



## **Item 5: Cultural Awards 2010 Open for Entries**

Councils are encouraged to enter the 2010 Cultural Awards and showcase their cultural development activities on the Cultural Awards website.

## **Item 14: Changes to Special Rate Variation Process**

The Division of Local Government has introduced a range of new application processes and procedures for Special Variations and increases in Minimum Rates for 2010/11.

## **Item 10: Outcomes from State Emergency Service Contributions Survey**

The LGSA recently conducted a survey of NSW Councils on the level of statutory and voluntary contributions to the State Emergency Service (SES) and impacts of the new Emergency Service Levy.

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### **Item 3: ACOSS National Conference 2010: A vote for equity**

Examine the country from the perspective of low income-earning Australians. What policies and programs are working? What needs to change? How do we achieve this?

### **Item 4: Harmony Day**

Harmony Day celebrates the cohesive nature of Australian society and promotes the benefits of our cultural diversity. This year it will be held on 21 March.

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### **Item 6: Inclusive Dance Masterclass**

Applications for Accessible Arts' Beyond Technique: Searching for Authenticity dance master classes are now open. Councils are encouraged to promote this opportunity to artists in their community.

### **Item 7: Regional Arts Consultation Results**

Regional Arts Australia has published a report 'Creating a Better Life for Regional Australians'. Councils are encouraged to consider these results when undertaking arts and cultural planning initiatives.

### **Item 8: Planning for Ageing - reference group members sought**

A new web resource that helps councils plan for ageing populations in the context of the new integrated planning and reporting framework is currently being developed. Councils are invited to submit an expression of interest to form part of the reference group.

### **Item 9: Work, Home and Community Project – Final Reports**

The Centre for Work + Life, University of South Australia has released four reports exploring how individuals and families integrate the demands of work with the needs of home and community life, and why this is becoming an increasing struggle in suburban Australia.

## Emergency Services

### **Item 10: Outcomes from State Emergency Service Contributions Survey**

The LGSA recently conducted a survey of NSW Councils on the level of statutory and voluntary contributions to the State Emergency Service (SES) and impacts of the new Emergency Service Levy.

## Environment

### **Item 11: Local Government Innovation in Waste Awards 2010**

Has your Council undertaken innovative Waste Management Projects in the last three years that have achieved great results? If so, share them with the Coffs Harbour Waste 2010 Conference. By doing so, your Council or Waste Authority could win a great prize!

### **Item 12: Protection of the Environment: Authorised Officers**

The first course for 2010 begins in February in Sydney. Courses fill up very quickly, so book now.

### **Item 13: Ozwater'10**

Registration for the Australian Water Association's (AWA) Ozwater'10 Conference and Trade Exhibition is now open. Earlybird Registration closes today, so be quick!

## **Finance**

### **Item 14: Changes to Special Rate Variation Process**

The Division of Local Government has introduced a range of new application processes and procedures for Special Variations and increases in Minimum Rates for 2010/11.

## **Infrastructure**

### **Item 15: Fluoridation of Public Water Supplies - Training**

Council staff working in fluoridation plants are required to complete this training in order to be eligible for a fluoride plant operator's licence, issued by NSW Health.

## **Learning**

### **Item 16: Councillor Professional Development Program – Feb-March 2010**

Programs scheduled from February to March 2010 in Sydney.

### **Item 17: The Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (GIPA Act)**

Two workshops have been scheduled for February 2010.

### **Item 18: Planning for Effective Public Participation**

This introductory module provides the fundamentals for effective public participation. It will be delivered in Sydney on 9-10 March 2010.

### **Item 19: Managing Information Overload – Speed Reading for Councillors and Senior Staff**

Increase your comprehension and manage the sometimes overwhelming reading material you face each week.

### **Item 20: Time Management and Mentoring Skills for Managers**

Managers who need to refine their time management or mentoring skills will benefit from these workshops held in Ballina.

### **Item 21: Seminar - Land and Environment Court Decisions and the Implications for Local Government**

The free, lunchtime seminar will explore decision on retail centres, climate change, recent planning principles and section 34 conferences (mediation).

### **Item 22: Trainer's Showcase**

Professional development is very important for all Local Government staff. To help council trainers to keep up their own professional development, this Trainer's Showcase provides quick bursts of ready to use icebreakers, activities and ideas for your induction, OH&S and other programs.

## **Roads and Transport**

### **Item 23: Plantations Act and Code Review**

The NSW Department of Industry and Investment is seeking feedback on the proposed amendments to the Plantations and Reafforestation Act 1999 and the Plantations and Reafforestation (Code) Regulation 2001.

### **Item 24: Photos of local road and bridge infrastructure**

Photographs are needed for a forthcoming research report on local road asset funding.

### **Item 25: Nominations sought for RTA Regional Traffic Committees**

The Roads and Traffic Authority are seeking nominations from suitably qualified council staff to represent Local Government on their Sydney, Northern, Southern and South Western Regional Traffic Committees.

## **Tourism**

### **Item 26: 2010 Local Government NSW Tourism Conference**

Conference registration is now open. This year's theme is 'The Business of Tourism.' Discounted earlybird registration closes 27 January.

