



Call for Papers – 2012 LGSA Water Management Conference

The LGSA is calling for papers for the 2012 LGSA Water Management Conference.

Local Infrastructure Renewal Scheme

The NSW Government has released guidelines for the Local Infrastructure Renewal Scheme (LIRS) that is to provide interest subsidies to councils for borrowings to renew infrastructure.

2012 Australian Local Government Women's Association (NSW) – Creators of Change

Registrations are now open for this year's Australian Local Government Women's Association (ALGWA) Conference to be held in Dubbo in March.

Local Government Association of NSW and the Shires Association of NSW

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The LGSA has represented NSW Local Government interests for consideration in the development of the Australian Governments National Cultural Policy. The policy will set out a strategic vision for arts, culture and the established and emerging creative industries in Australia.

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Local Government Procurement (LGP) is proud to announce that a major educational initiative for Local Government staff in NSW has been formalised. From early 2012 a new educational qualification will be available to council staff.

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From early 2012 Local Government Procurement (LGP) will be providing a series of new Training Modules specifically developed for council staff who have any involvement in purchasing, tendering and related functions.

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Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) NSW has announced the publication of the RMS Local Government Liaison Committee's Regional Roads Funding Assistance to Local Government Information Paper to Councils for 2011/12.

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RMS 2011/12 Regional Roads Funding Assistance Information Paper

Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) NSW has announced the publication of the RMS Local Government Liaison Committee's Regional Roads Funding Assistance to Local Government Information Paper to Councils for 2011/12.

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General Interest

Item 3: Call for Papers – 2012 LGSA Water Management Conference

The LGSA is calling for papers for the 2012 LGSA Water Management Conference.

This annual conference provides an opportunity for councillors, Local Government professionals, government representatives and the broader industry to tackle key water management issues and discuss emerging issues in the water portfolio.

Councils and other stakeholders are invited to forward papers and/or suggestions for consideration in the development of the Conference program. In particular, papers are invited on the following key topics:

- **Integrated water resource planning**

Wagga Wagga is part of a case study demonstrating benefits and feasibility of integrated resource planning that is part of a wider research project undertaken by the National Water Commission. The program will focus on regional and localised integrated water resource planning in the context of urban water availability, demand management, environmental flow requirements, urban salinity, risk-based water quality management and groundwater connectivity.

- **Review of regulatory and institutional arrangement for local water utilities in regional NSW**

The Conference will discuss outcomes on the NSW Government's Inquiry into Local Water Utilities as well as the national Inquiry into Australia's Urban Water Sector by the Productivity Commission.

Papers/suggestions should include:

- A brief outline of the issue/main focus of your paper/suggestion.
- The preferred format for its inclusion in the program (conference paper, presentation, display, workshop topic).
- Possible presenter/s and a brief biography (50 words maximum).
- The type of outcome that could be expected by conference delegates.

Please note that the LGSA do not accept presentations which are solely commercial in nature.

Regularly updated information about the Conference as well as the opportunity to subscribe to a Conference email newsletter is available on the Conference website.

Closing Date for Papers

Friday, 30 March 2012

Date/location

Sunday, 22 – Tuesday, 24 July 2012,
Wagga Wagga

Host

Wagga Wagga City Council

Water Conference Website

www.waterconference.lgsa.org.au.

Further information

Sascha Moege

sascha.moege@lgsa.org.au

Ref: R90/0027 SM

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General Interest

Item 4: 2012 Australian Local Government Women's Association (NSW) – Creators of Change

Registrations are now open for this year's Australian Local Government Women's Association (ALGWA) Conference to be held in Dubbo in March.

The annual ALGWA conference provides a platform for councillors and staff to gather to discuss current and emerging issues facing women in Local Government.

An impressive line-up of speakers has been arranged for 2012. Each presenter will discuss stories of how they have created change in their work place or in the community they live.

The *Creators of Change Conference* will help inspire and empower elected members and staff that collectively represent 27 percent of Local Government in NSW.

