inadequate recognition of the pivotal role Local Government plays in providing community infrastructure and services that underpins amenity for visitors, and the need for sustainable funding mechanisms.
- Continued confusion about the roles of tourism agencies across WA and who to turn to for support.
- The prohibitive costs of accessing data relating to tourism in Local Government areas.
- Impacts of a difficult regulatory environment at all levels of government on tourism and events.
- The need for support addressing tourism literacy and the visitor economy.

The People and Place Policy Team endorsed the updated advocacy position at its meeting on 22 October 2025, with the inclusion of an additional point requesting resourcing for emergency management and medical services that face significantly increased demand during peak tourism periods.

ATTACHMENT

- [The Role of Local Government in Tourism - 2025 Research Paper](#)

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

WALGA's **current** position:

That WALGA:

1. *Continues to advocate for a Local Government tourism strategy to deliver local tourism outcomes;*
2. *In the short-medium term, advocates that the State Government:*
 - a. *Produces targeted communication and education for Local Government using existing Tourism WA data to demonstrate the value of tourism to local communities, Elected Members and Local Government officers;*
 - b. *Provides guidance for Local Government on marketing small projects including events and attractions;*
 - c. *Directs Regional Development Commissions to facilitate the coordination of tourism stakeholders to provide strategic support where required for Local Government; and*
 - d. *Provides funding to Local Government for tourist infrastructure.*
3. *In the long term, advocates that the State Government:*
 - a. *Articulates the lead agency and defines the roles of other agencies in tourism, to facilitate coordination and collaboration of tourism activities across the State and to enhance Local Government's understanding of tourism in WA;*
 - b. *Defines and communicates how it provides destination marketing support to Local Governments and communicates how Local Governments can most effectively direct their resources;*
 - c. *Develops a sustainable State Government tourism funding mechanism for both regional and metropolitan Local Governments which is clearly communicated to Local Governments;*
 - d. *Implements and invests in Regional Investment Blueprints and delivers through appropriate funding models such as Royalties for Regions and federal funding opportunities which are clearly communicated to Local Government;*
 - e. *Continues funding to support sustainability of visitor centres;*
 - f. *Undertakes improvements to tourism-related infrastructure and technology including mobile signals and WIFI in regional areas; and*
 - g. *Undertakes measures to reduce the cost and improve the scheduling and routes of regional air services.*

It is proposed that the position **be replaced** with:

WALGA calls on the State Government to:

1. *Fund the implementation of the WA Visitor Economy Strategy and the supporting Tourism Destination Management Plans and Regional Tourism Development Strategies, including for:*
 - a. *maintenance and renewal of Local Government assets and services that underpin a positive visitor experience*
 - b. *new and existing tourism infrastructure*
 - c. *improving telecommunications infrastructure*
 - d. *measures to reduce the cost and improve the scheduling and routes of regional air services*
 - e. *accredited Visitor Centres.*
2. *Ensure that tourism destinations with significant seasonal influxes of visitors have adequate medical and emergency services and reliable telecommunications.*

3. *Articulate a clear tourism governance framework with defined roles and responsibilities to facilitate coordination and collaboration of tourism activities across the State.*
4. *Adequately consult and consider Local Government when undertaking strategic tourism planning across Western Australia.*
5. *Provide improved access to affordable, timely and granular data that delivers LGA-level insights on visitation, spend and event impacts.*

COMMENT

Since the current advocacy position was adopted, tourism across the State has continued to evolve and change, including post pandemic visitation growth, changing tourism behaviour, and the increasing costs of doing business.

Many challenges identified in the current advocacy position persist and remain part of the new draft advocacy position. These include:

- a lack of clarity in tourism organisation roles and responsibilities
- ineffective coordination efforts
- lack of capacity building opportunities for Local Government
- and inaccessible and expensive data, often missing a localised focus.

The suggested revision to Advocacy Position 3.9 Tourism aims to provide a consolidated and contemporary position on the important role Local Government provides for tourism in WA and how best to capitalise on opportunities to benefit their communities.

The proposed updates to the advocacy position seek to:

- Align State Government investment and support with the contemporary Tourism Destination Management Plans (TDMPs).
- Reiterate the need for clear tourism governance across the State, without reference to which agency should lead the work.
- Reiterate and further clarify the need for accessible data to support informed decision making.
- Emphasise the pivotal role the Local Government sector plays in supporting the visitor experience, and advocate for adequate consultation and funding to ensure this role can be sustained.

WALGA will continue to work with State Government agencies and support the Local Government sector, including sharing the updated tourism research paper which provides context around tourism and the diverse roles Local Government can play.

8.4 WASTE MANAGEMENT ADVOCACY POSITIONS

By Rebecca Brown, Policy Manager Environment and Waste

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council retire Advocacy Positions:

- 1. 7.2 State Waste Strategy;**
- 2. 7.3 Waste Authority; and**
- 3. 7.11 Waste Management and Resource Recovery Partnership Agreement.**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- WALGA has been undertaking a process of reviewing and updating Advocacy Positions and Policy Statements.
- There are three Waste Management Advocacy Positions (7.2 State Waste Strategy, 7.3 Waste Authority and 7.11 Waste Management and Resource Recovery Partnership Agreement) which have been recently reviewed.
- It was determined that these positions are either no longer relevant or have been incorporated into other positions and it is therefore recommended they be retired.
- To ensure a clear Local Government position on all relevant waste management matters, WALGA is also undertaking a policy position gap analysis to inform the development of future Advocacy Positions.
- The Municipal Waste Advisory Council endorsed retiring the three Advocacy Positions at its meeting on 15 October 2025.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The item retires the existing [Advocacy Positions](#):

7.2 State Waste Strategy

Local Government requires leadership and clear direction from the State Government in relation to waste management. As such, Local Government supports the development and implementation of a comprehensive State Waste Strategy which:

- 1. Is consistent with the content, purpose and objective of existing legislation and policy at both a state and national level;*
- 2. Clearly identifies the roles and responsibilities of the Waste Authority in regard to the development and implementation of the Strategy, as outlined in the Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Act 2007;*
- 3. Is reviewed, with Stakeholder input, within 2 years of implementation; and*
- 4. Includes achievable targets for all waste streams and focuses on waste reduction, resource recovery and the diversion of waste from landfill. Targets should be based on accurate baseline data and clearly identify roles, responsibilities and funding for each target area.*

7.3 Waste Authority

Local Government considers that an independent and effective Waste Authority is required. The role of the Waste Authority should be of a collaborative, facilitative and strategic nature. Specific activities should include:

- 1. Developing, administering, monitoring and reviewing the State Waste Strategy;*
- 2. Developing a Priority Waste List (for Extended Producer Responsibility) as required in the Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Act 2007; and*
- 3. Developing and implementing an annual Business Plan that delivers the objectives of the Waste Strategy.*

7.11 Waste Management and Resource Recovery Partnership Agreement

The Local Government sector supports the initiation of a State Local Government Partnership Agreement on Waste Management and Resource Recovery.

BACKGROUND

The process to review and update Advocacy Positions and Policy Statements relating to waste management is nearing completion. Three Advocacy Positions remain which have recently been reviewed:

- *7.2 State Waste Strategy* - The substance of this position is covered in the [Advocacy Position 71 Waste Management Legislation](#) which was endorsed by State Council in March 2025, and outlines requirements for State and Australian Government Waste Strategies.
- *7.3 Waste Authority* - This advocacy position is no longer required, as the Waste Authority's legislative requirements are defined under the WARR Act, and other aspects of waste management are addressed through Policy Position 71, endorsed by State Council in March 2025.
- *7.11 Waste Management and Resource Recovery Partnership Agreement* - Partnership agreements have not continued and advocacy efforts are being pursued through a variety of other approaches.

The Municipal Waste Advisory Council endorsed the retirement of the three Advocacy Positions at its meeting on 15 October 2025.

COMMENT

A review of all existing Advocacy Positions and Policy Statements has been progressed over the last two years. The three remaining advocacy positions are covered or included in other advocacy positions or have become dated and are no longer a relevant focus of advocacy. The Officers Advisory Group supported retiring the Advocacy Positions acknowledging that they are either incorporated into other existing positions or have become outdated. The Municipal Waste Advisory Council endorsed retiring the three Advocacy Positions and supported a gap analysis of advocacy positions.

8.5 ELECTORAL MATERIAL – AUTHORISATION STATEMENT ADDRESS REQUIREMENTS

By Felicity Morris, Manager Governance and Procurement

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That WALGA advocate to the State Government to amend section 4.87 of the *Local Government Act 1995* to:

- 1. Replace the requirement to include the name and address of the person authorising the electoral material, with a requirement to include the name and locality of the person authorising the material.**
- 2. Remove the requirement for the name and business address of the electoral material printer to appear at the end of the electoral material**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Authorisation requirements for electoral material are intended to protect the transparency and accountability of the electoral process.
- The mandatory publication of a street address, often the candidate's home, raises privacy and safety concerns, potentially deterring participation in Local Government elections.
- Other Australian jurisdictions offer more flexible approaches, such as allowing post office boxes or partial addresses, which maintain transparency without compromising safety.
- It is proposed that WALGA advocate that only the locality is included in the authorisation statement.
- The Governance Policy Team revised and endorsed the new advocacy position at its meeting on 20 October.

ATTACHMENT

- [Jurisdictional comparison - Electoral material authorisation requirements](#)

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this report is to provide a new advocacy position for endorsement. WALGA has several existing advocacy positions regarding election matters, but none dealing with electoral material.

BACKGROUND

Section 4.87 of the *Local Government Act 1995* requires all printed, published or distributed electoral material to include the name and address of the person who authorised the electoral material. The address cannot be a post office box. Printed electoral material must also include the name and business address of the printer.

In recent electoral cycles, concerns have been raised regarding the requirement to publish a physical address, often the residential address of the candidate. Members increasingly raised these concerns in the lead up to the 2025 Ordinary Local Government Elections, including at the Mayors and Presidents Forum at the 2025 WALGA Convention.

COMMENT

Authorisation requirements for election advertising are designed to enhance transparency and accountability in the electoral process. By clearly identifying the individual or organisation responsible for electoral communications, these rules ensure that voters can assess the source, credibility, and intent behind campaign materials. This transparency helps voters make informed decisions, discourages misinformation, and prevents “irresponsibility through anonymity”. Authorisation also enables regulatory bodies to trace and address any breaches of electoral laws, reinforcing the integrity of democratic participation.

However, the obligation to publish a candidate’s physical address raises significant privacy and safety concerns. Candidates for Local Government elections in Western Australia do not typically have official campaign headquarters. They may not have a business or other suitable address to use and are often required to list their personal residence. The internet and social media have increased the accessibility and permanence of personal information, making it easier for individuals to be targeted. Publicly disclosing a residential address can expose candidates and their families to risks such as harassment, intimidation, or unwanted contact, particularly in contentious or high-profile elections. These concerns are especially acute for candidates from vulnerable groups or those campaigning on polarising issues. This may deter individuals from standing for election, thereby limiting diversity and participation in local democracy.

A review of the requirements in other Australian jurisdictions has been carried out and is provided as an attachment. While many jurisdictions have similar requirements to WA, others have more flexible approaches:

- PO boxes satisfy the address requirement in Local Government elections in South Australia and Victoria.
- The locality (town/city) is sufficient for material that is published by an individual in Local Government elections in the Northern Territory, while a full address is required for material published by an organisation.
- The street name and locality are sufficient for material published by an individual in Territory elections in the Northern Territory, while a full address is required for material published by an organisation.
- Only the name of the person authorising the material is required for ACT Territory elections.

This demonstrates that there are a range of options for identifying the person responsible for the material, without needing to provide their address. The Returning Officer and regulatory bodies have access to candidates’ contact and nomination details, ensuring that any breaches can be investigated and enforced without compromising personal privacy. The draft advocacy position recommends that the requirement is limited to the name and locality of the person authorising the material.

It should be acknowledged that elected Council Members may be required to disclose their addresses in Primary and Annual Returns, which are available for public inspection. Similarly, a disclosure of a proximity interest in Council Meeting documents may allow a Council Member’s address to be identified. However, these materials are not circulated as widely as electoral materials or subject to the heightened electoral context.

As a final matter, if candidates print materials at home, the WAEC advises that no separate statement of the printer’s address is required, as this is satisfied by the authorisation statement. Many Australian jurisdictions do not require the printer’s name or address on

printed electoral materials. Increasingly, printing may be done through companies operating online only, without physical addresses. The review of authorisation requirements provides an opportunity to remove the requirement to include the printer's details.

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION BY STATE COUNCILLORS (UNDER SEPARATE COVER)

Items Under Separate Cover to State Council only.

9 POLICY TEAM AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

9.1 INFRASTRUCTURE POLICY TEAM REPORT

By Ian Duncan, Executive Manager, Infrastructure

FOR NOTING

The Infrastructure Policy Team includes the following subject areas:

- *Transport*
- *Infrastructure*
- *Road Safety*
- *Underground Power*
- *Street Lighting*

The Infrastructure Policy Team have not had a meeting since the last State Council meeting in September 2025.

9.2 PEOPLE AND PLACE POLICY TEAM REPORT

By Nicole Matthews, Executive Manager Policy

FOR NOTING

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

- *Community*
- *Emergency Management*

This report provides an update on matters considered since the last State Council meeting by the People and Place Policy Team at its meetings held on 30 September and 22 October 2025 .

1. MATTERS FOR STATE COUNCIL DECISION

The People and Place Policy Team endorsed a revised Advocacy Position 3.9 Tourism (State Council Agenda item 8.3).

The Policy Team also endorsed the following submissions to be sent to State Council via Flying Minute:

- Submission to the Department of Communities [on phase 2 Reforms of the Western Australia's Working with Children Check](#);
- Submission to the Federal Senate Environment and Communications Reference Committee Inquiry into the [National Cultural Policy](#); and
- Submission to the Education and Health Standing Committee Inquiry into [Community Use of WA Public School Facilities](#).

2. MATTERS FOR STATE COUNCIL NOTING

The People and Place Policy Team noted the following items included in the September State Council Agenda:

Item 8.3	Community Infrastructure and Community Sporting and Recreational Facilities Fund Advocacy Positions
Item 8.4	Rural and Remote Health Services Advocacy Position
Item 8.5	Health Advocacy Position
Item 10.2	2025 Local Government Emergency Management Survey
Item 10.3	WALGA 2025 Local Government Emergency Management Forum
Item 11.1.4	Report on Key Activities, Policy Portfolio

3. PEOPLE AND PLACE POLICY TEAM MATTERS

Team Updates

The Emergency Management team provided an update on:

- the release of the revised State Hazard Plan Fire;
- the 2025 Emergency Management Survey; and
- delays in the development of the Consolidated Emergency Services legislation.

The Community team provided an update on:

- Rural healthcare advocacy, including initial key findings from the member survey of GP support for 2024-25 and the Rural and Remote GP Provision workshop with key stakeholders from the health sector scheduled for 27 October.
- WALGA's meeting with the lead of the Review of Native Title and Aboriginal Heritage Processes for the State Government and subsequent letter providing more detailed information about issues affecting the sector.
- Initial discussion with the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage on opportunities to work collaboratively to build mutual understanding across Local Government and Noongar Regional Corporations about the Noongar Land Estate.
- WALGA Public Libraries Forum to be held on 20 November.

9.3 GOVERNANCE POLICY TEAM REPORT

By Kirsty Martin, Executive Manager Member Services

FOR NOTING

This report provides an update on matters considered, since the last State Council meeting. The Governance Policy Team has met on three occasions:

- 12 September 2025 (joint meeting with the Environment Policy Team)
- 20 October 2025
- 29 October 2025

1. MATTERS FOR STATE COUNCIL DECISION

Elections Advocacy – Authorisation Statement Exclude Candidate Address

The Policy Team considered a report on a new advocacy position on the requirements for published electoral materials to include a candidate's/printer's physical address. [Agenda item 8.5](#) of the State Council Agenda relates to this matter.

2026 Salaries and Allowances Tribunal Remuneration Inquiry for Local Government Chief Executive Officer and Elected Members

The Policy Team reviewed WALGA's draft submission to the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal on the 2026 Salaries and Allowances Tribunal Remuneration Inquiry for Local Government Chief Executive Officers and Elected Members. [Agenda item 8.2](#) of the State Council Agenda relates to this matter.

2. MATTERS FOR STATE COUNCIL NOTING

Elections Advocacy Position – Compulsory and Voluntary Voting and Election Frequency

Following a report to State Council on WALGA's Elections Advocacy Position in December 2024, State Council requested that the WALGA Secretariat further investigate the implications of compulsory and voluntary voting in Local Government elections. A report proposing further sector consultation was provided to the Governance Policy Team meeting on 20 October 2025. WALGA now understands that electoral reforms will be the subject of formal public consultation commencing late 2025. The Policy Team requested that WALGA provide a balanced and factual discussion paper to support sector feedback to the public consultation process. The Policy Team also requested that the matter be discussed at a State Council Strategic Forum.

Differential rating of unoccupied properties

A joint meeting of the Governance and Environment Policy Teams was held on 12 September to consider two motions carried at WALGA's 2024 AGM and referred to the Policy Teams by State Council.

The first motion called for reforms to allow Local Governments to prohibit demolition of habitable housing without Development Approval for a new build, impose time limits for project commencement and completion with penalty fees for non-compliance, and levy differential rates on unoccupied residential properties identified in a mandatory register.