## **In the News**

### **Item 27: Media from the LGSA**

View the latest media releases distributed by the LGSA

### **Item 28: Local Government Media**

View the latest Local Government media articles

## Awards

### **Item 1: Award opportunities**

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## Conferences and Events

### **Item 2: Upcoming conferences and events**

View upcoming conference and events relevant to Local Government

### **Item 3: Heading – ACOSS National Conference 2010: A vote for equity**

The Australian Council of Social Service annual conference provides an opportunity to examine the country from the perspective of low income-earning Australians. What policies and programs are working? What needs to change? How do we achieve this?

### **Item 4: Harmony Day**

Organised by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship, Harmony Day celebrates the cohesive nature of Australian society and promotes the benefits of our cultural diversity. This year it will be held on 21 March.

### **Item 13: Ozwater'10**

Registration for the Australian Water Association's (AWA) Ozwater'10 Conference and Trade Exhibition is now open. Earlybird Registration closes today, so be quick!

### **Item 26: 2010 Local Government NSW Tourism Conference**

Registration for the conference is now open. This year's theme is 'The Business of Tourism.'

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## Community

### Item 3: ACOSS National Conference 2010: A vote for equity

**Examine the country from the perspective of low income-earning Australians. What policies and programs are working? What needs to change? How do we achieve this?**

The Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS) annual conference is a chance to hear about and discuss key areas of social policy, community sector services, and the needs of social service clients and their communities. Plenary and workshop sessions bring together policy-makers, practitioners, consumers, academics and other researchers on key topics of relevance to social services.

#### Plenary topics

- Affordable housing
- Long-term unemployment
- Population
- Tax reform
- The third sector

#### Workshop sessions

Sessions will cover some of these issues in greater detail as well as other areas, including:

- Communication technology for low income Australians
- Health reform
- Income management
- Individualised service and funding arrangements
- Social enterprise

#### Background to ACOSS

ACOSS is the peak council of the community services and welfare sector. Established in 1956, ACOSS is the national voice for the needs of people affected by poverty and inequality.

File Reference: R90/1195-11

#### Date and Location

25 March 2010, Rydges  
Lakeside, Canberra

#### Registrations

Closes 15 March 2010. Register  
your interest to  
[conference@acoss.org.au](mailto:conference@acoss.org.au)

#### Further information

For sponsorship and exhibition  
opportunities: 02 9310 6200;  
[conference@acoss.org.au](mailto:conference@acoss.org.au).

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## Community

### Item 4: Harmony Day – Everyone Belongs

Harmony Day celebrates the cohesive nature of Australian society and promotes the benefits of our cultural diversity. This year it will be held on 21 March.

'Everyone belongs' is the continuing message reflecting community participation, inclusiveness, respect and a sense of belonging for all Australians.

A key theme in 2010 will be Express Yourself. This provides the opportunity for Councils to let residents know about the diversity in their workforce and communities and how they manage and promote that diversity.

Harmony Day is organised by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship. To celebrate the event, they are again providing free promotional items that can be ordered through the Harmony Day website (details above.) Promotional materials will be available from early February 2010.

**Online information**

[www.harmony.gov.au](http://www.harmony.gov.au)

**Further information**

[harmonyday@immi.gov.au](mailto:harmonyday@immi.gov.au),  
1800 330 100

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## Community

### Item 5: Cultural Awards 2010 Open for Entries

**All NSW councils can enter the 2010 Cultural Awards and showcase their cultural development activities on the Cultural Awards website.**

Many councils are already taking up the opportunity to submit cultural development initiatives on the Cultural Awards 2010 website.

#### Eligibility

To be eligible, projects must have been partly or wholly completed in 2009.

All eligible submissions will be in the running for this prestigious Accessible Arts Award.

#### Entries

If council is considering submitting more than one entry, we encourage the different units that may be considering such entries to collaborate. Collaboration and integration generally lead to better applications!

#### Inspiration

The Cultural Awards websites provide excellent examples of cultural development initiatives that have additional social outcomes for the community.

Councils that have not undertaken cultural initiatives in the past, or are considering submitting a project for the Cultural Awards in the future are encouraged to view previous projects for inspiration.

File Reference: R09/0016: AM

**Cultural Awards ceremony**  
Thursday 29 April 2010.

**Entries close**  
5pm, 26 February 2010.

**Online information**  
[www.CulturalAwards.lgsa.org.au](http://www.CulturalAwards.lgsa.org.au)

**For further information**  
Policy Officer, Cultural  
Development: 02 9242 4047;  
[alison.mclaren@lgsa.org.au](mailto:alison.mclaren@lgsa.org.au) or  
[christopher.hudson@lgsa.org.au](mailto:christopher.hudson@lgsa.org.au).

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## Community

### Item 6: Inclusive Dance Masterclass

**Applications for Accessible Arts' Beyond Technique: Searching for Authenticity dance master classes are now open. Councils are encouraged to promote this opportunity to artists in their community.**

Beyond Technique is a unique practical professional development opportunity for NSW artists to experience inclusive dance practice.

#### Who should attend?

The masterclass is intended for emerging and professional dancers with and without disability, dance industry professionals, teachers, choreographers, performers with movement background, educators with dance experience and arts practitioners with an interest in disability arts.