2012 Australian Local Government Women's Association (NSW) Conference
Thursday 22 – Saturday 24 March 2012

Location

Dubbo Regional Theatre & Convention Centre, Dubbo

Further Information

http://www.lgsa.org.au/resources/documents/ALWGA_brochure_LR.pdf

Registrations & accommodation

Bradley@ccem.com.au

Further information

Lana Willetts
Dubbo City Council
02 6801 4451

Ref: R90/0017-02 MG

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Community

Item 5: 'Beat the Heat' campaign

NSW Ministry of Health have launched the 'Beat the Heat' campaign this summer to remind people to be prepared for the hot weather and the health implications as a result of the heat.

Dr Kerry Chant, Chief Health Officer says there are four key messages from this campaign to follow:

1. Drink plenty of water.
2. Keep cool.
3. Take care of others.
4. Have a plan.

The LGSA encourages councils to promote this information to their communities.

Further information on heat related illness and information for carers and health professionals is available online (see fact box) and in other languages.

Online information

<http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/campaigns/beattheheat/>

Ref: R90/0830-02 MB

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Community

Item 6: Elsa Dixon Aboriginal Employment Program 2012/13

Applications for the 2012/13 Elsa Dixon Aboriginal Employment Program are open.

The Program, run by the NSW Department of Education and Training, encourages job opportunities and career advancement for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Applications for funding from eligible organisations in the NSW public, Local Government, private, or community sectors are being sought.

Applications must be for any of the following:

- Permanent employment.
- Temporary placement.
- Partnership projects.

Applications close

5pm, Friday 24 February 2012

Online information

www.det.nsw.edu.au/eas/acomm

Contact

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Department of Education and
Communities
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Ref: R01/0045 CC

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Community

Item 7: International Conference and a Free Public Forum - Refugees

The University of Melbourne, in partnership with Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV), is hosting an International Conference and a Free Public Forum in February 2012 about migrants and refugees.

Details are as follows:

- Free Public Forum "*Whose Country is it Anyway? Opportunities and Challenges for Visible Migrants and Refugees in Rural and Regional Australia*" Thursday 9 February 2012, 6:30pm, University of Melbourne.
- International Conference "*A Long Way from Home? The Rural and Regional Resettlement Experiences of Visible Migrants and Refugees*" Friday 10 February 2012, 9am - 5pm, University of Melbourne.

Early Bird registration closes
Friday, 20 January

Registration & Enquiries
<http://www.ssps.unimelb.edu.au/research/projects/vmr/events>

Ref: R91/0040-05 MG

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Community

Item 8: LGSA Submission on the National Cultural Policy Discussion Paper

The LGSA has represented NSW Local Government interests for consideration in the development of the Australian Governments National Cultural Policy. The policy will set out a strategic vision for arts, culture and the established and emerging creative industries in Australia.

The National Cultural Policy will reflect the important role that arts and creativity play in the daily lives of all Australians, and will help to integrate arts and cultural policy within our broader social and economic goals.

The National Cultural Policy Discussion Paper identifies the following proposed goals:

1. To ensure that what the Government supports, and how this support is provided, reflects the diversity of a 21st century Australia, and protects and supports Indigenous culture.
2. To encourage use of emerging technologies and new ideas that support the development of new artworks and the creative industries, and that enable more people to access and participate in arts and culture.
3. To support excellence and world class endeavour, and strengthen the role that the arts play in telling Australian stories both here and overseas.
4. To increase and strengthen the capacity of the arts to contribute to our society and economy.

The one reference to Local Government in the discussion paper is that the policy *"will provide a new way of clarifying responsibilities between Local, State and Federal Governments, major cultural organisations and agencies, and will set a new foundation for engagement and collaboration to ensure that all Australians benefit from the cultural life of our nation."*

The LGSA submission made the following recommendations:

1. Commonwealth Government provision of significant ongoing funding of Local Government to enhance regional and local cultural development, and cultural facilities, services and programs.
2. That all three spheres of government collaborate on cultural policy development and delivery planning.
3. That councils be funded to deliver cultural planning and brokerage toward delivery of the National Cultural Policy at a local level.
4. That measures are taken to ensure delivery of the National Cultural Policy provides equitable access across rural, regional and metropolitan communities.
5. That the National Cultural Policy addresses community participation in cultural development.
6. That all councils have opportunity for support regarding the National Broadband Network, to deliver hubs, transitioning their facilities, services and communities to maximise benefits of the new technology, not just the initial roll out areas.
7. That local communities are supported to produce local content for the National Broadband Network.