The second motion called for reforms to allow Local Governments to levy differential rates on long term unoccupied commercial buildings, with exemption where property owners demonstrated maintenance and activation of the property.

The motions shared similar policy objectives, discouraging prolonged non-use and non-occupancy of land and buildings because of adverse effects on housing supply, economic vitality and community amenity, and were considered jointly by the Policy Teams.

It was identified that current State Government policy settings prioritise streamlined development processes to address housing supply challenges. As a result, proposing to advocate for demolition controls that could slow redevelopment is not considered a sound approach and is unlikely to gain support.

WALGA sought legal advice which confirmed that amendments to the *Local Government Act 1995* (the Act) would be required to allow differential rating based on occupancy status. The report provided a draft advocacy position calling for amendments to section 6.33 of the Act to enable occupancy-based differential rating for both commercial and residential properties.

The Joint Policy Teams considered that there was a significant level of risk associated with the proposal and that it should not proceed. Instead, incentives and activation programs can be explored by Local Governments to encourage occupancy of buildings.

9.4 ENVIRONMENT POLICY TEAM REPORT

By Nicole Matthews, Executive Manager Policy

FOR NOTING

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 18 September 2025 and 5 November 2025.

1. MATTERS FOR STATE COUNCIL DECISION

WALGA Submission on the Planning and Development Regulations Amendment (Review of Planning Instruments) Regulations 2025 and supporting Draft Chapters of the WA Planning Manual

The Environment Policy Team endorsed the submission to the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage on the Planning and Development Regulations Amendment (Review of Planning Instruments) Regulations 2025 and supporting Draft Chapters of the WA Planning Manual - Local Planning Schemes and the Local Planning Policy to be provided to State Council for endorsement via Flying Minute.

State Council [Agenda item 10.6](#) relates to this matter.

WALGA Submission into the Select Committee into Land Development and Planning in Western Australia – Flying Agenda

The Environment Policy Team endorsed the submission to the Select Committee into WA Land Development and Planning Select Committee into WA Land Development and Planning. The submission will be considered by State Council through the flying minute process, in advance of the submission deadline of 14 November 2025.

WALGA has developed a Submission informed by relevant planning advocacy positions, [data collection projects](#) and sector feedback.

The Submission emphasises the critical role of Local Government plays in the planning system, and highlights concerns over the erosion of Local Government decision making powers by bodies such as Development Assessment Panels and the state significant development pathways.

The Submission calls for a recalibration of the planning system that restores the essential role of Local Government, ensures transparency and accountability in State decision-making, and prioritises reforms that are evidence-based and developed in genuine partnership with the Local Government sector.

2. ENVIRONMENT POLICY TEAM MATTERS

The Policy Team received updates on the following:

- Polyphagous shot-hole borer;
- Cat Containment;
- Climate Change Advocacy Position review; and
- Water Advocacy Position review.

9.5 MUNICIPAL WASTE ADVISORY COUNCIL (MWAC) REPORT

By Rebecca Brown, Policy Manager, Environment and Waste

FOR NOTING

This report provides an update on matters considered since the last State Council meeting by the Municipal Waste Advisory Council (MWAC), at the meeting held on 15 October 2025.

1. MATTERS FOR STATE COUNCIL DECISION

Retiring Waste Advocacy Positions

MWAC considered and endorsed retiring the following Waste Management Advocacy Positions:

- 7.2 State Waste Strategy
- 7.3 Waste Authority
- 7.11 Waste Management and Resource Recovery Partnership Agreement.

These positions are either no longer relevant or have been incorporated or included in other positions and it is therefore recommended they be retired.

State Council [Agenda item 8.4](#) relates to this matter.

2. MATTERS FOR STATE COUNCIL NOTING

Nil.

3. MUNICIPAL WASTE ADVISORY COUNCIL MATTERS

MWAC considered:

- Reconvening the Reducing Illegal Dumping (RID) Working Group:
 - Illegal dumping is a key issue for Local Governments to monitor and manage, ranging from large scale construction waste to household level dumping and requiring significant financial and physical resources.
 - Reconvening the RID Working Group provides greater opportunities for Local Government and State Government collaboration, knowledge sharing and development of practical tools and guidance to assist in illegal dumping management.
- Better Practice Guideline for Procurement of Waste and Resource Recovery Services:
 - This Better Practice Guideline is designed to assist Local Governments in planning and procuring waste management services and was developed in collaboration with Local Governments, Regional Councils and the waste management industry.
 - WALGA will develop and implement short training sessions based on this Guideline to assist with ongoing implementation.
- Better Practice Guideline for Local Waste Drop-off Points:
 - This Better Practice Guideline for Local Waste Drop-off Points is designed to assist Local Governments in assessing whether to establish a drop-off point.

- The Guideline was developed with input from Local Governments and Regional Councils and provides a decision-making framework to assess the necessity and feasibility of establishing drop-off points, with emphasis on waste avoidance and alignment with product stewardship schemes.

MWAC received updates on:

- Review of policy statements and better practice documents;
- Material accepted in Food Organics Garden Organics (FOGO) collection;
- Household Hazardous Waste Battery Campaign; and
- Waste & Resource Recovery Conference wrap up.

10 MATTERS FOR NOTING / INFORMATION

10.1 WALGA TRANSPORT AND ROADS FORUM 2025: SUMMARY REPORT

By Negar Nili, Policy Officer Transport and Roads

FOR NOTING

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Transport and Roads Forum was held at the State Reception Centre in Kings Park (Kaarta Koomba), on 14 August.
- With over 200 people in attendance, the event brought together transport experts and leaders from industry, stakeholder groups, Local, State and Federal Governments.
- The Forum is the premier Transport and Roads event for WA Local Governments and is jointly hosted by WALGA and Main Roads WA. The Forum was designed to meet the expressed needs of Local Government Members.
- The keynote speakers were:
 - Hon Jessica Stojkovski, in her capacity as Minister Assisting the Minister for Transport;
 - Paul Durdin, Road safety expert, Technical Director and Board Member of Abley Limited;
 - Michael Caltabiano, CEO, National Transport Research Organisation; and
 - Peter Woronzow, Director General, WA Department of Transport.
- The 2025 theme was 'From Vision to Action' with a focus on:
 - Road Safety
 - Sustainability
 - Active Transport
 - Asset Management
- The Forum was successful in stimulating discussion, challenging thinking and providing opportunities to share knowledge and network with colleagues. It included expert presentations and panel discussion sessions.
- A detailed report summarising the presentations and key deliverables is attached below.
- The full presentations can be viewed on the WALGA website [here](#).

ATTACHMENT

- [WALGA Transport and Road Forum 2025 Report](#)

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLICATIONS

The Forum aligns to the WALGA 2025-2029 Strategic Plan, in particular:

- Influence – lead advocacy on issues important to Local Government;
- Support – Anticipate, understand and respond to Member needs;
- Support – Offer integrated, Member-centric services; and
- Expertise – Foster relationships between our subject matter experts and stakeholders.

BACKGROUND

The origins of the Transport and Roads Forum dates back to 26 August 1998, when WALGA and Main Roads WA jointly convened the first event in response to the expressed needs

of Local Government Members. The program was developed in consultation with Regional Road Group Chairpersons and representatives of Main Roads WA, with an initial focus on road funding issues, which were of critical importance to Local Governments at the time.

Since then, the Forum has become a regular event, broadening its scope to address a wide range of transport and road-related issues. It has consistently provided a platform for Local Governments, Main Roads WA, and other stakeholders to share information, discuss challenges, and consider emerging issues affecting the sector.

The Forum program typically includes plenary and concurrent sessions, with time allocated for questions and discussion. Topics are selected to ensure relevance to both metropolitan and regional Local Governments and have included issues such as policy and funding, road construction and design, sustainability, transport issues, disaster recovery, and future planning.

Across its history, the Forum has maintained its original purpose of supporting informed discussion and strengthening collaboration between Local Governments and State Government agencies. The 2025 Forum, held in August, was the fifteenth Forum convened by WALGA and Main Roads WA.

COMMENT

WALGA has prepared a detailed summary of the presentations and key deliverables. The full presentations can be viewed on the [WALGA website](#).

10.2 POLYPHAGOUS SHOT-HOLE BORER (PSHB): TRANSITION TO MANAGEMENT

By Rebecca Brown, Policy Manager Environment and Waste

FOR NOTING

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Since the State Government [accouncement](#) on 18 June 2025 that it was no longer technically feasible to eradicate Polyphagous Shot-hole borer (PSHB) from Western Australia, a national [Transition to Management \(T2M\) Plan](#) has been put in place.
- The T2M Plan focuses in four program areas:
 - Orderly transition of eradication activities
 - Slow the spread
 - Capacity building and training
 - Future proofing.
- WALGA and Local Governments have been actively engaging with the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) on the T2M Plan implementation, including the development of the \$2.5M funding Program for Zone A Local Governments and capacity building.
- WALGA has written to the Director General of DPIRD identifying the priorities for Local Government including:
 - increased and sustained funding for Local Government and community PSHB management;
 - clear and consistent messaging – stop the spread;
 - ongoing and comprehensive PSHB surveillance;
 - development of effective management tools;
 - data sharing to enable targeted management efforts;
 - preparedness outside the Quarantine Area;
 - further funding for PSHB research; and
 - capacity building for Local Government.
- In addition to advocacy, WALGA has been supporting Local Government through a range of capacity building focusing on sharing knowledge on PSHB management.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This item relates to the following [advocacy positions](#):

4.4 Post Border Biosecurity

Western Australia's economy, environment and the community are facing increasing challenges posed by already established and new pests, weeds and diseases. Local Government has a significant role in biosecurity management, as land managers and regulators, and therefore has an interest in ensuring that Western Australia's biosecurity system, including control of declared pests, is effective and appropriately resourced.

WALGA considers significant changes to the operation of the State's biosecurity system, including the Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007, are required to ensure these risks can be managed now and into the future. To be effective the Western Australian biosecurity system must:

1. *Take a transparent approach to the notion of 'shared responsibility' by ensuring that:*
 - a. *The respective roles and responsibilities of Commonwealth, State and Local Government, industry, landholders, community groups and individuals are agreed and clearly articulated; and*
 - b. *There is improved pest management on State Government managed land and a formalised structure for State Government agencies with responsibilities for biosecurity management to work together and coordinate their activities.*
2. *Be underpinned by a strategic framework, developed in collaboration with stakeholders, that:*
 - a. *Establishes priorities for biosecurity threats in geographically defined regions, sets measurable targets and guides investment in biosecurity activities; and*
 - b. *Is regularly evaluated and reported on.*
3. *Have a greater focus on environmental biosecurity, through the increased recognition and management of pest species that have significant ecological impacts.*
4. *Be adequately, sustainably and equitably funded:*
 - a. *The appropriateness and effectiveness of the Declared Pest Rate (DPR) and Recognised Biosecurity Group (RBG) model as key mechanisms for the management of widespread and established declared pests should be reviewed and alternate mechanisms considered;*
 - b. *Increased and more equitable distribution of funding for every step in the biosecurity continuum and adequate resourcing for all stakeholders, including Local Government; and*
 - c. *The provision of funding for declared pest management in metropolitan areas.*
5. *Ensure that the criteria and process for listing of declared pests is evidence-based, timely and transparent.*
6. *Have an increased emphasis on compliance through education and enforcement activity, to ensure land managers are aware of their legislative responsibilities and are supported to implement biosecurity actions.*
7. *Facilitate the use of new technologies, strategic monitoring, and the establishment of data management systems to inform biosecurity investment decisions and support adaptive management.*
8. *Improve the community's understanding, awareness and action in relation to biosecurity to assist with threat surveillance and timely response to incursions.*

4.7 Polyphagous shot-hole borer

The Local Government sector:

1. *Recognises the significant threat the Polyphagous shot-hole borer (PSHB) represents to the growth and retention of urban forests;*
2. *Recognises the importance of shared surveillance by government, industry and community to assist with eradication efforts; and*
3. *Advocates for State Government funding for trees lost due to PSHB and to ameliorate the long term urban canopy impact.*

ATTACHMENT

- [Polyphagous Shot-Hole Borer - Transition to Management](#)

BACKGROUND

PSHB was first detected in East Fremantle in September 2021 and since that time the State Government undertook a nationally funded eradication response. However, on 18 June 2025, the State Government [announced](#) the National Management Group's (NMG) decision that it was no longer technically feasible to eradicate PSHB from Western Australia and the PSHB would transition to long-term management. The Transition to Management (T2M) phase commenced on 1 July with the T2M Plan in place by 1 September. Local Government was provided with a summary of the T2M Plan in late September.

The focus of the T2M Plan is:

1. *Orderly transition of eradication activities: Concluding the previous eradication tasks in a structured way to ensure continuity and minimise disruption for residents and industry.*
2. *Slow the spread: Implementing targeted surveillance, compliance and tree treatment to reduce the rate of PSHB spread, while providing practical opportunities for training and upskilling our partners.*
3. *Capacity building and training: Supporting landowners, local governments, industry, and communities through the development of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) programs, accessible resources, and practical training initiatives.*
4. *Future proofing: Preparing all stakeholders for long-term management through dedicated research, the development of improved surveillance tools, and the establishment of sustainable management systems.*

Some of these initiatives have been progressed, with DPIRD establishing a capacity building and training team.

COMMENT

WALGA has continued to advocate to Government for increased funding and support as well as providing capacity building avenues for Local Government. WALGA and Local Government continue to actively engage DPIRD on the T2M Plan implementation, including the development of the \$2.5M funding Program for Zone A Local Governments and capacity building.

WALGA hosted two seminars for Local Government in October (17 and 31 October) and is holding an in-person seminar on 28 November. These events showcase Local Government and relevant State Government agency on ground work with PSHB management. Recordings of these sessions will be available on request.

WALGA has written to the Director General of DPIRD identifying the priority actions needed in the T2M phase and included the funding request in the WALGA Budget Submission.

Increased and sustained funding for Local Government PSHB

- \$30 million over three years for Quarantine Area (QA) Local Governments, from 2026-27 to 2028-29.
- \$6 million over three years for QA residents, from 2026-27 to 2028-29 (for tree removal and pruning).

Clear and consistent messaging – stop the spread

In both the T2M, and long-term management phase, the approach needs to be agreed and clearly communicated as stopping, rather than slowing, the spread. Information released by DPIRD does mention 'stopping the spread of PSHB out of the Perth Metropolitan area' however the terminology in the T2M plan is 'slow the spread'. WALGA has expressed concern that the slow the spread messaging generates confusion, as typified by media reports of WA 'losing the PSHB battle', which confuses community understanding of the continued quarantine requirements.

Ongoing and comprehensive surveillance

A comprehensive surveillance system is critical to identify and treat new infestations and reduce the long-term impact rather than allowing PSHB to spread unchecked. DPIRD's decreased surveillance in Zone A is not supported until there are appropriate alternative measures in place. Early detection, and rapid response, has been shown to be highly effective at suppressing populations and reducing long-term impacts in other parts of the world. At present, Local Governments do not have the necessary resources to undertake the systematic surveillance.

Development of effective management tools

The T2M phase needs to equip land managers with the tools required to effectively manage PSHB long-term. The ability for Local Government to implement an integrated pest management approach that includes the use of chemical treatments is critical, noting that research is underway to find new effective biological and chemical treatments. Some pesticides have been shown to be effective at suppression of low level infestations in other parts of the world.

Data sharing to enable targeted management efforts

It is critical that data sharing arrangements are in place to support access to data on the location of infested trees across public and private property. The tracking and monitoring of infestations will support efficient surveillance and collaborative management across Local Government boundaries.

Preparedness in areas outside the QA

There is significant concern amongst Local Governments located outside of the QA regarding the risk of spread. As in Zone B, targeted surveillance of high-risk species is required, including sites that are likely to receive greenwaste (transfer stations and landfills). The location of amplifier hosts across the landscape will need to be determined. There are land management practices in regional areas that will require specific PSHB management advice for landholders, such as bushfire preparedness and considerations when undertaking fuel reduction burning.

Further Funding for PSHB Research

Local Government welcomed the allocation of funding through the WA Agricultural Research Collaboration (WAARC) to projects related to PSHB and are actively interested and engaged in the outcomes. WALGA also notes the commitment in the Response Plan Overview to progressing a national research strategy. The scope of this strategy is appreciated however needs to have funding attached to ensure that it can occur in a timely and coordinated manner.

Capacity building for Local Government

Building capacity both within Local Government and in the arboriculture industry is essential to increase capacity of stakeholders to meet the T2M plan objectives. The

provision of training, workshops and skill development on signs of infestation, management priorities, available tools and community messaging will help to ensure a consistent management approach across all stakeholders.

10.3 GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO INDEPENDENT BIOSECURITY AND AGRICULTURE MANAGEMENT ACT REVIEW

By Rebecca Brown, Policy Manager Environment and Waste

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council note the release of the Government Response to the *Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act* Review and WALGA's ongoing advocacy in this area.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The first statutory review of the *Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007* (BAM Act) [commenced](#) in March 2022 with the appointment of an Independent Panel. The three-stage review process was completed in December 2023 when the Panel provided their Report to Government.
- WALGA and Local Government provided considerable input into the Review Process, including through the development of a discussion paper, workshops, presentations to the Panel and [submissions](#).
- The [Review Report](#) was provided to the Minister for Agriculture and Food in December 2023 and the [Government Response](#) was Tabled in Parliament on 23 October 2025.
- The Government response recognises the need to strengthen the State's biosecurity system and undertake reform of the biosecurity system. However, most of the more significant recommendations have only been noted, with the Government citing that further work is required.
- WALGA welcomes the release of the report and Government Response and will be advocating for this work to be progressed as a priority and for the sector to be consulted as part of this process.
- WALGA's 2026-27 State Budget Submission is requesting an additional \$20 million per annum from 2026-27 for the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) to ensure WA is prepared and can respond to increasing biosecurity threats.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This item relates to the following [Advocacy Position](#):

4.4 Post Border Biosecurity

Western Australia's economy, environment and the community are facing increasing challenges posed by already established and new pests, weeds and diseases. Local Government has a significant role in biosecurity management, as land managers and regulators, and therefore has an interest in ensuring that Western Australia's biosecurity system, including control of declared pests, is effective and appropriately resourced.