#### The Class

There are three parts to the classes, each exploring creative movement in an inclusive environment. Warm up, strengthening exercises, ways to adapt movement and improvisation leading to new work are all part of the masterclasses. You can join in all or part of the program.

#### Philip Channells

The masterclasses are led by Philip Channells, Artistic Director of Adelaide's Restless Dance. Philip spent seven years working with Restless Dance Theatre as a performer, workshop leader and assistant director. He has recently been working in the UK with dance companies such as Candoco, StopGAP and Corali.

#### 2010 Arts-Activated Conference

Beyond Technique masterclasses form part of the 2010 Arts-Activated Conference, showcasing examples of excellence in arts and disability.

Councils are also encouraged to enable arts and cultural officers and interested councillors to attend the Arts-Activated Conference to gain a greater understanding of the potential for inclusive arts practice to grow audience numbers, improve participation rates of people with disability in the arts and enable the local arts community to become deeper and richer.

File Reference: R09/0016: AM

#### Class dates

23 and 24 March 2010.

#### Applications

Due Friday 5 February 2010.

Download a form at

<http://www.aarts.net.au/projects/dance/beyond-technique/>

#### Cost

\$20 for evening Masterclass in inclusive dance practice; \$20 for daytime creative development; or Free for evening showing of work.

#### Philip Channells information

<http://www.restlessdance.org/People/People.htm>

#### For further information

Becky Chapman, Arts Development Officer,  
[bchapman@aarts.net.au](mailto:bchapman@aarts.net.au), 02 9251 6499 ext 105.

Media contact: David Finnigan, Media and Marketing Coordinator,  
[dfinnigan@aarts.net.au](mailto:dfinnigan@aarts.net.au), 02 9251 6499 ext 101.

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# Community

## Item 7: Regional Arts Consultation Results

Regional Arts Australia has published a report 'Creating a Better Life for Regional Australians'. Councils are encouraged to consider these results when undertaking arts and cultural planning initiatives.

For further information  
<http://www.regionalarts.com.au/raa1/files/RAAconsultationbro-sml.pdf>

In 2009, Regional Arts Australia consulted with over 85,000 people.

Key outcomes for the next five years of arts and culture in regional communities include:

- building a strong sense of purpose and identity;
- developing inclusive and resilient communities;
- engaging young people in creating regional futures;
- health and wellbeing; and
- environmental sustainability.

Proposals for action are included under each of these goals – for example, establishing a Regional City of Culture program that provides support to a targeted regional city for a year in order to “develop and showcase its cultural life”. Increasingly, we are seeing that cultural initiatives have the potential to enable positive social and environmental change in a cross-sector environment.

### Results

The report identified that:

- More than 90% believed that increased funding was required to build on existing levels of arts activity.
- More than 85% believed the arts play a vital role in the community wellbeing and entertainment.
- Almost 85% were aware of partnerships between the arts and other sectors (Education, Health, Indigenous, Disability, Aged Care, Sport) in their community.
- More than 70% believed the arts play a role in cultural tourism.
- Almost 70% believed that more skills development training and professional development opportunities were required to assist in the development of the sector.
- More than 50% believed the arts play a role in economic development and job creation.

By reading this report, councils in regional communities can gain an insight into the arts and cultural needs of their community. We encourage members to become involved in proposed actions that aim to address the goals stipulated in the report.

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## Community

### Item 8: Planning for Ageing - reference group members sought

**A new web resource that helps councils plan for ageing populations in the context of the new integrated planning and reporting framework is currently being developed. Councils are invited to submit an expression of interest to form part of the reference group.**

The resource is being developed by the Division of Local Government, Department of Premier and Cabinet, in conjunction with the LGSA and the Office for Ageing.

It forms part of the NSW Government's commitment to *Towards 2030: planning for our changing populations*.

The *Towards 2030* actions being addressed by this project are:

- Work collaboratively with Local Government on a new integrated planning process requiring councils to prepare long term strategic plans which include consideration of the changing population demographic.
- Encourage social planning and community development initiatives at Local Government level to promote and support formal and informal community networks for all ages, and sustain intergenerational communities.

#### Reference Group

The Reference Group will provide advice on the most useful format and content of the web resource, and how to promote the resource to encourage its use. Councils from both rural and metropolitan areas are invited to apply.

Participation in the Reference Group may include attending meetings (in Sydney) or providing email feedback. There will be two meetings – one in late February to provide initial advice on format and content, and the other in early May to provide feedback on the draft resource and suggestions for promoting it.

File Reference: R96/0126

#### Expressions of Interest

Due 5 February 2010.

#### For further information

Margaret Kay, Senior Policy Officer, Ageing and Disability, NSW Local Government and Shires Associations:

02 9242 4082;

[Margaret.kay@lgsa.org.au](mailto:Margaret.kay@lgsa.org.au).

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## Community

### Item 9: Work, Home and Community Project – Final Reports

Four reports exploring how individuals and families integrate the demands of work with the needs of home and community life, and why this is becoming an increasing struggle in suburban Australia have been released.

The Centre for Work + Life, University of South Australia conducted the project in ten Australian suburbs in New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland and South Australia including four master planned communities, four traditional, lower socio-economic communities adjacent to the planned communities, and two inner urban, harbourside master planned communities.