The Australian Government is expected to release the National Cultural Policy in early 2012.

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National Cultural Policy Website

www.culture.arts.gov.au

National Cultural Policy Discussion Paper

<http://culture.arts.gov.au/discussion-paper>

LGSA Submission

<http://culture.arts.gov.au/sites/default/files/submissions/Submission%20445.pdf>

Contact

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Ref: R11/0028 CB

Emergency Services

Item 9: Emergency Service Levy Increased by 2.5 Percent

The total Emergency Service Levy (ESL) on Local Government for 2011/12 financial year has increased by 2.5 percent.

The LGSA annually reviews and monitors NSW council's contributions to the ESL to identify and address potential concerns.

The LGSA is pleased to inform its members that for the 2011/12 financial year, councils' overall contribution to the ESL has increased by 2.5 percent. This is a modest increase compared to the 11.6 percent increase in 2010/11.

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Ref: R09/0045 LG

Emergency Services	Council ESL Contribution 10/11	Council ESL Contribution 11/12	Average 11/12 Increase	Average 10/11 Increase
NSW Fire & Rescue	\$69,484,873.00	\$69,818,444.00	0.48%	8.75%
Rural Fire Service	\$30,076,720.00	\$31,869,639.88	5.96%	18.72%
State Emergency Service	\$6,956,585.86	\$7,493,999.96	7.73%	11.99%
<u>TOTAL ESL</u>	<u>\$106,518,178.86</u>	<u>\$109,182,083.84</u>	<u>2.5%</u>	<u>11.6%</u>

Increases/decreases to individual council ESL contributions may vary due to localised capital expenditure, works or population changes.

While the lower overall ESL increase is welcomed, the LGSA continues to make representations advocating that the current ESL system be replaced by a broad based property levy.

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Environment

Item 10: 2012/13 Coastal and Estuary Management Grants

The Office of Environment and Heritage is inviting applications under the Coastal and Estuary Management Grants Program for the 2012/13 financial year.

Funding of up to 50 percent of a project's costs is available to councils under these programs for:

- Preparing (or updating) coastal zone management plans and associated technical studies (including estuary health and coastal hazard assessments).
- Taking actions to manage the risks from coastal hazards.
- Taking actions to implement environmental repairs, including habitat restoration and conservation projects.
- Undertaking pre-construction activities for projects that are eligible and are likely to proceed to construction.
- Developing management tools - For example, education projects.

Applications are now open and close on Tuesday, 28 February. Grant guidelines and application forms are available on the Office of Environment and Heritage website (see fact box).

If you have any questions or require any further information, please contact the relevant regional office listed in the grant application guidelines.

Please note that the call for applications under the NSW Floodplain Management Program is expected to be made in late January 2012.

Applications close

Tuesday 28 February 2012

Online information

<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/coasts/InfoCoastEstFloodGrants.htm>

Ref: R93/0004

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Finance

Item 11: Local Infrastructure Renewal Scheme

The NSW Government has released guidelines for the Local Infrastructure Renewal Scheme (LIRS) that is to provide interest subsidies to councils for borrowings to renew infrastructure.

The LIRS was announced in the NSW State Budget for 2011/12 and is valued at \$70 million over five years. The LIRS guidelines are announced as part of the NSW Government's Local Infrastructure Backlog Policy, which is to comprise the following elements:

Audit of local infrastructure backlog

The Division of Local Government (DLG) is to undertake an audit of each council's local infrastructure backlog to provide better information on investment needs. The infrastructure backlog audit is to be based on councils' ten-year asset management plans, prepared under the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) framework, and data included in councils' annual financial reports. The audit is to be undertaken in stages from 2011 to 2014 as councils commence under the IP&R framework.