*WALGA considers significant changes to the operation of the State's biosecurity system, including the *Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007*, are required to ensure these risks can be managed now and into the future. To be effective the Western Australian biosecurity system must:*

1. *Take a transparent approach to the notion of 'shared responsibility' by ensuring that:*

- a. *The respective roles and responsibilities of Commonwealth, State and Local Government, industry, landholders, community groups and individuals are agreed and clearly articulated; and*
 - b. *There is improved pest management on State Government managed land and a formalised structure for State Government agencies with responsibilities for biosecurity management to work together and coordinate their activities.*
2. *Be underpinned by a strategic framework, developed in collaboration with stakeholders, that:*
 - a. *Establishes priorities for biosecurity threats in geographically defined regions, sets measurable targets and guides investment in biosecurity activities; and*
 - b. *Is regularly evaluated and reported on.*
3. *Have a greater focus on environmental biosecurity, through the increased recognition and management of pest species that have significant ecological impacts.*
4. *Be adequately, sustainably and equitably funded:*
 - a. *The appropriateness and effectiveness of the Declared Pest Rate (DPR) and Recognised Biosecurity Group (RBG) model as key mechanisms for the management of widespread and established declared pests should be reviewed and alternate mechanisms considered;*
 - b. *Increased and more equitable distribution of funding for every step in the biosecurity continuum and adequate resourcing for all stakeholders, including Local Government; and*
 - c. *The provision of funding for declared pest management in metropolitan areas.*
5. *Ensure that the criteria and process for listing of declared pests is evidence-based, timely and transparent.*
6. *Have an increased emphasis on compliance through education and enforcement activity, to ensure land managers are aware of their legislative responsibilities and are supported to implement biosecurity actions.*
7. *Facilitate the use of new technologies, strategic monitoring, and the establishment of data management systems to inform biosecurity investment decisions and support adaptive management.*
8. *Improve the community's understanding, awareness and action in relation to biosecurity to assist with threat surveillance and timely response to incursions.*

BACKGROUND

The *Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007* (BAM Act), and associated regulations, allow for the identification, control and management of organisms and activities that may pose a biosecurity risk. This first statutory Review of the BAM Act [commenced](#) in March 2022 with the appointment of an Independent Panel to oversee the process.

The Review Panel was tasked with assessing the BAM Act's operation and effectiveness. This included the extent to which the BAM Act provides a fit-for-purpose, efficient and effective legal framework to underpin WA's biosecurity system. The Review was undertaken in a three-stage process which identified themes, explored those themes then identified solutions.

WALGA and Local Government provided considerable input into the Review Process, through workshops, presentations to the Panel, a detailed [Discussion Paper](#) and

[submissions](#) on each stage of the process. WALGA's submissions recommended that significant reform of the State's biosecurity system was required. The 11 key biosecurity management themes that were identified by WALGA reflect issues raised by Local Governments and those found by the Auditor General's 2013 and 2020 assessment reports:

1. Strategic direction and regional priorities
2. Agency responsibilities
3. The Declared Pest Rate and Recognised Biosecurity Groups
4. Environmental biosecurity
5. Responses to incursions
6. Management of declared pests in urban areas
7. Problematic non-declared pests
8. Sustainable funding model
9. Compliance and enforcement
10. Monitoring, research and innovation
11. Community education and involvement.

State Council also endorsed an updated Biosecurity Position to inform WALGA's input and advocacy to the Review process.

The [Review Report](#) was provided to the Minister for Agriculture and Food, Hon Jackie Jarvis, in December 2023. WALGA's submissions are referenced throughout the report. The [Government Response](#) to the Review was Tabled in Parliament on 23 October 2025. Of the 33 review recommendations, the WA Government fully supports 8, supports 16 in principle, and notes 9 recommendations.

COMMENT

While WALGA welcomes the release of the Review Report and Government Response, it is important that there is now meaningful progress towards systemic reform and strengthening of the State's biosecurity system. The Government Response recognises the need to strengthen the State's biosecurity system to better respond to increasing risks and impacts and commits to a long term program to reform WA's biosecurity system to be developed and coordinated by DPIRD.

The 33 Recommendations of the Review, Government Response and WALGA comments are included in [the table below](#). WALGA's comments are based on the Post-Border Biosecurity Advocacy Position and submissions to the BAM Act Review. The main themes of the recommendations and the Government response include:

- support for increased alignment with national legislation and contemporary biosecurity regulation
- support for improved communications and community engagement
- a move beyond agricultural biosecurity as a focus for the legislation
- moves towards greater clarity and obligation regarding responsibilities for biosecurity management
- increased strategic direction and oversight for biosecurity
- increased penalties and regulation
- the need for substantial further work on funding of the biosecurity system prior to any changes.

WALGA is meeting with DPIRD to discuss the Government response and the next steps in relation to implementing the outcomes of the Review.

WALGA's 2026-27 State Budget Submission is requesting an additional \$20 million per annum from 2026-27 for the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) to ensure WA is prepared and can respond to increasing biosecurity threats.

Recommendation	Government Response	WALGA Comment
1. Change the title of the Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007 to the 'Biosecurity Act', removing the reference to agriculture management and making clear the legislation's scope extends beyond agriculture	Supported	Agree. Aligns with Local Government view regarding legislation scope and focusing on environmental biosecurity.
2. Align the reformed biosecurity act's purpose and objects with nationally agreed principles for biosecurity and set out what it is intended to achieve, modernising the legislation and making its intent clearer to system participants	Supported	Agree. These recommendations speak to national alignment of the legislation and while this was not specifically included in the consultation, Local Government consistently support clear roles and responsibilities – increased national alignment would assist in this matter.
3. Adopt defined terms and concepts for biosecurity matter, dealing, event, impact, risk, emergency and carrier that align with the national biosecurity system, aiming to harmonise approaches across state borders and facilitate compliance through a consistent framework	Supported	
4. Structure the reformed biosecurity act so that its regulatory framework aligns with principles and key concepts that guide biosecurity across Australia, making it easier for stakeholders and administrators to understand, comply with and implement	Supported in principle	
5. Progress the amendments to the BAM Act listed in Attachment 1 [to the BAM Act review] to make the BAM Act more workable and better able to support WA's biosecurity system while the more substantial legislative reforms recommended in this report are progressed	Supported in principle	Agree in principle. WALGA will advocate for changes to address issues identified during the response to the Polyphagous shot-hole borer response regarding sharing of data (s184) and barriers to timely response actions (e.g. tree removal).
6. Finalise the repeal of the Agriculture and Related Resources Protection Act 1976 and its subsidiary legislation, which was one of the 17 Acts intended to be fully superseded by the BAM Act	Supported	Administrative amendment.
7. Improve biosecurity communications and engagement to enhance everyone's	Supported	Agree. Aligns with Local Government view regarding the

understanding of what biosecurity is, how it benefits them, how they can contribute and the value of their participation		importance of education and awareness of biosecurity responsibilities.
8. Include a statement in the reformed biosecurity act that the act is to be administered, where feasible, in consultation with the general public, communities, Aboriginal peoples, industries, and local, state and Australian government bodies, to reinforce the importance of consultation and engagement	Supported in principle	Agree. Aligns with Local Government view regarding effective engagement with the sector and community.
9. Introduce a general biosecurity obligation into the reformed biosecurity act requiring individuals and organisations to take reasonable and practicable measures to prevent, eliminate or minimise biosecurity risks and impacts when dealing with biosecurity matter	Supported in principle	Agree in principle. Aligns with Local Government views, however noting for it to be effective it relies on all participants in the biosecurity system having an understanding of their obligation, and undertaking action as deemed reasonable.
10. Regulate dealings with biosecurity matter as a more practical regulatory construct to underpin WA's biosecurity legislation into the future	Supported in principle	Aligns with Local Government views regarding a simplified framework and assessment process based on the level of risk of the matter, which would provide a more transparent process, and potentially a stronger foundation for WA's biosecurity system. The current framework for the assessment and declaration of organisms in WA is unclear, with stakeholders questioning the reduction in the number of declared animals and pests, and the change of some control categories to unassigned, following a review by DPIRD in 2016. WA's current biosecurity system is based on the declaration of organisms and assignment of management categories, which provides the legislative basis for management obligations of landholders. The replacement of
11. Target the use of declarations of biosecurity matter under the reformed biosecurity act to achieve an appropriate level of protection, ensuring that controls are proportionate to the risk and potential impact	Supported in principle	
12. Regulate established pests and diseases using the general biosecurity obligation and subsidiary legislation when necessary, to support regulation that is flexible and appropriate to the impact presented	Supported in principle	

		this process with prescriptive legal requirements such as control orders, permits and codes would need to be clearly designed and communicated.
13. Develop a policy statement to provide strategic direction and guide decisions on WA's regulatory approach for specific biosecurity matter, ensuring transparency and consistency	Supported	Agree. Aligns with Local Government advocacy regarding strategic direction.
14. Include biosecurity emergency provisions in the reformed biosecurity act, requiring the declaration of a biosecurity emergency to activate special powers	Supported in principle	Agree. Aligns with Local Government view that it is critical that the BAM Act includes effective emergency provisions for pests and diseases. However noting it is essential that Local Government is consulted in the emergency response where emergency actions impact on Local Government operations or responsibilities. Also, the interface between the BAM Act, the Emergency Management Act 2005 and Public Health Act 2016 needs to be clarified, in terms of triggering and enabling an emergency response.
15. Include authority for compensation and reimbursement to be paid under certain circumstances for direct losses incurred when destructive biosecurity measures are taken or ordered by the WA Government under the reformed biosecurity act	Noted	Agree in principle. Local Government identified some merit in this approach, however only if the sector was included. It is particularly topical for Local Government following experience with PSHB.
16. Use behavioural science to better understand the values and views of system participants and inform an expanded program of initiatives that encourage compliance with WA's biosecurity legislation	Supported	Agree. Aligns with Local Government view regarding the importance of education and awareness of biosecurity responsibilities.
17. Consider expanding the use of regulatory personnel authorised under other legislation as BAM Act inspectors to bolster the on-ground presence of monitoring and enforcement	Supported	Agree in principle. The use of other Government agencies was considered in relation to this activity.

18. Include in the reformed biosecurity act a suite of inspector powers and tools that support the enforcement of modern biosecurity concepts including the general biosecurity obligation and requirements relating to dealings with biosecurity matter	Supported in principle	Agree in principle. Aligns with Local Government view regarding the need for enforcement, however noting that the reform opportunities do not address the lack of compliance and enforcement action by DPIRD – which will need additional resourcing to ensure effectiveness.
19. Align the value of penalties in the reformed biosecurity act with the value of penalties in modern biosecurity legislation and WA environmental legislation to ensure the penalty is proportional to the harm caused	Supported in principle	Agree. Aligns with Local Government views regarding increased compliance activities and penalties. In particular noting that there needs to be monitoring and appropriate penalties applied where landholders are non-compliant and their lack of action is contributing to increased pest incursions on surrounding land. WALGA supports the increase in the monetary value of the penalties. As a minimum, penalties should align with WA's Environmental Protection Act 1986, which provides a tiered penalty system (Tier 1 maximum penalty for a corporate body of \$500,000). This is significantly higher than the current maximum post-border biosecurity penalty of \$100,000 under the BAM Act.
20. Incorporate aggravated offence considerations in the reformed biosecurity act to reflect the seriousness of the action	Supported in principle	
21. Use penalty units in the reformed biosecurity act as a versatile tool for setting and adjusting the value of penalties to account for inflation or changes in the economy	Supported in principle	
22. Expand the scope of the provisions that enable local governments to make local laws to include established diseases, pest animals and plant pests	Noted	Agree in principle. WALGA is not opposed to local governments having an expanded ability to create local laws that enable Local Governments to regulate local pests and diseases of concern, however this should not be a requirement or an expectation and should not be used to shift costs onto the sector.

23. Authorise third parties to deliver biosecurity accreditation schemes under robust oversight, and align certification regulations with the standard set in modern biosecurity legislation	Supported in principle	No position. Feedback at the time of the Review identified concern that this approach could increase costs to industry.
24. In consultation with industry, develop a whole-of-system biosecurity policy, framework and legal instruments for the introduction of industry-government biosecurity response agreements at a state level	Supported in principle	No position. WALGA identified that these arrangements have limited relevance to Local Government, although there are benefits for the public good.
25. Establish pest management regions under the reformed biosecurity act, that are prescribed in regulation, and with a requirement for each pest management region to have a minister-approved pest management plan	Noted	Agree in principle. In submissions on the Act Review WALGA provided detailed feedback from the sector on the limitations of the current funding model. In the Government Response it is identified that "the WA Government agrees that the current declared pest rate system is not efficient or sustainable and requires reform if it is to be retained long term." However, it identifies that "economic analysis and impact assessment of different funding approaches will be required....and the declared pest rate will continue to be raised in its current form until the government has considered alternative approaches for funding established pest management". Local Government supports the adequate and sustainable funding for the biosecurity system and acknowledges that further work is required, however this is a priority to ensure the system functions.
26. Allocate pest management rate and matched WA Government funds (currently known as Declared Pest Account or declared pest rate funds) raised from a pest management region to carrying out that region's approved pest management plan	Noted	
27. Establish clear funding and eligibility requirements, processes and guidelines that support the regional allocation of pest management rate and matched WA Government funds (currently known as Declared Pest Account or declared pest rate funds) through a competitive process and multi-year funding agreements	Noted	
28. The WA Government leads the allocation of pest management rate and matched funds (currently known as Declared Pest Account or declared pest rate funds) preferably through a central body such as the biosecurity planning committee, to support a robust, transparent and independent process	Noted	
29. 29. Rename the declared pest rate to a pest management rate and apply it consistently across the state to pastoral and diversification leasehold land, and rural and urban farming freehold land in a way that targets landholders with significant pest management requirements who primarily benefit from funded coordinated pest management activities	Noted	

30. Consider implementing a simplified and standardised rating structure for the pest management rate that: a. applies a progressive ad valorem (cents in the dollar) rate that increases commensurate with the total unimproved value of the land held by an individual entity b. uses Land IDs as the basis for assessing the value of landholdings owned by an individual entity rather than Valuation Entity Numbers c. applies a minimum flat rate and a capped maximum rate per individual entity	Noted	
31. Establish a biosecurity planning committee under the reformed biosecurity act to provide strategic leadership and initiate whole-of-system planning, coordination and governance of WA's biosecurity system	Supported in principle	Agree. Aligns with Local Government views regarding a strategic approach.
32. Replace the provisions of section 186 of the BAM Act with a requirement for public authorities to include a compliance statement as part of their own annual reporting that reports on biosecurity measures taken and discloses any directions issued to it	Noted	Agree. This current provision provides some transparency regarding activities of public authorities such as DBCA.
33. Develop a new rolling 10-year WA biosecurity strategy to provide strategic guidance and direction to help achieve a transformation of WA's biosecurity system	Supported in principle	Agree. Aligns with Local Government views and WALGA Advocacy Position which calls for a strategic framework to provide guidance. Consultation and engagement with Local Government and other stakeholders will be key to effective development and implementation.

10.4 FLYING MINUTE – SUBMISSION FOR DRAFT GUIDELINES ON COMMUNITY BENEFITS FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS

By Lisa Harwood, Principal Policy Advisor Economic Development

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council note the Submission for Draft Guidelines on Community Benefits for Renewable Energy Projects, as endorsed by State Council via Flying Minute.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Western Australia's energy sector is transforming to achieve the State and Australian governments' 2050 net zero emissions target.
- The State Government released a draft Guideline Benefits Guideline Consultation Paper for consultation on 12 June 2025.
- The deadline for submissions on the draft Guideline was extended to 18 August following a request from WALGA.
- WALGA has prepared a draft submission aligned to WALGA's renewable energy advocacy positions and incorporating feedback from Local Governments.
- Local Governments were provided 4 weeks to provide feedback on the draft WALGA submission, from 26 June to 25 July 2025.
- 48 Local Governments provided feedback, including a joint submission on the Consultation Paper from 36 regional Local Governments.
- The draft submission was endorsed by State Council via Flying Minute on 08 August 2025. It was provided to the State Government on 18 August 2025.

ATTACHMENT

- [Flying Minute – Submission for Draft Guidelines on Community Benefits for Renewable Energy Projects](#)

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This item relates to the following [WALGA advocacy positions](#):

- 6.16 Energy Transition Engagement and Community Benefit Framework
- 6.17 Renewable Energy Facilities
- 6.18 Priority Agriculture

BACKGROUND

WALGA has three advocacy policy positions related to the renewable energy transition, which were endorsed by WALGA zones and State Council at the September 2024 State Council Meeting. One of these positions calls on the State Government to develop a comprehensive framework to manage the impact of the energy transition that includes local engagement and the realisation of local community benefits from energy transition projects. Other State Governments, including NSW, Queensland and Victoria, already have guidelines or frameworks that support communities, Local Governments and industries in negotiating community benefits.