Individuals and families around Australia are struggling to integrate the demands of work with the needs of home and community life and the reports from the Work, Home and Community project call for a more holistic approach to urban planning - one that considers the daily activities of residents across the lifespan, and acknowledges the space, time and power effects of urban design on different groups of people. The quality and location of work and essential services were found to be particularly significant to people's ability to live sustaining lives and build socially robust communities.

The Work, Home and Community Project was a three year study jointly funded by the Australia Research Council, Lend Lease Communities and the IEOG. Qualitative and quantitative information was collected from adult and teenage residents, workers, business owners and community service providers across the 10 suburban and urban communities. The overview report draws together the views of all those groups and provides specific stakeholder recommendations to government, planners, developers, businesses, schools and individuals.

#### Reports

<http://www.unisa.edu.au/hawkeianstitute/cwl/projects/work-home-community.asp>

#### For further information

Dr Pip Williams, Research

Fellow:

[pip.williams@unisa.edu.au](mailto:pip.williams@unisa.edu.au), 08 83024234

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## Emergency Services

### Item 10: Outcomes from State Emergency Service Contributions Survey

The LGSA recently conducted a survey of NSW Councils on the level of statutory and voluntary contributions to the State Emergency Service (SES) and impacts of the new Emergency Service Levy.

Thank you to all councils that responded. Some clear themes are outlined below.

The LGSA has recently received the 2008/09 actual Fire Service Levy (FSL) and final Emergency Service Levy (ESL) estimates for 2009/2010 from Emergency Management NSW and as such have been able to make a more appropriate assessment of the financial impacts of the new funding system.

#### For further information

Liz Gemes, Policy Officer Rural Affairs and Emergency Services:  
02 9242 4063,  
[liz.gemes@lgsa.org.au](mailto:liz.gemes@lgsa.org.au)

Total NSW 2008/09 Council contribution to the two Fire Services - FSL			
NSWFB (12.3%)	RFS (13.3%)	SES (0%)	<b>Total FSL</b>
\$63,039,313	\$26,738,213	\$ ~	<b>\$89,777,526</b>
Total NSW final estimate 2009/10 Council contribution to the three Emergency Services - ESL			
NSWFB (11.7%)	RFS (11.7%)	SES (11.7%)	<b>Total ESL</b>
\$63,891,654	\$25,333,908	\$6,211,612	<b>\$95,437,175</b>

Councils support their Emergency Services a number of ways including;

- through the payment of the ESL;
- provision of facilities to the RFS and SES as required by legislation; and
- voluntary financial and equipment contributions, and in-kind services.

### Statutory contributions vs Voluntary contributions

The clear message from the survey responses was the lack of understanding of what is required as a statutory contribution, what is considered a voluntary contribution and how the two interrelate. Following is a brief outline of contributions.

Statutory Contributions	Voluntary Contributions
<p>Payment of ESL issued by Emergency Management NSW for the 11.7% Local Government contribution to the three Emergency Service Budgets.</p> <p>Legislation requires councils to provide the SES suitable facilities that will accommodate training, storage, and office. Councils are also required to provide the RFS with suitable facilities and accommodation for the Fire Control Officer to exercise their functions.</p>	<p>There is an historical expectation that councils will provide a range voluntary contributions to their regional SES units such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vehicles (subsidies up to \$35k available from the SES on dollar-for-dollar basis with the council).</li> <li>• Vehicle operating costs.</li> <li>• Operational and office equipment including maintenance.</li> <li>• Accounting and administrative services.</li> <li>• Day-to-day running costs.</li> </ul>

All NSW Councils mandatory FSL and ESL contributions in 2008/09 and 2009/10 have been individually compared to identify disparities in contribution amounts.

Please be aware that in many situations the differences are created because of scheduled capital expenditure in that region, but not for all. These figures do not include the council's voluntary contributions.

Councils with a high increase in their contribution are being contacted to ascertain if the excessive increase is due to an anomaly in the new funding structure or an advised increase in expenditure.

<i>e.g. A Council Contributions</i>	<i>08/09 FSL</i>	<i>09/10 ESL</i>	<i>\$ Increase</i>	<i>% Increase</i>	
	<i>\$409,271</i>	<i>\$504,820</i>	<i>\$95,548</i>	<u><i>+23.3%</i></u>	
<b>Number of Councils in each % band of increased or decreased contribution amounts</b>					
-20% ~ -10%	-10% ~ -5%	-5% ~ 5%	5% ~ 10%	10% ~ 20%	20% +
10	6	54	42	30	10

### **Future Voluntary Contributions to the SES**

Councils were asked what their intention was for future voluntary contributions to the SES. The responses were as follow:

Committed to maintaining current standard of voluntary contributions	37%
Will review level of voluntary contributions after impacts of new ESL are known	36%
Will be reducing level of voluntary contributions	7%
Will be stopping voluntary contributions	7%
No answer or initially do not provide voluntary contributions	13%

### **Issues identified**

Councils have voiced criticism at how the new funding system was introduced and raised issues which included:

- lack of consultation;
- inadequate and delayed information;
- that the information provided from EMNSW and SES units were conflicting; and
- funding structure and accounting practices of local SES units and asset management issues.

Since the release of the final 2009/10 ESL contributions estimates many councils have voiced concerns about being unfairly over-charged.