Local Infrastructure Renewal Scheme

The LIRS is to provide interest subsidies of four percent that will substantially reduce the borrowing costs on significant loans that councils take out to fund infrastructure renewal projects. The subsidy aims to provide an incentive to councils to make greater use of debt funding to accelerate investment to address infrastructure backlogs and augment funding options already available to councils.

The LIRS is being administered by the Division. Applications are to be assessed by an assessment panel comprising an Independent Chair and representatives from DLG, NSW Treasury and the Department of Planning and Infrastructure.

The LIRS guidelines provide detailed information on the eligibility requirements and assessment criteria for projects. Further information to assist councils to make an application is to be provided to those councils that notify DLG of their intention to apply, in line with the following timetable:

- Pre-notification by councils of their intention to lodge an application by Friday, 10 February 2012.
- Application closing date: Saturday, 10 March 2012.

NSW Treasury Corporation financial assessment and benchmarking

NSW Treasury Corporation (TCorp) is to establish a system for assessment and benchmarking of NSW councils' financial position. The purpose of the assessment is to assist councils' asset acquisition and investment management strategies, including providing advice on their capacity to utilise debt when appropriate. Councils that apply for assistance under the LIRS will be required to have a TCorp assessment completed.

LGSA Position

The LGSA has welcomed the LIRS as a step in the right direction; however, it is important to note that considering the existing Local Government infrastructure renewal backlog of at least \$6.3 billion, it will not in be sufficient in itself. The LGSA will call for the expansion of the scheme in future NSW State Budgets.

Online Information

www.dlg.nsw.gov.au

LGSA Media Release

<http://www.lgsa.org.au/www/html/4105-11th-january-2012-councils-welcome-nsw-local-infrastructure-renewal-scheme.asp?intSiteID=1>

Further information on LIRS

DLG's LIRS Project Manager
(02) 4428 4100

Further information on the TCorp process

Kevin Pugh
Senior Manager Corporate
Finance, NSW Treasury
Corporation
02 9325 9257
kevin.pugh@tcorp.nsw.gov.au

Ref: R06/0023 SM

The LGSA also notes that the LRIS should not be seen as a replacement for special rate variations, but as an additional tool to augment council financing options for providing essential community assets.

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Learning

Item 12: Ethical and Fraud Awareness Training

Learning Solutions has a number of programs on ethics and fraud awareness for senior staff, line managers, and council staff.

Senior Managers (one hour briefing)

Objective: To outline the specific responsibilities of senior management within council, concerning ethical behaviours and preventing fraudulent conduct.

Content will include:

- Legislative setting for NSW Local Government.
- Requirements of ICAC, DLG.
- Code of Conduct and other policies.
- Risk areas (based on recent actual situations).
- Importance of creating a culture of compliance and reporting.

Line Managers – half day workshop

Objective: To outline the specific responsibilities of line management within council, concerning ethical behaviours and preventing fraudulent conduct.

Content will include the above as well as the following:

- Assessing risk in your area of control.
- Conflict of interests – what it is and how to avoid it.
- Importance of supporting a culture of compliance and reporting.
- Outside employment/external business activities.

Case studies and practical exercises involving:

- Actual cases from ICAC.
- Contract management.
- Purchasing.
- Acting on reports from staff.

Staff – half day workshop

Objective: To outline the general responsibilities of staff within council, concerning ethical behaviours and preventing fraudulent conduct.

Content will include the above as well as the following:

- Case studies and practical exercises involving actual ICAC case studies.
- Situations covering various areas of the Code of Conduct.
- Outside employment and private business undertakings.
- Dealing with family and friends.
- Gifts and benefits.

Contact

Learning Solutions
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02 9242 4081
learning@lgsa.org.au

Ref: I98/0012 DR

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Learning

Item 13: In-House Training - Work Health and Safety (WHS) – various workshops

Local Government Learning Solutions is pleased to offer councils a variety of workshops on WHS.