On 12 June 2025, the State Government released its Draft Guideline on Community Benefits for Renewable Energy Projects. The stated purpose of the Guideline is to:

- provide information to communities about the types of benefit sharing arrangements available for the renewable energy infrastructure they are hosting,

- provide information to developers about State Government expectations for community benefits arrangements,
- provide a guide on appropriate value of community benefits in different contexts,
- provide suggestions for the governance and administration of community benefits funds,
- provide confidence and clarity for proponents and investors by setting out a clear framework for benefit-sharing arrangements across Western Australia.

The State's Guideline complements WALGA's recently released [Renewable Energy Community Benefit and Engagement Guide](#).

The deadline for submissions on the draft Guideline was extended to 18 August 2025 following a request from WALGA.

COMMENT

WALGA has prepared a submission on the Guideline. The submission broadly supports many aspects of the State's draft Guideline, but recommends a specific focus on, or changes to, several aspects. This includes:

- The need for the requirement for community benefits to be mandated.
- Changes to the contribution rate, from the proposed range to a single, indexed figure floor for wind, solar and battery storage projects.
- That benefit sharing arrangements should commence during the construction phase of projects.
- Further clarity on the role of rates versus community benefits and that these be viewed separately.
- That Local Government should determine the appropriate governance mechanisms.
- Clearer guidance on when developers should engage with neighbouring Local Governments.
- The need for a statewide strategy to guide the rollout of the energy transition.
- The need for State Government to lead and coordinate regional cumulative impact assessments for large scale renewable projects, in consultation with proponents and Local Governments.
- Clarity on when the Guideline should apply to existing projects.

Feedback was requested on the draft submission from Local Government CEOs and Mayors/Presidents between 26 June and 25 July. WALGA received responses from 48 Local Governments, via SurveyMonkey, email and a joint submission on the discussion paper from 36 regional Local Governments.

Relevant feedback from Local Governments was incorporated into the draft submission. All Local Governments were also encouraged to provide their own submissions to the State Government.

The Submission was endorsed by State Council via Flying Minute on 8 August and provided to the State Government on 18 August.

10.5 FLYING MINUTE – COMMUNICATIONS AGREEMENT CONSULTATION SUBMISSION

By Kirsty Martin, Executive Manager Member Services and Felicity Morris, Manager Governance and Procurement

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council note the Submission on the Communications Agreements Consultation, as endorsed by State Council via Flying Minute.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Consultation is open on the draft [Local Government Regulations Amendment Regulations 2025](#) (the Draft Regulations) and draft [Local Government \(Default Communications Agreement\) Order 2025](#) (the Draft Order) which give effect to reforms regarding communications agreements between Council and the CEO.
- Communications agreements will regulate Council and Committee Member requests and access to information.
- Sector feedback has been collated and identifies some overarching concerns, specific amendments and elements that are broadly suitable.
- The overriding view is that the Draft Order is overly prescriptive and complex and requires simplification. A principles-based approach is preferred.
- The attached submission, informed by this feedback, is recommended for endorsement.
- The submission attached was endorsed by the Governance Policy Team on 11 August and by State Council via Flying Minute on 20 August. It was provided to the Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety on 22 August.

ATTACHMENT

- [Flying Minute – Communications Agreement Consultation Submission](#)

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

WALGA's existing advocacy position is based on the high-level reform proposals provided for public consultation in 2022. The current [Advocacy Position](#) is:

2.5.3 Council Communication Agreements

The Local Government sector supports the introduction of a consistent, regulated Communications Agreement between Councils and the CEO within Local Governments.

This position was based on the understanding that communication agreements would be consistent with the existing policies and protocols used by Local Governments, rather than significantly more prescriptive and complex.

BACKGROUND

The *Local Government Amendment Act 2023* (2023 Amendment Act) included amendments to the *Local Government Act 1995* (the Act) to:

- Provide that the right of a Council Member or Committee Member to access information under section 5.92 must be exercised in accordance with the Local Government's communications agreement.

- Require every Local Government to have a communications agreement between the Council and the CEO regulating the matters specified in the Act and regulations.
- Require the Minister to make a Ministerial Order setting out a default communications agreement which applies at any time a Local Government does not have its own communications agreement.
- Enable Local Governments to adopt and amend their own communications agreement with the agreement of the CEO, which will expire at the end of every caretaker period, and upon the end of the CEO's employment with that Local Government.

The Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety (LGIRS) published the draft [Local Government Regulations Amendment Regulations 2025](#) (the Draft Regulations) and draft [Local Government \(Default Communications Agreement\) Order 2025](#) (the Draft Order).

The Draft Regulations prescribe the minimum requirements for all communications agreements and include mechanisms to require compliance by Local Government employees, Council Members and Committee Members. The Draft Order sets out what is proposed to be the default communications agreement.

The Draft Regulations and Draft Order were released for public consultation on 5 June, with submissions closing on 25 July. WALGA requested an extension to this period and the public consultation period now closes on 22 August. WALGA circulated a discussion paper to Local Governments requesting comments by Monday 28 July. This short timeframe has been challenging for Local Governments to review the materials and report through their Council meeting cycles.

The Governance Policy Team considered the attached submission at their meeting on 11 August and recommend endorsement by State Council.

COMMENT

Responses received from Local Governments indicate general concerns regarding:

- Excessive prescriptive detail in both the Draft Regulations and Draft Order which will impose increased red-tape and administrative burden, in conflict with stated aims of the reforms.
- Complex, regulatory style drafting in the Draft Order that will make the default communications agreement difficult to interpret and apply.
- Unworkable proposed commencement date of 19 October, given the existing Local Government workload supporting elections and preparing for Council Member inductions.

Draft Regulations

The Draft Regulations will:

- prescribe additional matters that must be addressed in communications agreements including providing copies of correspondence sent by the Mayor or President to all Council Members and arrangements for Commissioners;
- prescribe definitions for key terms that will apply to all communications agreements;
- amend the *Local Government (Model Code of Conduct) Regulations 2021* and *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996* to modify Council and employee codes of conduct.

Feedback clearly indicated the provisions dealing with Mayor / President correspondence would not be suitable for all Local Governments, with the potential to generate high volumes of largely irrelevant correspondence to all Council Members. Removal of this matter from the Draft Regulations and Draft Order would allow Local Governments to include appropriate provisions in their own communications agreements if they consider them necessary. Similarly, Local Governments strongly objected to the requirement that all communications agreements allow Commissioners special powers to determine how requests may be made and to make requests of any Local Government employee.

The Draft Regulations prescribe key definitions for "request for information" and for "administrative matters", which are subject to simplified process. The sector strongly opposes the vague and expansive definition of "request for information" as it is inconsistent with the Act, likely to cause an increased administrative burden, generate unreasonable expectations and overreach, and introduce uncertainty that increases the likelihood of disputes. The definition for "administrative matter" is more suitable, but may still be inappropriate for some Local Governments. Feedback suggested some improvements, but ultimately supported removing this definition from the Draft Regulations, to allow each Local Government to agree to an appropriate definition.

Local Governments oppose proposed amendments to the *Local Government (Model Code of Conduct) Regulations 2021* that would mean Council Members were not prohibited from directing or attempting to direct an employee when making requests under a communications agreement. This would undermine a key principle of the Act, that the CEO is responsible for the direction of employees. Some responses also expressed concerns that the Codes of Conduct would be used to enforce compliance with communications agreements, regarding this as unnecessarily regulation.

Draft Order

Feedback suggested amendments to several provisions of the Draft Order. In particular, Local Governments oppose the inclusion of minimum numbers of nominated employees (employees to whom requests may be addressed). These arrangements were regarded as unnecessarily bureaucratic. The proposed mechanism for disputes also prompted concerns regarding damage to relationships, entrenching adversarial relationships between members and the CEO, abuse of the process and substantial use of resources. A significant number of Local Governments did not support empowering Council to make a final determination of disputes, or to overturn a decision of the CEO. Responses proposed a broad range of improvements to several clauses that specify the requirements and processes for requests. The most frequent amendments have been addressed in the draft WALGA Submission. However, the range of these suggestions reflect the difficulty in providing a default communications agreement that allows for the diverse needs and contexts of Local Governments. This reinforces the need for a more principles-based, policy style drafting approach for the Draft Order.

The sector feedback and detailed analysis of the Draft Regulations and Draft Order has informed the preparation of the attached draft WALGA submission. The submission recommendations are provided below.

Submission Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Drafting style

1. That WALGA advise the Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety to:

- (a) Minimise the level of prescriptive detail in the Draft Regulations to avoid unnecessary red-tape and administrative burden, which is inconsistent with reform objectives.
- (b) Ensure that Councils and CEOs have the flexibility to adopt communications agreements that are appropriate for their needs, context, structure and resource levels.
- (c) Simplify the Draft Order by using clear, plain language drafting.

Recommendation 2: Commencement date

- 2. That WALGA advise the Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety to revise the commencement date of the Regulations to allow at least six months after publication of the final Regulations and Order for Local Governments to prepare.

Recommendation 3: Provision of Mayor or President Correspondence to all Council Members

- 3. That WALGA advise the Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety:
 - (a) Not to prescribe in regulations the provision of Mayor / President correspondence to all Council Members as an additional matter that must be regulated by all communications agreements.
 - (b) To delete Clause 5 of the Draft Order and exclude this matter from any future default communications agreement.

Recommendation 4: Requests for information – definition and scope

- 4. That WALGA advise the Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety to delete the words "or otherwise" and "other information" from any definitions of request for information.

Recommendation 5: Administrative matters – definition and scope

- 5. That WALGA advise the Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety to:
 - (a) Not prescribe a definition for "administrative matter" in regulations, allowing it to be defined in each communications agreement.
 - (b) Include the following definition of administrative matter in the default communications agreement:

administrative matter in relation to a council member or committee member, means support or assistance provided to an individual council member or individual committee member to facilitate an administrative process related to that member, and may include:

 - (i) council and committee meeting scheduling, attendance, apologies, leave of absence, deputy committee member attendance, drafting a notice of motion or alternative motion;
 - (ii) attendance at professional development, training or events, associated speech writing, ceremonial protocols, travel, accommodation and incidental expense arrangements;
 - (iii) entitlements to a fee, allowance, reimbursement or superannuation;

- (iv) *personal compliance obligations under the Act, Regulations, or other written law including code of conduct, conflict of interest, gift disclosure or recordkeeping requirements; or*
- (v) *information and communication technology software or hardware provided by the local government.*

Recommendation 6: Commissioners

6. That WALGA advise the Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety:
 - (a) Not to prescribe in regulations any requirement for all communications agreements to include provisions for commissioners.
 - (b) Not to prescribe in regulations that commissioners may make requests to any employee, determine the manner of their requests and the manner of the response.
 - (c) To delete Clauses 29 and 30 from the Draft Order.

Recommendation 7: Model Code of Conduct Amendments

7. That WALGA advise the Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety not to proceed with the amendment to clause 20 of the Model Code of Conduct for Council Members, Committee Members and Candidates.

Recommendation 8: Clause 4 General principles

8. That WALGA advise the Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety to include an additional principle in Clause 4 that emphasises the importance of mutual respect for the separate roles and responsibilities of Council Members, Council and the CEO under the Act.

Recommendation 9: Clause 8 Nominated employees

9. That WALGA advise the Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety to:
 - (a) Delete the minimum numbers of nominated employees from Clause 8.
 - (b) Replace requirements to direct a request to "an appropriate nominated employee" with requirements to direct a request to "a nominated employee" to allow flexibility.
 - (c) Allow the CEO to keep Council Members informed of nominated employees by any appropriate method, rather than requiring maintenance of a register.

Recommendation 10: Clause 12 Information that may be requested

10. That WALGA advise the Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety to:
 - (a) Review the matters listed in Clause 12 to ensure they are clear and suitable.
 - (b) Clarify that Clause 12 is subject to Clause 13.

Recommendation 11: Clause 13 Requirements applicable to requests for information

11. That WALGA advise the Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety to:
 - (a) Consider amendment of Clause 13(2)(b) to read:

"accompanied by any supporting information that may assist the local government to respond to the request, including the relevance of the request to the functions of the requesting member under the Act or another written law."

Recommendation 12: Clause 14 Certain information not required to be provided

12. That WALGA advise the Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety to amend Clause 14(c) to provide that information is not required to be provided if it is not held by the Local Government.

Recommendation 13: Clause 15 Disputes

13. That WALGA advise the Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety to:
 - (a) Amend sub-clause 15(2) to provide that where the requesting member is the Mayor or President, the dispute should be discussed at a meeting between the requesting member, the CEO and the Deputy Mayor or President.
 - (b) Consider options for referring disputes to an impartial third party, including the Inspector if appropriate.
 - (c) Replace sub-clauses 15(3) and 15(4) with a statement noting that Council Members may bring a notice of motion for Council's consideration, with reference to Council's role under the Act.
 - (d) If Council's authority to determine disputes under sub-clauses 15(3) and 15(4) is retained, provide guidance about the scope and limitations of this authority, and the information and considerations that must inform Council's decision-making.

Recommendation 14: Division 4 Processes for requests for information

14. That WALGA advise the Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety to clarify Clause 22 to provide additional guidance on:
 - (a) when it is appropriate not to provide a copy to all members; and
 - (b) the process to resolve a disagreement between the CEO and requesting member.

The Submission was endorsed by State Council via Flying Minute on 20 August and provided to the Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety on 22 August.

10.6 FLYING MINUTE – WALGA SUBMISSION ON THE AMENDMENT REGULATIONS AND DRAFT CHAPTERS OF THE WA PLANNING MANUAL

By Coralie Claudio, Senior Policy Advisor Planning

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council note the Submission to the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage on the *Planning and Development Regulations Amendment (Review of Planning Instruments) Regulations 2025* and supporting Draft Chapters of the WA Planning Manual - Local Planning Schemes and the Local Planning Policy, as endorsed by State Council via Flying Minute.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage (DPLH) is seeking comments on the *Planning and Development Regulations Amendment (Review of Planning Instruments) Regulations 2025* (Amendment Regulations) and two supporting Draft Chapters of the WA Planning Manual - Local Planning Schemes chapter (LPS Manual) and the Local Planning Policy (LPP Manual) by 3 October 2025.
- The Amendment Regulations facilitate the 10 yearly reviews of local planning instruments, introduces new provisions for local planning policies (LPPs) and expanding the circumstances where Local Government can revoke a local development plan (LDP).
- The LPP Manual was previously consulted on in late 2024 and has been updated in response to submissions received and to ensure consistency with the Amendment Regulations.
- WALGA's submission broadly supports the Amendment Regulations and Manuals, recognising they will modernise planning processes and provide contemporary guidance and resources. The submission includes recommendations on standardising and improving accessibility of local planning frameworks, enhancing WAPC accountability and transparency, and addressing resourcing and implementation challenges.
- The submission was endorsed by the Environment Policy Team on 18 September and State Council via Flying Minute on 30 September.

ATTACHMENT

- [Submission to the Amendment Regulations and supporting Draft Chapters of the WA Planning Manual - Local Planning Schemes and the Local Planning Policy](#)

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

WALGA's submission is consistent with WALGA [Advocacy Positions](#) 6.1 Planning Principles and Reform, 6.12 Special Residential Zone, 6.17 Renewable Energy Facilities, 6.18 Priority Agriculture and 4.5 Urban Forest.

BACKGROUND

The Amendment Regulations are necessary to implement Part 9A of the *Planning and Development Amendment Act 2023*, which introduces a 10-year review cycle for State and local planning instruments under the *Planning and Development Act 2005*.

Importantly Part 2 of the Amendment Regulations, seeks to amend the *Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015* to:

1. Facilitate 10 yearly reviews of local planning instruments (local planning schemes and local planning strategies) including a Report of Review (RoR) process. Currently local planning schemes are required to be reviewed every five years.
2. Introduce new provisions relating to the manner and form, purpose, duration, review, and extension of LPPs. This includes introducing a five-year lifespan for LPPs and the requirement for LPPs to be prepared in a standard manner and form. Currently LPPs are not subject to a statutory timeframe or review requirements or a specific manner and form template.
3. Expand the circumstances where Local Government can revoke a LDP. Currently LDPs can only be revoked if the development to which the plan relates becomes a non-conforming use.

The LPS Manual provides an extensive guide to support the preparation, amendment, review and assessment of local planning schemes (LPS), elaborating on the requirements of the Regulations. The LPS Manual consolidates a significant number of documents into a single, practical guide, supplemented by relevant appendices, including manner and form documents.

The LPP Manual was previously consulted on in late 2024 and has been updated in response to submissions received and to ensure consistency with changes proposed by the Amendment Regulations. WALGA prepared a [response](#) to the previous draft Manual, raising concerns that the changes to the Regulations and the LPP Manual shouldn't have the effect of incrementally standardising the content and narrowing the scope of LPPs which remain one of the few planning instruments over which Local Governments retain control.

WALGA, alongside DPLH hosted an Information Session for Local Governments on Thursday, 7 August 2025 on the Amendment Regulations and Manuals.

COMMENT

WALGA's submission broadly supports the Amendment Regulations and Manuals, recognising they will modernise planning processes and provide contemporary guidance and resources, enhancing consistency across local planning frameworks.