The LGSA are pursuing these matters and will advise councils of any updates.

File Reference: R90/0753 LG

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## Environment

### Item 11: Local Government Innovation in Waste Awards 2010

Has your Council undertaken innovative Waste Management Projects in the last three years that have achieved great results? If so, share them with the Coffs Harbour Waste 2010 Conference. By doing so, your Council or Waste Authority could win a great prize!

The Local Government Innovation in Waste Awards are being conducted by the Waste 2010 Conference with support from the LGSA and the Waste Management Association of Australia.

Entries close Friday 12 February 2010.

#### Prizes

##### 1st Prize

A return trip to the US to a Waste Conference (return airfare, five nights accommodation and registration) to the value of AU\$4,000; and a 1st prize plaque.

##### 2nd Prize

A return trip to New Zealand WasteMINZ 2010 Conference (return airfare, three nights accommodation and registration) to the value of AU\$2,500; and a 2nd prize plaque.

##### 3rd Prize

Registration (including attendance at all social events) and two nights accommodation at Waste 2011 in Coffs Harbour to the value of \$1,000; and a 3rd prize plaque.

##### 4th and 5th Prizes

Highly commended plaques.

File R90/0561 RV

#### Key dates

Entries close 12 February 2010

#### Online information

[www.impactenviro.com.au/waste2010/](http://www.impactenviro.com.au/waste2010/)

#### For further information

Greg or Dawn: 02 6583 8118;  
[waste2010@impactenviro.com.au](mailto:waste2010@impactenviro.com.au).

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## Environment

### Item 12: Protection of the Environment: Authorised Officers

**The first course for 2010 begins in February in Sydney. Courses fill up very quickly, so book now.**

The Authorised Officers Course for local councils will again be delivered by SD Environmental Management on behalf of the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water NSW (DECCW). There are three courses for 2010.

The course continues to meet councils' needs for fulfilling their regulatory duties. It is continually updated, with new examples of council regulatory work and outcomes of prosecutions added every year. It includes the amendments to the Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997 (POEO).

The course is aligned to the Local Government training package, in particular the Certificate IV in Local Government (Regulatory Services).

#### Dates and Locations

**Sydney:** Holiday Inn, Potts Point - February 9-10, February 23-24.

**Parramatta:** The Sebel, June 8-9, June 22-23.

**Griffith:** The Burley Griffin Room, Griffith Regional Theatre, Oct 25–28.

File R96/0003: RV

#### Course outline and registration form

[www.sdenviro.com.au](http://www.sdenviro.com.au).

#### Cost

\$1400 for four days (includes comprehensive Learner Guide, copy of POEO Act, assessment and all catering). Reductions for in-house or groups are available.

#### Online information

<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/sustainbus/trainingandeducation.htm>

#### For further information

Sonja Duncan at SD Environmental Management: 02 4946 7811;  
[sonja@sdenviro.com.au](mailto:sonja@sdenviro.com.au).

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## Environment

### Item 13: Ozwater'10

**Registration for the Australian Water Association's (AWA) Ozwater'10 Conference and Trade Exhibition is now open. Earlybird Registration closes today, so be quick!**

#### Who should attend

AWA's Ozwater is the largest water conference and trade exhibition in the southern hemisphere and will interest any person with a professional involvement in the water industry.

Thousands of water sector professionals will attend Ozwater'10 to profile the projects, technologies and practices that will feature in an increasingly challenging and demanding era of water management.

#### The Conference

Ozwater'10's theme 'Achieving Water Security' acknowledges the many challenges facing the water industry such as climate change, water shortages and skills shortages and the responses that the industry is making from both the policy and practical points of view.

The conference will represent all sectors of the industry, integrating ideas and knowledge among people involved in research, regulation, consultancy, management and operations, drinking water, wastewater and stormwater.

The conference program will include eminent keynote speakers encompassing experiences, challenges and solutions from within Australia, New Zealand, Africa and Europe.

Presentations will be complemented by over 180 platform papers and workshops under the main conference themes of:

- Integrating Water Management.
- Making Sense of Water Policy Reform – the Last 10 Years and the Next.
- New Water Sources and Systems.
- Water and People.
- Water and Wastewater Systems and Processes.

#### Trade Exhibition

The Ozwater'10 free trade exhibition will showcase the best of the best in water sector products, services and technology presented by more than 200 national and international exhibitors.

Ozwater'10 is one of the most important events on the water sector calendar.

File Reference: R90/1056-12 SM

#### Date and Location

8–10 Mar 2010, Brisbane  
Convention & Exhibition Centre

#### Early bird registration

Closes today, 15 January 2010

#### Online information

Program, registration and further information is available at the conference website at [www.ozwater10.com.au](http://www.ozwater10.com.au)

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## Finance

### Item 14: Changes to Special Rate Variation Process

**Significant changes and a range of new application processes and procedures for Special Variations and increases in Minimum Rates for 2010/11 are likely to present difficulties to many councils**

The changes were announced in Division of Local Government Circular 09-42 issued on 18 December 2009. New guidelines were issued on the same date. A summary of the Circular is presented below.

#### Increasing minimum amounts

Applications to increase minimum amounts above the statutory limits are now the subject of a separate application process. Councils will not be permitted, as part of a special rate variation, to alter the relative rating burden between those paying the minimum rate and other ratepayers.