These workshops are available on a fee for service basis, and include:

1. **WHS Legislation Awareness** workshop for all staff or Managers (half day).
2. **WHS Duty Holders** workshop for all levels of Managers and HR/OHS staff, committee members and Health and Safety representatives (half day).
3. **Due Diligence** workshop for all levels of Managers and HR/OHS staff, committee members and Health and Safety representatives (half or full day).
4. **WHS Consultation** workshop for Line Managers and HR/OHS staff, committee members and Health and Safety representatives (half day).
5. **WHS Regulation** workshop for Line Managers, Supervisors, OHS staff, committee members and Health and Safety representatives (half day).
6. **WHS Codes of Practice** workshop for Line Managers, Supervisors, OH&S staff, committee members and Health and Safety representatives (half day).
7. **WHS Regulation and Codes of Practice** workshop for Line Managers, Supervisors, OH&S staff, committee members and Health and Safety representatives (full day).
8. **WHS Management Plan** workshop for Executive Managers, Line Managers, HR Managers and OH&S Officers (half day).
9. **WHS for Volunteers and Contractors** workshop for Line Managers, Supervisors, OH&S staff, committee members and Health and Safety representatives (half day).

Contact

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learning@lgsa.org.au

Ref: I98/0012 DR

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Planning

Item 14: NSW Draft Wind Farm Guidelines Released

The NSW Department of Planning and Infrastructure has released draft guidelines which aim to help regulate the wind farm industry while minimising potential impacts on local communities.

The Guidelines, released on Friday 23 December 2011, give more power to affected neighbours and land owners while placing strict regulatory guidelines on wind farm owners and operators.

The new Guidelines aim to help clarify and provide a consistent framework for the wind farm industry, in which the assessment and development of wind farms can be fairly regulated. The Guidelines are intended to:

- Assist in the assessment and development stages of wind farm projects.
- Outline the processes for community consultation.
- Provide a measurement of the impact the proposed wind farm will have on the surrounding areas.

Currently 13 out of the State's 17 wind farm development projects will be affected by the new guidelines.

Much like the Victorian guidelines, the NSW guidelines propose a 2km buffer between proposed wind farms and any existing residences. Within this zone residents have the ability to veto any projects, which would give the public more control over potential developments than any other renewable energy project. However, wind farms may still be developed within the denied 2km buffer if approval from a Joint Regional Planning Panel is granted.

One of the most contentious requirements within the Guidelines is the new noise limit from the wind turbines. The turbines must adhere to a strict 35 decibel noise level limit, making it the strictest requirement of its type in the world.

The draft will remain on public exhibition until **Wednesday, 14 March 2012**. Councils are encouraged to make a submission.

Submissions due

Wednesday, 14 March 2012

Guidelines available at

http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=5yeY6yw_wRE%3d&tabid=205&mid=1081&language=en-AU

Further information

<http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Development/Onexhibition/tabid/205/ctl/View/mid/1081/ID/66/language/en-AU/Default.aspx>

Ref: R90/1011 JP

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Procurement

Item 15: NEW Certificate IV in Government (Procurement and Contracting) for NSW Local Government

Local Government Procurement (LGP) is proud to announce that a major educational initiative for Local Government staff in NSW has been formalised. From early 2012 a new educational qualification will be available to council staff.

The Certificate IV in Government (Procurement and Contracting) for NSW Local Government has been developed to specifically meet the needs of purchasing related staff in NSW councils. This initiative delivers a tailored version of the qualification that is specific to the role of purchasing and contract management staff within the NSW Local Government sector.

This new course has been written with the legislative and process needs of council staff built into the training materials. It is the first such specific course leading to a qualification available to council staff in Australia. It is a nationally recognised certificate course that can be used for further educational purposes.

The course development has been funded by LGP and is being coordinated by Bayley and Associates. The Managing Director of Bayley and Associates, Ruth Bayley is also the CEO of the Australian Association of Procurement and Contract Management.