However, the submission raises the following matters that require addressing:

- local planning framework standardisation should not be at the expense of robust local planning instruments, specifically LPPs, that enable context appropriate outcomes and reflect the unique characteristics of individual communities.
- local planning instruments should be clear, user-friendly, and written in plain language for all stakeholders.
- WAPC processes and decisions should be subject to appropriate statutory timeframes and transparency, consistent with the requirements placed on Local Government.
- Additional support and resources may be required to help Local Governments meet expected timeframes and deliverables, particularly in regional areas where planning workforce shortages are more pronounced.

WALGA's submission was informed by feedback at the Information Session, Local Government officer input, and WALGA's previous submissions and advocacy positions, specifically 6.1 Planning Principles and Reform.

The submission was endorsed by the Environment Policy Team on 18 September and State Council via Flying Minute on 30 September.

10.7 FLYING MINUTE – WALGA SUBMISSION ON PHASE 2 REFORMS TO WESTERN AUSTRALIA'S WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK LAW

By Rebecca Hicks, Policy Advisor Community

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council note the Submission on Phase 2 Reforms to Western Australia's Working with Children Check Law, as endorsed by State Council via Flying Minute.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- On 26 August 2025, the WA Department of Communities (DoC) released a public Consultation Paper seeking feedback on potential [Phase Two reforms to Western Australia's \(WA\) Working with Children law](#).
- The Consultation period closed on 23 September, however WALGA secured an extension until 14 October 2025.
- The potential Phase 2 reforms aim to:
 - Improve protections for WA's children by updating the [Working with Children \(Screening\) Act 2004](#) (WWC Act) scope to reflect contemporary service provision.
 - Ensure that regardless of where a child lives, they are provided a consistent level of protection by increased national consistency across State and Territory WWC Schemes to the extent possible and appropriate.
- WALGA's submission was informed by Member feedback and provided technical detail on the issues the sector would want to see included in the reforms.
- WALGA's submission recommended that the potential Phase 2 reforms:
 - Amend the WWC Act definitions of 'contact' or 'child-related work' to more appropriately reflect the variety of engagement Local Government staff and Elected Members have with children.
 - That the WWC Act includes a category for those in positions whose duties require ongoing contact with children.
 - That both commercial and non-commercial services remain captured under the WWC Act.
- The submission was endorsed by the People and Place Policy Team on 30 September and State Council via Flying Minute on 8 October.

ATTACHMENT

- [Flying Minute: Submission on Phase 2 Reforms of Western Australia's Working with Children Check Law](#)

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This Submission aligns to the following Advocacy Positions:

[3.6 Children and Young People:](#)

The Local Government sector supports the development and well-being of children and young people through strategic partnerships and a combination of services and facility provision. The Association advocates that the State and Commonwealth should continue to invest in the wellbeing of young West Australians.

3.10.2 Child Safeguarding:

1. *Local Government supports:*
 - a. *the recommendations from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse 2017, in particular Recommendation 6.12 which can be achieved by Local Government implementing and embedding child safeguarding across its functions with support from Governments at the national, state and territory levels; and*
 - b. *the ten National Principles for Child Safe Organisations (Australian Human Rights Commission).*
2. *The State Government through an Independent Oversight Body should provide financial, resourcing and capacity building support to Local Governments to implement and embed child safeguarding across its functions, through the provision of:*
 - a. *supporting materials such as template policies, procedures and guidelines;*
 - b. *consistent key messaging and resources to promote and share in venues and facilities and online;*
 - c. *examples of best practice, including case studies;*
 - d. *self-assessment tools to assist Local Government;*
 - e. *ongoing training and skills development for Local Government staff, including online training options;*
 - f. *funding for the delivery of the child safeguarding function within smaller, less well resourced (Band 3 and Band 4) Local Governments; and*
 - g. *expert officers within each region to provide support and guidance to Local Government on child safeguarding.*
3. *The Local Government sector supports Local Government participation in the State's National Redress Scheme, with full financial coverage by the State.*

BACKGROUND

The WWC Act requires Working with Children Checks (WWCC) for employees and volunteers undertaking child-related work to minimise the risk of harm to children. On 1 July 2023 the Department of Communities [Phase 1 WWCC reforms](#) came into effect. Reforms to WWCC systems are undertaken within the context of the recommendations of the [Royal Commission into Institutional Response to Child Sexual Abuse](#) (Royal Commission) and media coverage of child abuse cases.

The potential Phase 2 reform to the WWC Act consultation paper was released on 26 August 2025. The Paper aimed to provide a framework to feedback on potential Phase 2 reforms to the WWC Act in response to the [Working with Children Check Report](#) recommendations from the Royal Commission. The reforms seek to balance capturing persons relevant under the WWC Act and ensuring the system remains effective and not overloaded.

Local Governments have a broad engagement with children across a variety of roles and duties including:

- direct service provision such as child and youth programs
- community facing roles such as customer service officers and community safety rangers
- roles that engage with children as part of their wider roles and responsibilities, including elected members.

Most Local Government services that engage children are captured by the WWC Act under category 18, 'children's entertainment or party services'. This is not an accurate

representation of Local Government staff's engagement with children. Furthermore, Local Government staff receive inconsistent advice of the application of the categories, and which roles require WWCC.

COMMENT

WALGA's submission made 8 recommendations:

1. That the phase 2 reforms review the definitions of 'contact' or 'child-related work' and categories to more appropriately reflect contemporary service models and the variety of engagement Local Government staff and Elected Members have with children.
2. That the current WWCC categories are reviewed to ensure they adequately capture the extent of support services provided by Local Governments.
3. That both commercial and non-commercial services remain captured under the legislation.
4. That a category that better defines community facing services undertaken by Local Governments is introduced.
5. That employers are not required to inform the WWCC Screening Unit when a person commences or ceases being engaged by them in child-related employment, and that penalties are not applied.
6. That a nationally consistent WWCC scheme is implemented and accepted across all jurisdictions, with provisions for transitional and processing costs.
7. That the WA Government mandate the 10 National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.
8. That the WA Government establish an independent child safeguarding oversight body.

The submission was endorsed by the People and Place Policy Team on 30 September and State Council via Flying Minute on 8 October.

WALGA will continue to work with the Department of Communities to ensure a statewide culture of child safety and further detailed consultation on the implementation of the WWCC Phase 2 reforms with the Local Government sector.

10.8 FLYING MINUTE – WALGA SUBMISSION TO THE EDUCATION AND HEALTH STANDING COMMITTEE INQUIRY INTO COMMUNITY USE OF WA PUBLIC SCHOOL FACILITIES

By Rebecca Hicks, Policy Advisor Community

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council note the Submission to the Education and Health Standing Committee Inquiry into Community Use of WA Public School Facilities, as endorsed by State Council via Flying Minute.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- On 26 August, WALGA was invited to make a submission to the Inquiry into Community Use of WA Public School Facilities.
- The Consultation period closed on 12 October.
- The WALGA submission was informed by feedback from Members and provided high level commentary on this emerging policy direction from the State Government.
- WALGA's submission supported increased community use of WA public school facilities but recommended that the:
 - Local Government sector be included as a key stakeholder in the development and delivery of community use of public school facilities initiatives.
 - State Government prioritises the development of policy frameworks and clarifies roles and responsibilities in consultation with all involved parties to address the identified barriers to community use agreements.
 - State Government establishes funding mechanisms to supplement costs incurred by Local Governments related to community use of public school facilities.
- The submission was endorsed by the People and Place Policy team on 30 September and was endorsed by State Council via Flying Minute on 8 October.

ATTACHMENT

- [Flying Minute: Submission to the Education and Health Standing Committee Inquiry into Community Use of WA Public School Facilities](#)

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The submission aligns to WALGA [Advocacy Position 3.7 Community Infrastructure](#):

Local Governments own, lease, and maintain vital community infrastructure across Western Australia that delivers essential benefits to local communities. Local Governments face significant funding pressures to ensure this infrastructure is effectively planned, developed, maintained, and enhanced to meet evolving community needs and population growth.

1. *WALGA calls on the Australian Government to provide \$500 million per annum for community infrastructure through a national formula based, targeted Local Government funding program.*
2. *WALGA calls on the State Government to:*

- a. *Provide \$60 million per annum for the Community Sporting and Recreation Facilities Fund, separate to the PlayOn WA 2030 Funding commitments.*
- b. *Provide \$60 million per annum for community arts and cultural infrastructure,*
- c. *Provide funding for retrofitting accessible design features to community infrastructure,*
- d. *Align all community infrastructure funding with existing State co-contribution of at least two-thirds.*

BACKGROUND

The Education and Health Standing Committee sought feedback on the community use of WA public school facilities, with a focus on the:

- benefits and risks of community use of public school facilities,
- patterns of community use across WA,
- current policy framework and other arrangements that guide community use,
- barriers to maximising community use,
- opportunities to enable increased use of public school facilities,
- approaches taken to promote community use of school facilities by non-government schools, and in other jurisdictions.

Local Governments are key providers and operators of community facilities. Local Governments across WA reported that community demand for sport facilities is growing significantly beyond the capacity of existing infrastructure. The [ALGA National State of Assets Report](#) highlights the significant need for replacement of Local Government buildings and facilities due to poor condition, function, and capacity.

Existing funding mechanisms available to Local Governments to support the development and maintenance of community infrastructure are typically oversubscribed, focused on sports facilities and not of sufficient value to meet demand. This issue is a central element of the Community Infrastructure advocacy position endorsed by State Council in September 2025.

The Community Use of School Sporting Facilities Program is a \$10 million initiative of the State Government, jointly developed by the Department of Creative Industries, Tourism and Sport (CITS) and the Department of Education (DoE), that aims to increase use of public school sporting facilities in Western Australia. Local Governments are currently not eligible for this funding.

COMMENT

WALGA's submission supported increased utilisation of school facilities for community use as a cost effective mechanism for a meeting increasing demand.

The submission made 3 recommendations:

1. That the Local Government sector be included as a key stakeholder in the development and delivery of community use of public school facilities initiatives.
2. That the State Government prioritises the development of policy frameworks and clarifies roles and responsibilities in consultation with all involved parties to address the identified barriers to community use agreements.
3. That the State Government provide Local Governments with additional funding for administrative or maintenance costs associated with community use of public schools.

The submission was endorsed by the People and Place Policy team on 30 September and was endorsed by State Council via Flying Minute on 8 October.

WALGA and representative Local Governments have been invited to attend an inquiry hearing. WALGA will continue to work with the Committee and State Government agencies on this matter.

10.9 FLYING MINUTE – WALGA SUBMISSION TO THE FEDERAL SENATE ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS REFERENCE COMMITTEE INQUIRY INTO THE NATIONAL CULTURAL POLICY

By Rebecca Hicks, Policy Advisor Community

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council note the Submission to the Federal Senate Environment and Communications Reference Committee Inquiry into the National Cultural Policy, as endorsed by State Council via Flying Minute.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- In July 2025, the Senate agreed that the National Cultural Policy Inquiry be re-adopted in the 48th Parliament.
- The Consultation period closed on 3 October, however WALGA secured an extension until 14 October.
- ALGA is also provided a submission to the inquiry which the WALGA submission referenced.
- WALGA's submission highlighted the important role of the Western Australian Local Government in fostering the creative industries sector.
- WALGA's submission made 3 recommendations:
 - Future Revive implementation should be developed in consultation with the Local Government sector to identify and prioritise locally based need.
 - The Australian Government provide sustainable funding streams for Local Governments to build and maintain arts and cultural infrastructure to meet community accessibility requirements.
 - That the Australian Government provide \$500 million per annum for community infrastructure through a national formula based, targeted Local Government funding program.
- The submission was endorsed by the People and Place Policy Team on 30 September and was endorsed by State Council via Flying Minute on 8 October.

ATTACHMENT

- [Flying Minute: Submission to the Federal Senate Environment and Communications Reference Committee Inquiry into the National Cultural Policy](#)

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The submission aligns to WALGA [Advocacy Position 3.7 Community Infrastructure](#):

Local Governments own, lease, and maintain vital community infrastructure across Western Australia that delivers essential benefits to local communities. Local Governments face significant funding pressures to ensure this infrastructure is effectively planned, developed, maintained, and enhanced to meet evolving community needs and population growth.

1. *WALGA calls on the Australian Government to provide \$500 million per annum for community infrastructure through a national formula based, targeted Local Government funding program.*
2. *WALGA calls on the State Government to:*

- a. *Provide \$60 million per annum for the Community Sporting and Recreation Facilities Fund, separate to the PlayOn WA 2030 Funding commitments.*
- b. *Provide \$60 million per annum for community arts and cultural infrastructure,*
- c. *Provide funding for retrofitting accessible design features to community infrastructure,*
- d. *Align all community infrastructure funding with existing State co-contribution of at least two-thirds.*

BACKGROUND

The Australian Government's 2023 [National Cultural Policy](#) (Revive) provides a five-year plan to revive the arts in Australia. Revive sets out the Australian Government's ambition to "change the trajectory of the creative sector, to deliver new momentum." Revive contains 85 actions structured around five interconnected pillars:

1. First Nations first
2. A place for every story
3. Centrality of the artist
4. Strong cultural infrastructure
5. Engaging the audience

In July 2025, the Senate agreed that the National Cultural Policy Inquiry be re-adopted in the 48th Parliament for inquiry and report. The terms of reference for the Inquiry are broad: To inquire into: a. the National Cultural Policy released on 30 January 2023; and b. any other related matters.

Local Governments play a key role in supporting place-based arts and cultural practices, including a significant level of financial investment. The role on Local Governments is not well represented in Revive.

The Australian Government published [progress on the implementation of Revive](#) in September 2025.

COMMENT

WALGA's submission focussed on the gaps in implementation of Revive actions, with an emphasis on the need for increased investment in cultural infrastructure, consistent with the revised Community Infrastructure Advocacy Position endorsed by State Council in September 2025.

WALGA's submission highlighted the important role WA Local Governments have as providers and operators of cultural infrastructure and the wider benefits these facilities provide for community cohesion and wellbeing. Reference was also made to the sectors local level expertise and relationships that can support the implementation of Revive and wider Australian Government priorities on regional prosperity and economic growth.

The submission made 3 recommendations:

1. Future Revive implementation should be developed in consultation with the Local Government sector to identify and prioritise locally based need.
2. The Australian Government provide sustainable funding streams for Local Governments to build and maintain arts and cultural infrastructure to meet community accessibility requirements.

3. That the Australian Government provide \$500 million per annum for community infrastructure through a national formula based, targeted Local Government funding program.

The submission was endorsed by the People and Place Policy Team on 30 September and was endorsed by State Council via Flying Minute on 8 October.

11 ORGANISATION REPORTS

11.1 KEY ACTIVITY REPORTS

11.1.1 REPORT ON KEY ACTIVITIES, ADVOCACY PORTFOLIO

By Rachel Horton, Executive Manager Advocacy

FOR NOTING

The Advocacy Portfolio comprises the following work units:

- *Association Governance*
- *Marketing*
- *Communications*
- *Media*
- *Events*

The following outlines the activities of the Advocacy Portfolio since the September 2025 State Council meeting.

1. ASSOCIATION GOVERNANCE

2025 Annual General Meeting

The WALGA Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held on 23 September as part of the 2025 Local Government Convention.

220 Voting Delegates representing 124 Member Local Governments participated in the AGM.

Five Member motions were considered, with four being supported by Members as follows:

- Provision of Medical Services in Remote and Very Remote Local Governments
- Homelessness – Short-term Accommodation Solutions
- Rating Exemption Advocacy Position
- Rateability of Miscellaneous Licenses

In accordance with the Constitution, these Member motions will be considered by State Council at [item 8.1](#) of the Agenda.

2. MARKETING

Local Government Election Campaign

WALGA worked with the Department of Local Government Industry Regulation and Safety to deliver a campaign to both increase the diversity of nominations and voter participation.

The campaign ended on 18 October, so a full end of campaign report will be compiled and shared in the next Key Activity Report.

Training Campaigns

The Diploma of Local Government - Elected Member campaign is currently live driving a 165% increase in website traffic and generating 21 direct enquiries to date.

Throughout this period the Cert III in Local Government and 2025 Jacqui Dodd Diploma Scholarship were also completed. The Cert III campaign generated significant interest with an engagement of 70%, resulting in 17 enquiries and 5 enrolments. The Scholarship also generated above average engagement with an engagement rate of 57% and 14 applications.

Marketing also designed materials, signage and handouts for cross-promotion of training courses at WALGA sector events.