#### Special variations

Councils wishing to apply for a special variation must comply with the Division's **Guidelines for the preparation of an application for a special variation to general income in 2010/2011**.

The guidelines provide advice to councils and other interested parties on:

- how the new Integrated Planning and Reporting reforms impact on special variations;
- what the different types of special variations are;
- what the special variation application process involves; and
- the treatment of applications to increase minimum rates above the statutory limit.

Councils wishing to increase minimum ordinary or special rates above the statutory limit must comply with the Division's **Guidelines for the preparation of an application to increase minimum rates above the statutory limit**, which are also published on the 'Information for Councils' section of the Division's website.

It is the responsibility of councils to ensure their application is fully compliant with the relevant guidelines and that all relevant information is provided as part of the application. All councils are required to submit their comprehensive applications in line with the following schedules.

#### Special Variation Applications - Under section 508(2)

Councils applying for a section 508(2) special variation in 2010/11 are required to submit their completed application, including the results of their draft management plan consultations and resolution to adopt the plan, by Friday 26 March 2010.

#### Special Variation Applications - Under section 508A

Councils applying for a section 508A special variation in 2010/11 are required to submit their application in accordance with the following:

Stage 1: Intention to Apply – to be submitted by Friday 29 January 2010.

Stage 2: Final application (including community engagement outcomes) to be submitted by Friday 30 April 2010.

#### Circular

<http://www.dlg.nsw.gov.au/dlg/dlghome/documents/Circulars/09-42.pdf>

#### Guidelines

[http://www.dlg.nsw.gov.au/dlg/dlghome/documents/Information/Special%20Variation%20Application%20Guidelines%202010\\_11.pdf](http://www.dlg.nsw.gov.au/dlg/dlghome/documents/Information/Special%20Variation%20Application%20Guidelines%202010_11.pdf)

[http://www.dlg.nsw.gov.au/dlg/dlghome/documents/Information/Minimum%20Amount%20-%20Application%20Guidelines%202010\\_11.pdf](http://www.dlg.nsw.gov.au/dlg/dlghome/documents/Information/Minimum%20Amount%20-%20Application%20Guidelines%202010_11.pdf)

#### Online information

[www.dlg.nsw.gov.au](http://www.dlg.nsw.gov.au) under 'Information for councils'

#### For further information

DLG rates section: 02 4428 4100

LGSA: Shaun McBride, Strategy Manager, Finance, Infrastructure and Planning: 02 9242 4072; [shaun.mcbride@lgsa.org.au](mailto:shaun.mcbride@lgsa.org.au)

## **Minimum Amount Applications**

Councils applying to increase minimum amounts above the statutory limit in 2010/11 are required to submit their completed applications, including the results of their draft management plan consultations and resolution to adopt the plan, by Friday 28 May 2010.

The LGSA are concerned that these significant changes have been made without consultation and that they will present problems to many councils. The LGSA will be making representations to the Minister and the DLG.

File Reference: R90/0397SMcB

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## Infrastructure

### Item 15: Fluoridation of Public Water Supplies - Training

**Council staff working in fluoridation plants are required to complete this training in order to be eligible for a fluoride plant operator's licence, issued by NSW Health.**

This training is provided by TAFE/Open Training and Education Network (OTEN) (Western Sydney Institute), in conjunction with NSW Health and NSW Office of Water.

It is a three day workshop that is run several times a year on a needs basis. Councils should register their interest to ensure training is arranged.

File Reference: R90/0575

#### **Next training session**

Bowral 16-18 March 2010.

#### **For further information**

Christine Schwartzkoff, Part Time Teacher (Mon, Wed), TAFE NSW, Western Sydney Institute:  
02 9715 8484;  
[christine.schwartzkoff@tafensw.edu.au](mailto:christine.schwartzkoff@tafensw.edu.au)

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## Learning

### Item 16: Councillor Professional Development Program – Feb-March 2010

Programs scheduled from February to March 2010 in Sydney.

#### **Good Governance**

Saturday 13 February

#### **Effective Meeting Skills**

Monday 15 February\*

#### **Managing the Information Overload –Speed Reading**

Thursday 18 February

#### **Media Fundamentals**

Monday 22 February

#### **Planning Legislation Skills and Knowledge**

Friday 26 February

#### **Initiating Change for Councillors**

Thursday 4 March

#### **Councillor Weekend**

Friday 12 March to Saturday 13 March

#### **Financial Skills for Councillors**

Friday 19 March

#### **Connecting with the Community**

Friday 26 March

\*Evening module

File Reference: R95/0084:RN

#### **Costs**

Most modules: \$495 inc GST.  
Media Fundamentals: \$594 inc GST.  
Evening modules: \$330 inc GST.  
The Councillor Weekend: \$880 inc GST.

#### **Registrations**

Online registration is available:  
<http://www.lgsa.org.au/www/html/150-learning-solutions.asp>.  
Alternatively download a form from the above link and fax to 02 9242 4188 or email [learning@learning.org.au](mailto:learning@learning.org.au).

#### **Further information**

Ruth Niemczyk, Learning Solutions  
[ruth.niemczyk@lgsa.org.au](mailto:ruth.niemczyk@lgsa.org.au)

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## Learning

### Item 17: The Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (GIPA Act)

Two workshops have been scheduled for February 2010.