SPECIAL OFFER - As was announced at the November 2011 Local Government Procurement Conference, LGP will be subsidising the first placements for this new course.

The first ten staff applying for the course will be enrolled at a discounted rate of \$3200 per person (normally \$3800).

The course is likely to be conducted in Sydney (though if demand warrants we will conduct the course in Regional locations - a minimum of ten students required).

The content of the training is 11 full days (broken into stages of two or three days each), with eight days being face to face classes then three days of assessment workshops.

2012 Dates - Sydney CBD (*participants are required to attend all four blocks*)

Block one: Tuesday 1 – Thursday 3 May

Block two: Monday 28 – Tuesday 29 May

Block three: Monday 4 – Wednesday 6 June

Block four: Wednesday 13 – Friday 15 June

For further information on the electives or for an enrolment form visit LGP's website (see fact box).

Local Government Procurement Pty Ltd (LGP) is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Local Government and Shires Associations of New South Wales (LGSA).

Online information

<http://www.lgp.org.au/www/html/4093-procurement-qualifications-and-training-.asp?intSiteID=3>

Contact

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02 8270 8700
info@lgp.org.au

Ref: R05/0057

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Procurement

Item 16: NEW Training Modules for Local Government Staff

From early 2012 Local Government Procurement (LGP) will be providing a series of new Training Modules specifically developed for council staff who have any involvement in purchasing, tendering and related functions.

The training courses will be half or full day modules that have been developed based on feedback from staff and recent developments around procurement functions. The module's content has had council and LGP staff input and is being developed by Bayley and Associates. The modules will be delivered by LGP staff and will include full course notes and a certificate of completion. The courses are not accredited, but have been developed with the specific needs of NSW councils in mind.

The initial modules will be:

- Stores and Inventory Management.
- Basic Purchasing.
- Advanced Purchasing.
- Tendering Requirements.
- Specification Writing.
- Contract Management.

Modules will be conducted across the State, dependant on demand. A minimum of ten participants per module will be a prerequisite for training to be held in Regional locations.

It is likely that the costs to conduct the modules will be as little as \$275 (inc. GST) per person for half day modules and \$550 (inc. GST) per full day module, where there is a minimum of ten participants.

Register your interest for further updates about the training modules by contacting LGP or visit LGP's website (see fact box).

Local Government Procurement Pty Ltd (LGP) is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Local Government and Shires Associations of New South Wales (LGSA).

Online information

<http://www.lgp.org.au/www/html/4093-procurement-qualifications-and-training-.asp?intSiteID=3>

Contact

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info@lgp.org.au

Ref: R05/0057

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Roads and Transport

Item 17: RMS 2011/12 Regional Roads Funding Assistance Information Paper

Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) NSW has announced the publication of the RMS Local Government Liaison Committee's Regional Roads Funding Assistance to Local Government Information Paper to Councils for 2011/12.

This paper has been prepared for the RMS Local Government Liaison Committee (LGLC) as part of the process of improving the partnership and communication between RMS and councils and making funding arrangements more transparent. It informs councils about the level of funding assistance for Regional Roads for 2011/12, describes how the distribution of funds is determined and gives details of each council's block grant. It also summarises councils' reported expenditure and outputs on Regional Roads in 2009/10.

If you require assistance with the Information Paper please contact Peter McMahon at RMS (see fact box).

Access the 2011/12 Information Paper for councils
http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au/doing-business-with-us/downloads/lgr/information_councils_dl1.html

Further Information

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02 8858 5480

LGSA Contact

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Ref: R90/0724 RC

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In the News

Item 18: Media from the LGSA

View the latest media releases distributed by the LGSA

Councils welcome NSW Local Infrastructure Renewal Scheme

11th January 2012

<http://www.lgsa.org.au/www/html/4105-11th-january-2012-councils-welcome-nsw-local-infrastructure-renewal-scheme.asp?intSiteID=1>

The Local Government and Shires Associations of NSW (LGSA) have welcomed the commencement of the NSW Local Infrastructure Renewal Scheme (the Scheme).

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