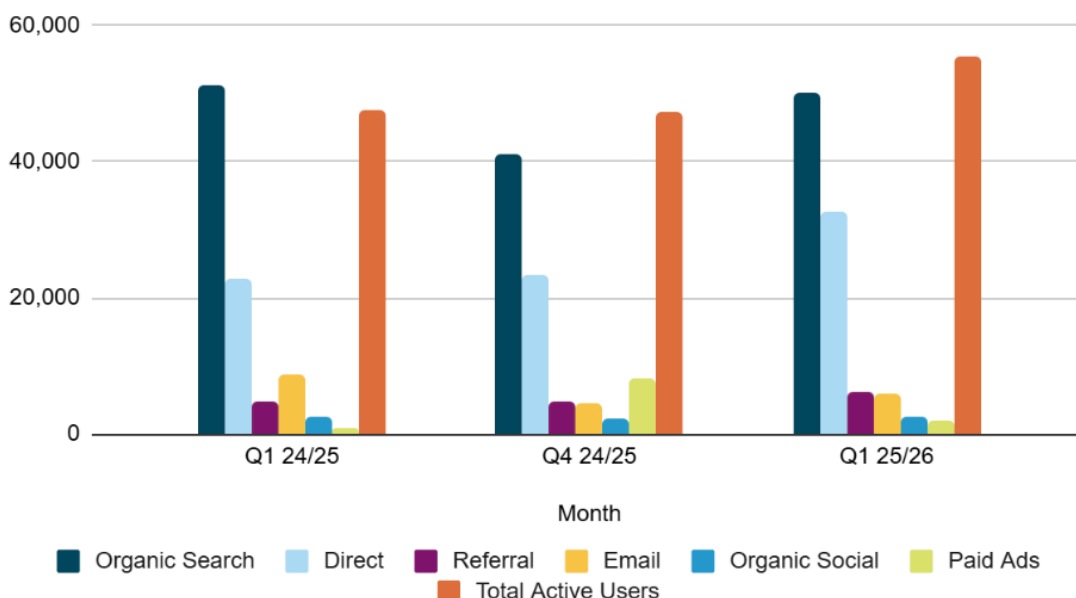
Showcase in Pixels

A new approach to marketing the 2025 Showcase in Pixels campaign has been a great success with a 946% increase in submissions compared to 2024 (24 to 251). New initiatives included marketing to the Department of Education, liaison with Local Governments around the submission process and promoting previous winners on social media.

Website

Q1 2025/26 recorded 99,295 sessions and 55,272 active users - a 12% year-on-year increase in sessions, with a 16% uplift from Q4 2024/25. Traffic was boosted by referrals, paid campaigns, and organic event campaigns. The most notable increase to web pages has been to Events, Waste, the Preferred Supplier Program and Local Government Directory.

Quarterly Web Traffic by Source



Members Portal

The scope of requirements is complete, so a business case will now be formed before releasing an RFQ.

3. COMMUNICATIONS

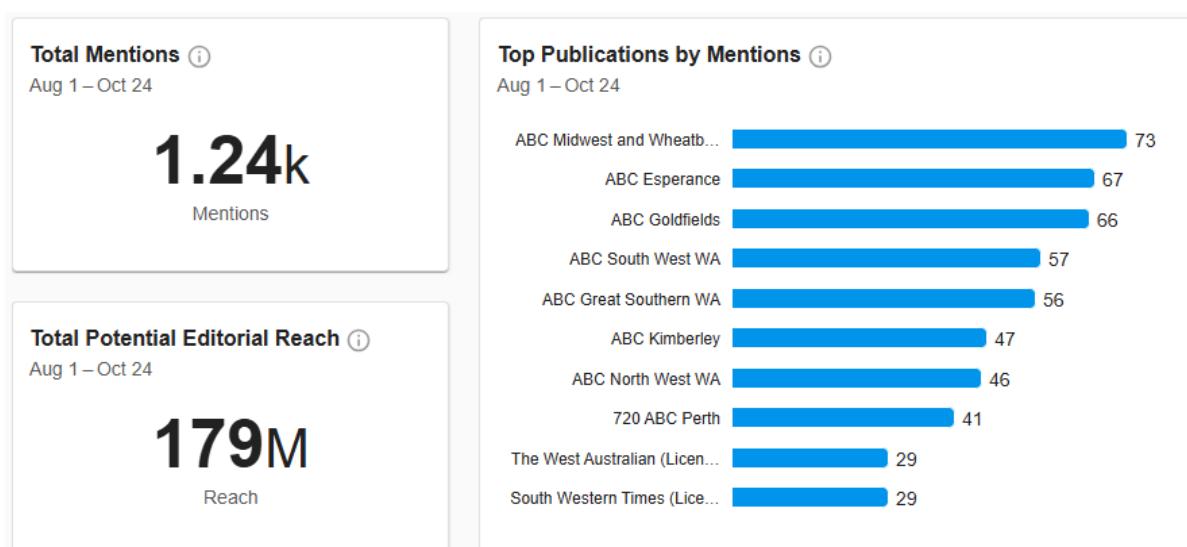
Multiple internal and external communications were prepared throughout the reporting period between Friday, 1 August – Friday, 24 October (85 days) including:

- LG Direct weekly newsletters distributed to more than 2,000 Elected Members and senior staff
- Development of WALGA's Western Councillor Magazine
- WALGA's September Quarterly Economic Briefing

4. MEDIA

There were 1,242 mentions of WALGA and President Karen Chappel between Friday, 1 August – Friday, 24 October (85 days). This is an increase of 84% from 676 in the previous reporting period. Noting that the reporting period is 20 days longer, the average mentions is more relevant which increased from 9 a day to 14.

The majority of mentions were from ABC Midwest and Wheatbelt, ABC Esperance and ABC Goldfields, due to the State Council meeting in Norseman and Miscellaneous Licenses.



Earned Media:

WALGA has received 72 requests for comment across print, radio, television and online media, in comparison to 43 requests in the last reporting period.

Topic:

- Local Government Elections x 23 queries
- Local Government Reform x 7 queries
- Planning and Building x 6 queries
- Trees and biosecurity x 5 queries
- Local Government Convention x 5 queries
- Miscellaneous Licenses x 4 queries
- Other: x 22 queries

Top Advocacy mainstream media mentions by reach:

- Telecommunications – 15.1m
- Cat Act reforms – 14.1m
- Miscellaneous Licenses – 14.1m

Media Releases:

WALGA released ten proactive media statements in the reporting period, regarding matters including Emergency Management, Local Government Elections and Miscellaneous Licenses.

- WALGA condemns State Government move to legislate against Supreme Court decision – Saturday, 2 August 2025
- WALGA welcomes commitment from State Government for Regional Road Safety Program – Thursday, 14 August 2025
- WALGA Executive Director Tony Brown appointed inaugural Local Government Inspector – Wednesday, 20 August 2025
- WALGA calls on community members to nominate in upcoming 2025 Local Government Elections – Saturday, 23 August 2025
- WALGA shines light on National Biosecurity Week for 2025 – Monday, 25 August 2025
- A welcome change: WALGA supports move to include wine and spirit bottles in Containers for Change – Wednesday, 10 September 2025
- WALGA welcomes State Government boost for Community Emergency Services Managers – Wednesday, 17 September 2025
- Legacy in Action: WALGA's 2025 Local Government Convention looks beyond election cycles – Tuesday, 30 September 2025
- WALGA climate Ready Street Tree trial project underway – Tuesday, 7 October 2025
- WALGA slams State Government's legislation to undermine Supreme Court – Thursday, 23 October 2025

Social Media:

The below statistics cover the period between Friday, 1 August – Friday, 24 October (85 days) compared to Wednesday, 28 May – Thursday, 31 July 2025 (65 days).

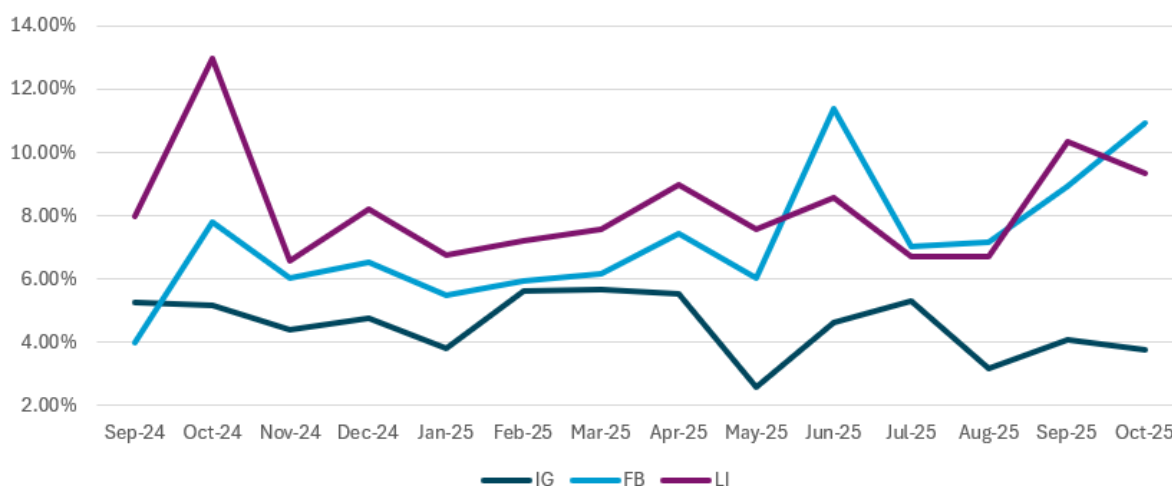
Social media has performed well through this reporting period but it's important to note that a paid campaign ran on Facebook from 27 August – 18 October 2025 which increased performance dramatically, along with the annual Local Government Convention which generates significant social media engagement.

LinkedIn continues to perform strongly with a 37% increase in post reactions (2,480 compared to 1,729 in the previous reporting period) and an 9% post engagement rate (an increase of 22%).

Influenced by the paid campaign being live, the Facebook post reach increased by 50% and post impressions by 60%.

Instagram remains a less engaged channel with a 28% decrease in reach and 4% decrease in engagement. WALGA posts less on Instagram as 'Calls to Action' can't be added. Analysis shows that WALGA's Instagram followers respond more to visual storytelling, so this will be increased during the next reporting period.

Social Media Engagement %



5. EVENTS

WALGA 2025 Local Government Convention

The 2025 WALGA Local Government Convention was attended by over 500 delegates. This year's theme, 'Lean into Legacy', delved into how the decisions we make today form the building blocks for tomorrow.

Local Governments had the chance to engage directly with State Government Department and Agency Directors General as well as Chief Executive Officers on topics impacting their Local Government as part of the Heads of Agency session.

Delegates also heard from State and Federal representatives with addresses from Federal Assistant Minister for Climate Change and Energy and Federal Member for Fremantle Josh Wilson MP and State Leader of the Opposition Basil Zempilas.

WALGA's State of Play was facilitated by State Political Editor of The West Australian Jessica Page, where former Local Government representatives Rhys Williams MLA, the Honourable Lauren Cayoun MLC, David Bolt MLA and Kirrilee Warr MLA spoke about their journeys and about current issues.

Other sessions included a Mayors and Presidents forum, and keynote presentations from futurist Dr Richard Hames and former Australian of the year and AFL great Adam Goodes.

Breakout sessions focussed on Electrification and Economic Development, along with an expert panel session on cooperation and Shared Services between Local Governments.

WALGA's Annual General Meeting was also held, with each Member Local Government represented by two Voting Delegates. In addition to endorsing WALGA's 2024-25 Annual Report, a number of key motions were debated and passed. (Please see the Governance section.)

Social events included the Welcome Drinks and a Cocktail Gala were both well attended with 412 and 364 guests respectively. The traditional Icons Breakfast was well received, with guest speaker Glenn McGrath inspiring the audience with his personal story and view on leaving a legacy.

Both the Exhibition and Sponsorship opportunities were fully utilised with more than 80 exhibitors taking part in the Convention Exhibition.

A survey has been issued to attendees. Feedback will be collated and utilised to inform the planning of the 2026 Convention.

Transport and Roads Forum – August 2025

The Transport and Roads Forum was attended by over 200 delegates and included an opening address by Hon Jessica Stojkovski MLA, Minister for Child Protection; Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence; Minister Assisting the Minister for Transport; Peel.

The program received positive feedback, particularly the Active Transport and Road Safety sessions. There was strong interest and discussion generated on strategic and innovative approaches to road asset management and transport planning following the Keynote Address on Technology and Data Insights to support decision-making.

Future events

Planning is now underway for final events of 2025 including:

- New Elected Member Seminar
- New State Councillor welcome
- Showcase in Pixels
- WALGA Wrap.

11.1.2 REPORT ON KEY ACTIVITIES, INFRASTRUCTURE PORTFOLIO

By Ian Duncan, Executive Manager Infrastructure

FOR NOTING

The Infrastructure Portfolio comprises the following work units:

- *Roads*
- *Road Funding*
- *Transport*
- *Asset Management*
- *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 (LGTRRIP)

An investigation into road data collection technologies for Local Governments in WA was recently published on the [LGTRRIP website](#). The development of a road safety rating tool for intersections is progressing.

Road Rail Interface Agreements

The model *pro forma* Interface Agreement template between Local Governments and Arc Infrastructure has been disseminated by Arc Infrastructure to Local Governments in the South West, Goldfields, and Great Southern regions. Agreements will be sent to Local Governments in the Mid West and Wheatbelt regions in due course. A memorandum outlining what has changed between the old and new agreements, the main issues of contention, their resolution, and other key updates was also provided to all Local Governments hosting Arc Infrastructure operated rail in July 2025.

Rail Interface Agreements have been required since 2010 with the details now set out under the *Rail Safety National Law (WA) 2024*.

2. ROAD FUNDING

State Road Funds to Local Government Advisory Committee (SAC)

WALGA and Main Roads have been progressing activities to implement resolutions made by the SAC at the September meeting. These include efforts to reduce funding expected to be carried forward at the end of 2025/26 by calling for additional shovel ready projects in regional locations and additional rehabilitation projects in the Metropolitan region.

SAC have also requested that Main Roads and WALGA draft amendments to the SRFLG Procedures to clarify methodologies for the allocation of road project grant funding.

Multi-Criteria Assessment (MCA) Model Revisions

The WALGA Infrastructure Team continues to work with the Regional Road Groups to better align the MCA models used by Regional Road Groups to prioritise projects for Road Project

Grant funding with the Agreement. 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. All the Regional Road Groups have commenced the MCA revision process, with the process in the Gascoyne, Great Southern, and South-West region now complete. Significant progress has been made in each of the other regions.

3. TRANSPORT

Active Transport and Micromobility-Discussion Paper

The paper is now published on the WALGA website. The paper provides an overview of the current situation for Active Transport in Western Australia, including existing infrastructure, planning frameworks, and local government initiatives. It also outlines key challenges and opportunities identified through consultation with Local Governments across the State.

The Discussion Paper aims to inform ongoing policy development, encourage collaboration, and support the creation of safer, more connected, and more sustainable transport networks across Western Australia. [Read the discussion paper here.](#)

Active Transport and Micromobility Advocacy Plan

The Active Transport advocacy positions were endorsed by State Council in September. These positions were developed through a process that began with a draft discussion paper, supported by consultations and a stakeholder workshop involving Local Governments and State agencies. You can view these positions here: [Advocacy Positions Manual](#).

Work has commenced on an Active Transport Advocacy Plan to guide efforts to achieve the changes identified.

4. ASSET MANAGEMENT

Road Assets and Expenditure Report Project

Procurement to appoint a qualified contractor to undertake the works associated with improving the data collection, interpretation and presentation of information concerning Local Government road assets and expenditure closed on 17 October. Work is now underway to evaluate the proposals and award the tender. The study detailing the current processes used to develop the Road Asset and Expenditure Report and a future state will be used as a basis for completing this work. This phase will include the development of a database, reporting interface, and dashboard.

Review of the WALGA Road Visual Condition Assessment Manual

The WALGA Road Visual Condition Manual was published in 2016. Significant technology advances and stakeholder feedback have triggered the need for a review and update. Consultants, CivilSE, have been appointed to undertake the review, which will include comprehensive consultation with users, and preparing a second edition. Work has progressed on the report and WALGA is currently undertaking a review of the updated document. This manual provides important support to Local Government road managers and provides the framework for being able to understand the condition of the road network statewide.

5. UTILITIES

Western Power

The Association continues to focus on engaging with the senior management and Distribution Connection Services teams at Western Power, seeking reduced delivery times for projects that require work to be undertaken by the electricity distributor. Long wait times for designs, quotes and construction are delaying a wide range of road projects and other developments.

A Local Government Officers Forum was strongly supported and provided information about ways to use the Western Power portal to monitor projects and communicate with Western Power. A commitment was made to re-introduce the option for Local Governments to directly engage consultants and contractors to do a trial of thirty streetlighting projects from September, with the view to potentially expanding this if successful. This option has since seen one Local Government program a project with two further Local Governments investigating the feasibility of taking up the option.

Western Power have engaged additional consultant and contractor resources to improve turnaround times. However, no targets for particular types of work were agreed.

Streetlighting

The Association has been advised that engagement with Local Governments regarding the next tranche of the Proactive Streetlight Replacement Program and revision of the Streetlight Asset Management Plan cannot proceed until a public announcement of the program by the Minister for Energy. This timing is unknown. The pilot program in three Local Government areas is continuing with positive feedback from Local Governments.

Work between the Association, Western Power, and external consultants is under discussion, with the goal of investigating ways of supporting Local Government specify luminaire types for the replacement program.

Telecommunications

The Commonwealth Government announced \$1.19 million in grant funding for 28 Telstra and 4 Optus projects in WA to strengthen the mobile telecommunications network, particularly to increase resilience during power outages. Most projects are battery capacity upgrades and installation of Automatic Transfer Units (ATUs) to enable mobile generators to be used to provide an independent power supply. This program includes five projects in peri-urban areas that are now included in scope. WALGA has advocated for funding to be provided to strengthen telecommunications networks in peri-urban areas.

Following engagement with Telstra, the State Agencies responsible for the ATU project have decided to implement a trial model for the 2025-26 high threat season with DFES responsible for the coordination and connection of portable generators to ATUs during power outages associated with an emergency.

DFES has hired generators, which will be stored by the Shires of Merredin, Narrogin, and Northam during the high-threat period. DFES will coordinate the credentialing and deployment of personnel to deploy and connect the generators. DFES will be responsible for liaising with Telstra to manage operational aspects of the project.