The issue of primary importance for NSW councils agencies is that the GIPA Act will repeal the Freedom of Information Act 1989 (FoI Act) including the exemption categories contained within the FoI Act against disclosure of the documents to the public.

The workshop will identify the practical implications for councils and provides a guide to ensuring that councils and managers are fully aware of their legal obligations under the law.

#### Who Should Attend?

GIPA/FoI officers, public affairs officers, governance managers and senior staff.

#### Course Presenter

Monica Kelly, Associate, Maddocks

#### 2009 Date and Location

**Sydney:** Thursday 18 February, Local Government Learning Centre

**Wagga Wagga:** Thursday 25 February, Bob Osborne Skills Centre

File Reference: I98/0012:RN

#### Cost

\$440 inc GST

#### Registrations

<http://www.lgsa.org.au/www/html/152-courses-for-staff.asp>

#### Further Information

Learning Solutions: 02 9242 4181 or [learning@lgsa.org.au](mailto:learning@lgsa.org.au)

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## Learning

### Item 18: Planning for Effective Public Participation

**This introductory module provides the fundamentals for effective public participation. It will be delivered in Sydney on 9-10 March 2010.**

Participants will learn how to establish clear and achievable objectives for public participation and how to define a promise to the public, using the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum for Public Participation.

Participants will learn how to prepare their organisation or project teams for conducting public participation and how to plan for the timing, techniques, and resources needed to make public participation a success.

This course is well recognised amongst the community of public participation professionals in Australia and New Zealand and many other countries including USA, Canada and the UK.

#### Facilitator

Margaret Harvie, Plan Com Consulting P/L. Margaret is an accredited International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) trainer.

Margaret has extensive local, national and overseas experience including experience in community development with Indigenous communities in Queensland.

File Reference: R98/0012:RN

#### Dates and Location

9-10 Mar 2010,  
Local Government Learning  
Centre, 28 Margaret St Sydney

#### Cost

\$880 inc GST

#### Registrations

[learning@learning.org.au](mailto:learning@learning.org.au)

#### Further information

Learning Solutions: Jennifer  
Fanning on 02 9242 4181 or  
[learning@lgsa.org.au](mailto:learning@lgsa.org.au).

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## Learning

### Item 19: Managing Information Overload – Speed Reading for Councillors and Senior Staff

**Increase your comprehension and manage the sometimes overwhelming reading material you face each week.**

Presented by renowned international speaker, author and trainer Roz Townsend, the course teaches you the basic principles of speed reading and will help improve your comprehension.

You will also learn how to improve your memory and use mind maps to store information. Once these basic skills have been understood, they can be applied to a whole range of documents.

Develop your skills in concentration, comprehension, previewing, punctuation, paragraphing, peripheral vision, skimming, scanning, memory, mind mapping and flexible reading.

File Reference: R95/0084:RN

#### **Dates and Location**

**Sydney:** Thu 18 Feb: Local Government Learning Centre.

**Tamworth:** Wed 3 Mar.

#### **Cost**

\$495 inc GST

#### **Registrations**

<http://www.lgsa.org.au/www/html/150-learning-solutions.asp>

#### **Further Information**

Ruth Niemczyk, Learning Solutions: 02 9242 4180, [learning@lgsa.org.au](mailto:learning@lgsa.org.au)

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## Learning

### Item 20: Time Management and Mentoring Skills for Managers

Managers who need to refine their time management or mentoring skills will benefit from these workshops held in Ballina.

#### Time Management

Anyone who struggles with prioritising their work, managing tasks, handling people interrupters or shifting priorities, procrastination, or managing emails, should attend this very practical workshop.

Participants will walk away from this program with a comprehensive manual of ready to use time management tools, as well as a more disciplined approach to planning their day and eliminating or diminishing the affects of time wasting behaviours

#### Mentoring Skills for Managers

Managers who want to facilitate the learning of their colleagues in the workplace will benefit from this program.

The program will cover the following topics:

- understand the roles and responsibilities of a mentor;
- know what it takes to be a mentor;
- understand what the mentee and the mentor will get out of the mentoring partnership;
- follow a defined mentoring process;
- understand how to have a first mentoring meeting and follow up interactions;
- appreciate the need for personal growth opportunities;
- know the pitfalls of mentoring relationships; and
- develop a personal action plan to consolidate the learning on this workshop.

#### Facilitator

Ruth Niemczyk, Manager, Local Government Learning Solutions

File Reference: I98/0012:RN

#### Dates and Location

**Time Management** – Ballina, Thu 18 Feb

**Mentoring Skills** – Ballina, Fri 19 Feb

#### Cost

\$462 inc GST

#### Registrations

<http://www.lgsa.org.au/www/html/152-courses-for-staff.asp>

#### Further Information

Learning Solutions: 02 9242 4181/0

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## Learning

### Item 21: Seminar - Land and Environment Court Decisions and the Implications for Local Government

The free, lunchtime seminar will explore decision on retail centres, climate change, recent planning principles and section 34 conferences (mediation).

This is a joint LGSA and Maddocks seminar to be held in Sydney for councillors and senior staff.