6. ROAD SAFETY

2025 Australasian Road Safety Conference

Western Australia's hosted more than 600 delegates from across the globe at the 2025 Australasian Road Safety Conference in October. WALGA's expertise through the RoadWise program contributed to the impact of this event including by: participating in the organising committees, planning and delivering a conference workshop especially for Local Governments, and showcasing Local Government contributions to road safety program through an exhibition booth and the presentation of two papers. [Home - ARSC 2025 Conference | Road Safety Excellence - Australasia](#)

Regulatory Impact Analysis to reduce the open road default speed limit

WALGA provided a submission to the National Office of Road Safety in response to the Consultation Regulatory Impact Analysis to reduce the open road default speed limit. This submission is based on advocacy positions endorsed by State Council in August 2022 and May 2023.

Road Safety Council

The Road Safety Council Communiques can viewed at [Road Safety Council Meeting Communiques](#)

11.1.3 REPORT ON KEY ACTIVITIES, MEMBER SERVICES PORTFOLIO

By Kirsty Martin, Executive Director Member Services

FOR NOTING

The Member Services Portfolio comprises the following work units:

- *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 September 2025 State Council meeting.

1. COMMERCIAL

ARENA/EV Projects

The ARENA project continues to progress through a reporting and knowledge-sharing phase. ARENA have provided an extension of time for some more complex final reporting deliverables, with the project remaining on track for completion in the current financial year.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Project

The AI Readiness Assessment project has now been completed. WALGA is currently considering the outcome of the AI Readiness Assessment report, briefing key stakeholders on the findings, and exploring potential collaboration and co-funding opportunities. Further communications to the sector are in development.

2. EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

WALGA ER continues to represent the sector in applications in the WA Industrial Relations Commission (WAIRC) including:

Applications CICS 5, 8 and 9 of 2023 - Union demarcation dispute

Application IAC 2 of 2025 - Industrial Appeal Court appeal

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).

The matter had 20 hearing days in July and October 2024. WASU, LGRCEU and WALGA completed their cases with the exception of one WALGA witness (unavailable during that time).

During the hearing in October 2024 the CFMEUW made a number of applications:

- The first application was to dismiss the matter, which the Commission rejected and dismissed.

- The second application was for discovery of documents from WALGA and the WASU, which the Commission ordered and WALGA and WASU complied with. WALGA and WASU have claimed privilege over these documents (Privilege Claim).
- A further application for discovery of documents from WALGA, WASU and the LGRCEU. In response the WASU, LGRCEU and WALGA applied to dismiss the CFMEUW's second application for production of documents. This was dismissed by the CICS on 26 March 2025 (Dismissal Decision).

The CFMEUW lodged an appeal to the Industrial Appeal Court (IAC) against the Dismissal Decision (IAC 2/2025).

The Privilege Claim was heard by the CICS as an interlocutory matter on 28 May 2025. The CICS issued a decision on 11 July 2025, upholding the claims of legal professional privilege and accordingly no orders for production of these documents will occur.

Following the Privilege decision the CFMEUW withdrew its appeal to the Industrial Appeal Court against the CICS decision to dismiss the CFMEUW's Second application for production of documents (IAC 2/2025).

The substantive matter was listed for a directions hearing on Thursday 4 September 2025. During the directions hearing the CFMEUW advised that it would seek to submit further evidence and it wished to recall two WALGA witnesses. The WALGA, WASU and LGRCEU strongly opposed the course of action proposed by the CFMEUW.

Directions issued by the CICS made it clear that any proposal to call new evidence would require an application by a party and would need to address issues of delay, material prejudice, probative value and the s. 26 (1)(a) of the IR Act considerations of equity and good conscience.

An application was made by CFMEUW on 26 September 2025 to include a new witness outline by Nathan Fisher (CFMEUW Industrial Organiser) The CICS heard the matter on Monday 6 October and issued orders on 7 October 2025 that restrict the CFMEUW from adducing further evidence. The CFMEUW is restricted to responding orally to evidence already led in the proceedings or topics covered by Mr Fisher's witness outline dated 10 May 2024.

The substantive matter has recommenced for a further 21 hearing days from 20 October 2025 to 19 November 2025.

The various applications for production of documents by the CFMEUW and to dismiss the matter have caused significant delays and costs to the substantive matter.

3. GOVERNANCE AND PROCUREMENT

Local Government Elections

WALGA has responded to a very high volume of enquiries throughout the electoral period, assisting Local Governments with caretaker requirements, enrolment and candidate nomination eligibility, the electoral process and swearing in of Council Members. Recently, the team has been providing advice regarding elections by Council of Mayors, Shire Presidents and Deputies, as well as the appointment of committee members and Presiding Members.

Candidate briefings:

On Monday, 18 August 2025, WALGA, together with LGIRS and the WA Electoral Commission, hosted a Statewide Elections Candidate Information Webinar with over 300 attendees. In addition, WALGA presented at in person candidate briefings at the invitation of a further 18 Local Governments.

Public Notice Program:

WALGA again coordinated the Public Notices Program for the 2025 Local Government Elections, assisting 10 Class 3 and 4 Local Governments to comply with public notice requirements when conducting their own elections.

Local Government Act Reform

WALGA continues to support Local Governments through the ongoing Local Government Act reform process. On 22 August 2025, following sector consultation and endorsement by State Council, WALGA provided a sector submission to the LGIRS consultation on Communications Agreements.

Audit, Risk and Improvement Committees

WALGA has established a pool of independent persons whom Local Governments may consider for appointment to their Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee. Details of available pool members have been provided to 35 Local Governments. In addition, WALGA has provided extensive advice to Local Government regarding the requirements and the delayed commencement of regulations.

Procurement Network Forum

Over 80 Local Governments registered for the all-day WALGA flagship PNF held at the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre as part of the WALGA Convention. Its theme was *Managing Procurement Risk in an Uncertain World*. Attendance was available in person and via livestream. Topics included the Preferred Supplier Program, When Procurement Goes Wrong (DLA Piper), Understanding Risk in Contract Management (Moray & Agnew), Using Contractual Approaches to Manage Procurement Risk (Civic Legal), and Procurement Audit Risks (OAG).

4. TRAINING

The Training Team is busy setting up the 2026 short course schedule, covering over 50 Officer and Elected Member training options throughout the year. Being an election year, a specific focus is on Council Member Essentials (CME) Training.

We continue to see high demand for On-Site Training requests across the regions, for both Officer and Elected Member Training. Local Governments collaborating with their neighbour organisations to share the cost of training.

Our new intake for the Diploma of Local Government - Elected Member starts on 13 November with a one-day foundation training workshop to kickstart the program with the aim to refresh knowledge and skills from the previously completed CME training and to get the students off to a good start with lots of support, engagement and networking opportunities.

At the 2025 WALGA Convention, we celebrated the dedication and hard work of 10 Elected Members in a festive graduation ceremony, where WALGA President Cr Karen Chappel AM JP awarded the Diploma Local Government - Elected Member to our graduates. In addition,

and for the first time, 3 Councillors completed the Elected Member Skill Set. The content builds on the Council Member Essentials training, deepening understanding and application of three Units of Competency.

The Diploma of Local Government for Officers has commenced in July, and we are receiving enrolments already for 2026.

11.1.4 REPORT ON KEY ACTIVITIES, POLICY PORTFOLIO

By Nicole Matthews, Executive Manager Policy

FOR NOTING

The Policy Portfolio comprises the following work units:

- *Economics*
- *Environment and Waste*
- *Planning and Building*
- *Emergency Management*
- *Community*

The following outlines the activities of the Policy Portfolio since the September 2025 State Council meeting.

1. ECONOMICS

Economic Briefing

WALGA has released the September quarter Economic Briefing and Local Government Cost Index (LGCI).

The Briefing provides Local Governments with a snapshot of the current economic climate and economic conditions impacting the sector, as well as unique data and insights tailored for Local Governments in WA.

The Western Australian economy is growing faster than the national average, driven increasingly by the private sector as public sector investment stabilises at a high level. Population growth remains strong, however housing supply is struggling to meet demand, leading to rising prices and rents. Inflation has returned to the Reserve Bank of Australia's target range, supported by recent interest rate cuts, though inflation in WA remains slightly higher due to the strong domestic economy.

The labour market is gradually easing with steady employment growth and sustained wage increases, particularly in the public sector. Local government costs have risen, mainly due to public sector wage growth and construction costs, with ongoing risks from global trade tensions.

Digital Industries Webinar

In October, WALGA hosted digital industries webinar with the Department of Energy and Economic Diversification (DEED). The focus was on the WA Government's Digital Industries Acceleration Strategy and how Local Governments can support their business community to be digitally secure, enabled and empowered. Speakers were from the Department of Energy and Economic Diversification, CyberWest Hub, and the Small Business Development Corporation. This webinar was recorded and is available on the WALGA website.

Housing, Workforce and Liveability Webinars

In September, WALGA and .id partnered to provide a data-driven and interactive webinar series, exploring the changing dynamics across regional and metropolitan Western Australia. These webinars addressed challenges that have emerged across housing,

workforce capacity, and liveability. Two webinars were delivered, one focussed on the metropolitan area, and one on the regions. Both are available to watch on the WALGA website.

2. ENVIRONMENT AND WASTE

Cat Containment

Following a range of advocacy from Local Government, WALGA and other stakeholders, the Hon. Hannah Beazley MLA, Minister for Local Government; Disability Services; Volunteering; Youth; Gascoyne, [announced](#) on 17 September that the Government would be progressing amendments to Cat Act to enable Local Governments to make and enforce local laws regarding cat containment. The Minister indicated that Amendment Bill would be introduced in 2026.

The effective implementation of these changes will require a collaborative, and resourced, approach across Local Governments and other key stakeholders. WALGA is engaging with the sector and other relevant groups on this matter.

H5 Bird Flu

There has been a [suspected detection](#) of H5 Bird Flu on Heard Island by the Australian Antarctic Program. Noting that Heard Island is over 4000 km south west of Perth and a confirmed detection would not substantially increase the risk to Australia.

WALGA continues to engage with the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) and other agencies on the development of the WA Response Plan for H5 Bird Flu and resources for Local Government to assist in preparing for this issue.

Native Vegetation

WALGA hosted four Native Vegetation Clearing Regulations Webinars during September and October, with over 250 Local Government representatives attending these events. This is part of WALGA's ongoing capacity building activities and will provide a resource for the sector to assist in navigating these regulations.

3. PLANNING AND BUILDING

Planning Showcase

The fifth annual WALGA Planning Showcase was held alongside the 2025 WALGA State Convention on 22 September 2025. Over 240 delegates representing 41 Local Governments from across the State were addressed by the Hon. John Carey BA MLA, who highlighted the importance of Local Government planning to WA and case studies from Local Governments from around the State.

Parliamentary Inquiry into Land Development and Planning in Western Australia

A Select Committee into WA Land Development and Planning has been established to inquire into matters relating to land planning, transactions and development in Western Australia. WALGA's submission, which has been informed by planning advocacy positions, specifically 6.4 State Development Applications and Decision Making (previously Development Assessment Panel advocacy position), relevant data collection projects and sector feedback will be considered by State Council via Flying Minute. The submission emphasises the critical role of Local Government plays in the planning system, and highlights concerns over the erosion of Local Government decision making powers by

bodies such as Development Assessment Panels (DAPs), the state significant development pathways and the transparency and accountability of State decision-making.

Planning and Building Performance Monitoring Project 2025

WALGA has commenced the ninth iteration of the Local Government Performance Monitoring Project. 56 Local Governments are participating this year, including 29 of the 30 metropolitan Local Governments, surrounding peri-urban Local Governments, and all of the large regional centres. The findings of the Project will be incorporated into WALGA online interactive [Performance Monitoring Dashboard](#).

NCC roofed outdoor areas - Consultation Response

WALGA has [provided feedback](#) to the Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety (LGIRS) on a proposed Western Australian State addition to the National Construction Code (NCC) 2025, specifically introducing Deemed-to-Satisfy (DtS) provisions for fire separation of roofed outdoor areas such as patios. WALGA supports the proposal, given the cited long-standing inconsistencies in how setback exemptions—particularly those applied to patios—have been interpreted across jurisdictions. The response emphasised the need for a consistent, sector-wide approach to improve clarity and reduce regulatory ambiguity. The response included recommendations to refine definitions, address concerns around insulated panels, allowable encroachments, and non-combustible fencing requirements, aiming to ensure the provisions are practical, equitable, and aligned with community expectations.

Bushfire Prone Area Mapping - Consultation Response

WALGA provided a [consultation response](#) to the Department of Fire and Emergency Services annual review of the [Map of Bush Fire Prone Areas](#). The response focused on the need to continue to review the Mapping Standard for Bush Fire Prone Areas, with a need to consider expanding the current exemption for small areas of urban bushland in the Central Perth Planning Sub-Region to adjoining areas of outer Perth.

4. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Emergency Management Representation

WALGA CEO, Nick Sloan, represented the Sector at the State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC) Meeting on 9 October. SEMC communiques are available [here](#). WALGA was also represented at the Interagency Bushfire Operations Committee (IBOC) on 24 September, the Bushfire Operations Committee (BOC) on 20 October and the State Bushfire Advisory Committee (SBAC) meeting on 8 July, and the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) Higher Risk Season Summit on 16 – 17 September.

2025 WALGA Local Government Emergency Management Survey

Conducted every two years, the 2025 Local Government Emergency Management Survey is invaluable in identifying sector priorities, pressure points, and emerging issues to inform our policy development and advocacy. All Local Governments are strongly encouraged to complete the Survey via the unique link that has been provided to each Local Government CEO. All Mayors and Presidents have also been made aware of the Survey. The Survey is being conducted in partnership with the Edith Cowan University Survey Research Centre, which brings extensive expertise in survey design, delivery, and analysis. The 2025 survey closes on Friday, 28 November 2025.

Statutory Review of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2020*

WorkSafe is inviting submissions on the [Statutory Review of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2020*](#) (WHS Act). This review is critically important to the Local Government sector, particularly in light of the application of the WHS Act to volunteers and Council Members. Since the introduction of the WHS Act, Local Governments have become Persons Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBU) for approximately 18,000 Bush Fire Brigade volunteers across Western Australia. This presents significant challenges, given the inherently high-risk nature of the role and the complexities involved in meeting WHS obligations effectively. In addition, complexities have arisen for Local Governments in understanding the rights and responsibilities of Council Members as 'other persons' under the WHS Act.

WALGA has been granted an extension for its submission until 12 December 2025. The draft submission will be provided to State Council for consideration by Flying Minute. All Local Governments have been requested to provide their feedback to WALGA via em@walga.asu.au (cc. governance@walga.asn.au) by Monday 17 November, and to consider providing feedback directly to WorkSafe by 28 November 2025. Further information, including the discussion paper and submission guidelines, is available [here](#).

Consolidated Emergency Services Legislation Update

DFES has provided the following update on the Consolidated Emergency Services Legislation:

- Work on the development of an Emergency Services Exposure Draft Bill is ongoing.
- A dedicated team of six officers from the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) are reviewing and refining the legislative proposal to consolidate the arrangements within the existing *Bush Fires Act 1954*, *Fire Brigades Act 1942* and the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1998*.
- The drafting process is legally technical, time-intensive and the practical considerations are complex. DFES is investing time and effort to produce new legislation that is fit-for-purpose for the many stakeholders involved in emergency management.
- Once finalised, the Exposure Draft Bill will be released for public comment. Until then, targeted consultation may be undertaken by DFES on discrete matters.

State Hazard Plan – HAZMAT Annex B Space Re-entry Debris (SPRED)

Space Re-Entry Debris (SPRED) is a prescribed hazard in WA covered under the State Hazard Plan – HAZMAT Annex B. Also known as orbital debris or space junk, SPRED includes defunct satellites, spent rocket stages, and fragments from collisions or erosion. Annex B is currently under review, and Local Governments are invited to provide feedback by Friday, 2 January 2026. Feedback can be provided directly through the State's [Engage WA Emergency Management site](#), and/or share your feedback via em@walga.asn.au.

State Hazard Plan – Fire

WALGA facilitated a comprehensive engagement with Local Governments and provided a detailed submission to inform the revised SHP-Fire, which is now published on the SEMC website. Updates include clearer role definitions and minimum training standards for fire ground personnel. While WALGA's submission influenced several aspects of the final document, some areas—like funding reform and legislative change—remain unresolved. WALGA continues to advocate for improved support and communication, particularly around training standards for Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades.

- The [HMA recommended Minimum Training Standards](#)
- The revised [State Hazard - Plan Fire](#)

High Threat Season

WALGA Pre-Season Webinar

On 6 November 2025, WALGA hosted a Pre-Season Webinar designed to equip Local Government CEOs, Elected Members, and Emergency Management staff with critical insights and connections needed ahead of the upcoming High Threat Period. Topics discussed included:

- Latest Seasonal Outlook from the Bureau of Meteorology
- Updated guidance on protecting Aboriginal Cultural Heritage during bushfire response from Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage, and the Office of Bushfire Risk Management
- Fast Facts & Key Contacts on risk and insurance, recovery and operations, fire management, emergency relief and support.

High Threat Season Letters

To support Local Governments to prepare for the high-threat weather season WALGA President, President Cr Karen Chappell, and WALGA CEO, Nick Sloan, recently wrote to all Mayors, Presidents and CEOs. This correspondence reinforces WALGA's commitment to supporting Local Governments during the high-threat season, highlighting its ongoing situational awareness through the All Hazards Liaison Group and CEO representation on the State Emergency Coordination Group during significant emergencies. It also outlines additional resources and information, such as State Recovery arrangements, Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA), State Coordination contacts.

CEO Bush Fire Brigades Update

As an outcome from WALGA's engagement with DFES through CEO Bushfire Roundtables in 2024 and 2025, DFES has sent all Local Government CEOs that manage Bush Fire Brigades a Pre-Season Volunteer Report Package, developed to support preparedness for the upcoming bushfire season. This package includes a training report detailing completion of minimum recommended bushfire training by registered bushfire volunteers, a Volunteer Snapshot Report – summarising key information for each brigade in the local government area, a list of updates to DFES Doctrine and additional training information.

Local Emergency Management Arrangements (LEMA) Improvement Pilot

WALGA's LEMA pilot project, launched in February 2025, is progressing with five Local Governments: the Shires of Manjimup, Shark Bay, Chittering, Gingin, and the City of Kwinana. The pilot is testing and refining LEMA templates and resources while also gathering input to inform future guidance and tools. DFES is also developing an online Statement of Policy, a LEMA Development Framework, and has trialled a new methodology for local emergency risk profiling with each of the pilot Local Governments.

5. COMMUNITY

Rural and Remote Healthcare Advocacy

Following State Council's endorsement of the Rural and Remote Healthcare Services advocacy position at the September meeting, a survey has been completed to provide 2024-25 data on sector support for General Practice (GP) services amongst regional Local Governments. 74 responses (69%) from regional Local Governments were received. Key findings include:

- over half of respondents (56%) are supporting GP services
- in FY 2024-25, Local Governments provided over \$9 million (net) reported in support for GP services. A \$3.3 million increase in 3 years.

WALGA has shared key findings with survey participants.

WALGA continues to refine its advocacy ask to focus on long-term solutions to this gap in healthcare service funding. On 27 October 2025 WALGA hosted a rural and remote GP provision workshop with key stakeholders in the regional and health sectors. The session enabled discussion of areas for joint advocacy focused on innovative models of service and funding solutions.

Native Title and Aboriginal Heritage Processes

On 30 September 2025, WALGA met with Mr Glen Kelly, Member of the National Native Title Tribunal (NNTT), who is leading the State Government's Review of Native Title and Aboriginal Heritage Processes. WALGA provided a letter to Mr Kelly following the meeting confirming the issues discussed, to support his report on the Review.

WALGA will follow up separately with the NNTT to explore opportunities to partner on sector capacity building and ensure Local Governments are aware of and can access these services.

The Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage (DPLH) has indicated imminent release of sector guidance on the approval requirements under Regulation 10 of the *Aboriginal Heritage Action 1972*. WALGA has called for the guidance in relation to regular maintenance, capital works and low impact community activities since the amended legislation was introduced in 2023. WALGA will work with DPLH to share the guidance with members.

WALGA has also commenced initial discussions with DPLH's Land Management Team and will explore options to strengthen understanding and collaboration between the State Government, Local Governments and Noongar Regional Corporations in relation to the Noongar Land Estate in early 2026.

Kolbang Yanginy | Looking forward, sharing

Kolbang Yanginy is a collaborative project developed by Reconciliation WA (RWA), WALGA, the Department of the Premier and Cabinet (DPC), Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage (DPLH) and the Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety (DLGIRS). The main output of the project is *Kolbang Yanginy*, an online resource intended to support and strengthen the capacity of Local Governments in relation to reconciliation, Aboriginal community engagement, native title and Aboriginal heritage. The website is due to go live by mid-November, with various events planned over the next six months to familiarise Local Government officers, Zones and Elected Members with the resource.

WALGA Public Libraries Forum:

On 20 November 2025, WALGA facilitated a state-wide Public Libraries Forum, a commitment under the [WA Public Libraries Strategy 2022-2026](#). The annual forum aims to increase WA Public Librarians' capacity to develop community partnerships. The free, half-day event's theme of 'Foundations for Community Partnerships' gave Local Government librarians the skills and networking opportunities to engage with social work students from various Western Australian universities and learnt more about practical community partnerships from the State Library of WA's 2024 Kay Poutsie Scholarship recipient. The Forum was available online for regional and remote Local Governments.

Local Government Community of Practice: Disability Inclusion

ALGA has established a Local Government Community of Practice on disability and inclusion. The work is funded by the Commonwealth Department of Health, Disability and

Ageing and aligns to *Australia's Disability Strategy 2021–2031*. WALGA is an observer in this group, with Local Government Officers from the City of Stirling and City of Greater Geraldton as Western Australian representatives. The Community of Practice will initially convene, under ALGA secretariat support, from October 2025 – June 2026 to provide feedback on an updated *Disability Inclusion Planning – A Guide for Local Government* and a supplementing document highlighting Local Government initiatives and case studies.

11.2 PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The December 2025 [President's Report](#) was made available at the time the Agenda was published.

FOR NOTING

11.3 CEO'S REPORT

The CEO's Report will be circulated to State Councillors with the Revised Agenda (under separate cover).

FOR NOTING

12 ADDITIONAL ZONE RESOLUTIONS

To be advised following Zone meetings.

13 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next ordinary meeting of the WALGA State Council will be held in the Boardroom at WALGA, ONE70, LV3, 170 Railway Parade, West Leederville on Wednesday, 4 March commencing at 4:15pm.

The State Council meeting schedule for 2026 is as follows:

Date	Venue
Wednesday, 4 March	WALGA
Wednesday, 6 May	Central Metropolitan Zone (TBC)
Wednesday, 1 July	WALGA
Thursday-Friday, 3-4 September	Central Country Zone (TBC)
Wednesday, 2 December	WALGA

14 CLOSURE

STATUS REPORT ON STATE COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS

MEETING	RESOLUTION	COMMENT	COMPLETION DATE	OFFICER RESPONSIBLE
5 September 2025 Item 8.1 Rating of Renewable Energy Facilities	That WALGA advocate to the State Government for: 1. Legislative amendments to enable WA Local Governments to rate large-scale renewable energy facilities using current rating mechanisms (differential rating based on UV, differential rating based on GRV, or GRV alone) with certainty; and 2. A commitment to implement a Payment in Lieu of Rates (PiLoR) framework in Western Australia. RESOLUTION 049.4/2025	Correspondence has been sent to the Minister for Local Government and the Minister for Energy. The Advocacy Positions Manual has been updated.	Completed	Kirsty Martin Executive Manager Member Services
5 September 2025 Item 8.2 Rating of Miscellaneous Licenses	That WALGA: 1. Advocate for Local Governments to continue to have the ability to rate miscellaneous licences under the <i>Mining Act 1978</i> ; and 2. Oppose legislative amendments that seek to exempt occupied miscellaneous licence land from rating. 3. Continue to advocate for a broad review to be conducted into the justification and fairness of all rating exemption categories currently prescribed under section 6.26 of the Local Government Act 1995. RESOLUTION 050.4/2025	Correspondence has been sent to the Premier, Minister for Local Government. Opposition parties have been briefed. In addition funding for the broad review of rating exemptions is included in the State Budget submission. The Advocacy Positions Manual has been updated.		Kirsty Martin Executive Manager Member Services
5 September 2025 Item 8.3 Community Infrastructure	That WALGA: 1. Replace Advocacy Position 3.71 Community Infrastructure with the following:	The Advocacy Positions Manual has been updated.		Nicole Matthews Executive Manager Policy

MEETING	RESOLUTION	COMMENT	COMPLETION DATE	OFFICER RESPONSIBLE
and Community Sporting and Recreation Facilities Fund Advocacy Positions	<i>Local Governments own, lease, and maintain vital community infrastructure across Western Australia that delivers essential benefits to local communities. Local Governments face significant funding pressures to ensure this infrastructure is effectively planned, developed, maintained, and enhanced to meet evolving community needs and population growth.</i> 1. <i>WALGA calls on the Australian Government to provide \$500 million per annum for community infrastructure through a national formula based, targeted Local Government funding program.</i> 2. <i>WALGA calls on the State Government to:</i> a. <i>Provide \$60 million per annum for the Community Sporting and Recreation Facilities Fund, separate to the PlayOn WA 2030 Funding commitments.</i> b. <i>Provide \$60 million per annum for community arts and cultural infrastructure,</i> c. <i>Provide funding for retrofitting accessible design features to community infrastructure,</i> d. <i>Align all community infrastructure funding with existing State co-contribution of at least two-thirds.</i> 2. Retire Advocacy Position 3.7.2 Community Sporting and Recreation Facilities Fund. RESOLUTION 052.4/2025			

MEETING	RESOLUTION	COMMENT	COMPLETION DATE	OFFICER RESPONSIBLE
5 September 2025 Item 8.4 Rural and Remote Health Services Advocacy Position	That WALGA replace Advocacy Position 3.2.2 Regional Health Services with the following: <i>The Western Australian and Australian Governments are responsible for ensuring that all West Australians have equitable access to primary healthcare services, regardless of their location. Local Governments should not have to step in to support the provision of these services for their communities.</i> 1. <i>WALGA calls on the Western Australian and Australian Governments to address the systemic failures in the provision of rural and remote primary healthcare services, including through:</i> a. <i>the development and implementation of adequate, appropriate and sustainable funding models</i> b. <i>incentivising rural and remote healthcare workforce recruitment and retention.</i> 2. <i>Local Governments should be reimbursed for costs incurred to support the provision of primary healthcare services until sustainable funding and workforce models are in place.</i> RESOLUTION 053.4/2025	The Advocacy Positions Manual has been updated.		Nicole Matthews Executive Manager Policy
5 September 2025	That WALGA retire Advocacy Position 3.2 Health. RESOLUTION 054.4/2025	The Advocacy Positions Manual has been updated.		Nicole Matthews Executive Manager Policy

MEETING	RESOLUTION	COMMENT	COMPLETION DATE	OFFICER RESPONSIBLE
Item 8.5 Health Advocacy Position				
5 September 2025 Item 8.6 Advocacy Positions on Active Transport and Micromobility	That WALGA endorse the proposed advocacy positions on Active Transport and micromobility subject to: - The following item added to the Priority Actions of the Funding Position Statement: <i>Allocate dedicated funding to deliver safe, pedestrian- and bicycle-priority crossing points on local and distributor roads, particularly around schools, community hubs, and public transport nodes, to support safe and accessible active transport journeys.</i> - Request the CEO to prepare an Active Transport Advocacy Plan for WALGA including, but not limited to, funding models to achieve the advocacy positions. - That the Plan be brought back to the Infrastructure Policy Team for discussion. RESOLUTION 055.4/2025	The Advocacy Positions Manual has been updated.		Ian Duncan Executive Manager Infrastructure
2 July 2025 Item 8.1 Suspension and Disqualification for Offences Advocacy Position	That WALGA defers consideration of this matter for further work, including: - defining appropriately serious offences for intervention; and - addressing the role of the Local Government Inspector. - evaluating whether advocacy for disqualification based on convictions under the Planning and Development Act 2005 and Building Act 2011 should be retained.	Work has commenced on defining appropriately serious offences for intervention. Consideration of how the Office of the Inspector affects this position is awaiting the release of regulations pertaining to the office.		Kirsty Martin Executive Manager Member Services

MEETING	RESOLUTION	COMMENT	COMPLETION DATE	OFFICER RESPONSIBLE
	RESOLUTION 037.3/2025			
5 March 2025 Item 9.1 Infrastructure Policy Team Report	That State Council: - Note the report from the Infrastructure Policy Team for the 5 March 2025 meeting. - Determine to: - Delete Advocacy Position 5.2.8 (Towards Zero Road Safety Strategy 2008 – 2020). - Amend the title of Advocacy Position 5.2.7 from Road Safety Strategy (Imagine Zero) to Driving Change Road Safety Strategy 2020-2030. - Undertake further policy development and consultation with Members regarding the default open road speed limit in Western Australia. RESOLUTION 013.1/2025	The Advocacy Positions Manual has been updated. The Infrastructure Policy Team resolved to recommend WALGA engage an independent specialist to develop a framework to support the Local Government sector in decision making and advocacy relating to speed limits.		Ian Duncan Executive Manager Infrastructure
6 December 2024 Item 8.1 2024 Annual General Meeting Resolutions	That: - the item 7.1 Amendments to <i>Cat Act 2011</i>- Allow Local Governments to Make Local Laws to Contain Cats to the Owner's Property be endorsed. ... - the following resolutions from the 2024 WALGA Annual General Meeting be referred to the Governance Policy Team for further work to be undertaken: - Advocacy for Legislative Reforms to Counter Land-Banking - Advocacy for Expansion of Differential Rating to Include Long Term Unoccupied Commercial Buildings (Property Activation Levy). RESOLUTION 089.5/2024	The Advocacy Positions Manual has been updated. Following a range of advocacy from Local Government, WALGA and other stakeholders the Hon. Hannah Beazley MLA Minister for Local Government; Disability Services; Volunteering; Youth' Gascoyne announced on 17 September that the Government would be progressing amendments to Cat Act to enable Local Governments to make and enforce local laws regarding cat containment. The Minister indicated that Amendment Bill would be introduced in 2026.		Kirsty Martin Executive Manager Member Services

MEETING	RESOLUTION	COMMENT	COMPLETION DATE	OFFICER RESPONSIBLE
		Once the scope of the Amendment is clear, WALGA will continue work on the template Cat Local Law. WALGA sought legal advice which confirmed that amendments to the <i>Local Government Act 1995</i> (the Act) would be required to allow differential rating based on occupancy status. A joint meeting of the Governance and Environment Policy teams was held on 12 September and is addressed in the Governance Policy Team report on this matter.		
6 December 2024 Item 8.1 2024 Annual General Meeting Resolutions	That: ... 2. the following resolutions from the 2024 WALGA Annual General Meeting be referred to the Environment Policy Team for further work to be undertaken: 7.2 Advocacy for Legislative Reforms to Counter Land-Banking 7.4 Action on Asbestos for Western Australia 7.6 Advocacy for Accessibility. ...	Resolution 7.2 (regarding the planning related items within this resolution): The demolition of single houses is generally a form of development exempt from requiring development approval, and only a demolition permit is required for the complete or partial demolition, dismantling or removal of a building or an incidental structure. The current planning and building legislation		Nicole Matthews Executive Manager Policy

MEETING	RESOLUTION	COMMENT	COMPLETION DATE	OFFICER RESPONSIBLE
	RESOLUTION 089.5/2024	do not allow the conditioning of approval or refusal of a building permit in a manner proposed by the AGM resolution. A joint meeting of the Environment and Governance Policy Teams has been scheduled for 12 September to consider this item. Resolution 7.4: WALGA is engaging at the State and National level on this issue, including through membership of the WA Interagency Asbestos Group and nationally the Asbestos Safety Eradication Agency reference group and has raised the issues impacting Local Governments in relation to safe removal and disposal, including ensuring statewide options. WALGA continues to work on this issue, including the implementation of a Reducing Illegal Dumping Working Group as asbestos has been identified as a frequently dumped item. Resolution 7.6: Liveable Housing Design Standard as part of the National Construction Code (NCC) provides a set of technical		

MEETING	RESOLUTION	COMMENT	COMPLETION DATE	OFFICER RESPONSIBLE
		provisions that if complied with enable dwellings to better meet the needs of the community, including older people and people with mobility limitations. The code specifies seven minimum standards to ensure all new homes are accessible with modifications including step-free entrances and showers and wider doors and corridors that can accommodate wheelchairs and walking aids. All states enact the NCC through state legislation and regulation. A range of states are taking different approaches in terms of adopting the liveable housing requirements, but at time of writing all states except NSW and Western Australia have adopted the liveable housing provisions. The NCC 2022 only became operational in WA on 1 May. The appointment of a new Commerce Minister following the 2025 State Election provides an opportunity to engage on this matter. WALGA raised the prospects of WA adopting the standard at its meeting with the Minister in July 2025.		

MEETING	RESOLUTION	COMMENT	COMPLETION DATE	OFFICER RESPONSIBLE
6 December 2024 Item 8.2 Local Government Elections Advocacy Positions	That item 1 be deferred, and the Secretariat further investigate implications of compulsory and voluntary participation in Local Government elections and report back to State Council. RESOLUTION 090.5/2024 That WALGA adopt the following Elections Advocacy Positions: <i>The Local Government sector supports:</i> <i>1. Councillors serve four-year terms with elections every two years and half of the Council positions spilled at each election.</i> <i>2. First-Past-The-Post (FPTP) voting system for Local Government elections. If Optional Preferential Voting (OPV) remains as the primary method of voting, the sector supports the removal of the 'proportional' part of the voting method for general elections.</i> <i>3. First-Past-The-Post (FPTP) voting system for internal Council elections.</i> <i>4. Councils holding elections by means of in-person, postal and/or electronic voting.</i> <i>5. Current legislative provisions of Mayor/President of Class 1 and Class 2 Local Governments being directly elected by the community and Class 3 and Class 4 Local Governments determining whether its Mayor or President is elected by the Council or by the community.</i> RESOLUTION 091.5/2024	The Advocacy Positions Manual has been updated. Correspondence has been sent to the Minister for Local Government advising on the five advocacy positions endorsed. Investigation of the implications of compulsory and voluntary voting has continued with engagement from the Governance Policy Team and is addressed in the Governance Policy Team report.		Kirsty Martin Executive Manager Member Services