The NSW Land and Environment Court (L&E Court) deals with land, planning and environment law matters relevant to Local Government practice.

By providing an alternative vehicle for environmental protection, the L&E Court often produces landmark cases and cases establishing planning principles.

#### Presenters

Stan Kondilios, Partner, Maddocks and Prue Burns, Partner, Maddocks.

#### Registrations

Registrations are essential since numbers are limited. A confirmation letter will be faxed with details of the venue.

File Reference: I98/0012:RN

#### Date and Time

Fri 5 Mar 2010, 12 - 2pm

#### Location

Local Government Learning Centre, 28 Margaret Street, Sydney

#### Registrations

[learning@lgsa.org.au](mailto:learning@lgsa.org.au)

#### Further Information

Learning Solutions: 02 9242 4181; [learning@lgsa.org.au](mailto:learning@lgsa.org.au)

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## Learning

### Item 22: Trainer's Showcase

Professional development is very important for all Local Government staff. To help council trainers to keep up their own professional development, this Trainer's Showcase provides quick bursts of ready to use icebreakers, activities and ideas for your induction, OH&S and other programs.

#### Showcase content

- Best selling training DVDs
- Writing skills tips for trainers
- Managing information overload – how to get more out of your training day
- Innovative learning strategies
- How to handle difficult workshop participants
- Training technology – what's new out there
- Getting real with training evaluations
- Best practice training needs assessments
- The ten best icebreakers to engage your audience.

The Showcase topics will be presented in practical short bites and everyone who attends will walk away with a comprehensive manual of tips and ideas and a list of the best web sites for trainers.

#### Two events for your convenience

To help regional councils we have scheduled the event on Tuesday 16 February, the day after our free Learning and Development Network meeting on 15 February. Staff can attend two professional development events over two consecutive days.

Participant numbers are restricted so please register early.

File Reference: I98/0012:RN

#### Date and Location

Tue 16 Feb, 9.00am – 4.30pm,  
Sydney

#### Cost

\$55 inc GST. The fee includes lunch and the trainer's manual.

#### Registrations

<http://www.lgsa.org.au/www/html/152-courses-for-staff.asp>

#### Further information

Darryl Rubiolo, Learning  
Solutions: 02 92424182;  
[learning@lgsa.org.au](mailto:learning@lgsa.org.au)

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## Roads and Transport

### Item 23: Plantations Act and Code Review

The NSW Department of Industry and Investment is seeking feedback on the proposed amendments to the Plantations and Reafforestation Act 1999 and the Plantations and Reafforestation (Code) Regulation 2001.

A statutory review of the Act and Regulation began in 2005. The purpose of the review was to consider whether the policy objectives of the Act were valid, and whether the terms of the Act and Code are still appropriate to meet those objectives.

The Government stated that feedback from stakeholders indicates the Act and Code are – for the most part – working well and have industry support. The review has therefore been directed to fine-tuning existing provisions and considering issues of concern identified by stakeholders.

#### Proposed amendments

A number of inter-agency working groups developed proposals for amendments to the Act and Code based on recommendations in the Report to Parliament. An Industry Reference Group was consulted on these proposals.

The proposed changes include:

- new transport infrastructure contribution provisions
- new fire protection provisions
- revised provisions to meet best practice environmental standards
- introduction of application fees
- other measures to improve the effectiveness of the Act and Code.

The Plantations and Reafforestation Amendment Bill 2009 and Plantations and Reafforestation (Code) Amendment Regulation 2009 propose amendments to the Act and Code based on the recommendations of the working groups.

#### Your feedback

The draft Bill and Regulation will be on public exhibition until 12 February 2010 and Industry and Investment NSW welcomes submissions on the proposed amendments.

The LGSA will be considering the draft bill and regulation and would appreciate any feedback from councils or copies of submissions to assist us in formulating a whole-of-Local Government response. These can be made to Richard Connors (details above.)

File Reference: R90/0552:RC

#### Online information

The Bill, Amendment Regulation and Information Sheets:  
<http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/resources/private-forestry/plantation-authorisations/review>

#### Discussion paper (June 05):

[http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0016/312109/review-discussion-paper.pdf](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0016/312109/review-discussion-paper.pdf)

#### Report to Parliament (December 05):

[http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0014/312107/Report-to-parliament-review.pdf](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0014/312107/Report-to-parliament-review.pdf)

#### Further information

NSW Department of Industry & Investment: Lindsey Paget-Cooke, Acting Manager, Legislation & Government Relations: 02 8289 3970; [lindsey.paget-cooke@industry.nsw.gov.au](mailto:lindsey.paget-cooke@industry.nsw.gov.au).

LGSA: Richard Connors, Senior Policy Officer, Roads and Transport: 02 9242 4073; [Richard.Connors@lgsa.org.au](mailto:Richard.Connors@lgsa.org.au).

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## Roads and Transport

### Item 24: Photos of local road and bridge infrastructure

#### Photographs are needed for a forthcoming research report on local road asset funding.

The LGSA in conjunction with the Institute of Public Works Engineering NSW (IPWEA), are undertaking a research project on various aspects of road asset funding.

This work updates and adds upon similar work done for the NSW Local Government Financial Sustainability Inquiry and more recently updated road and bridge benchmarking studies undertaken by IPWEA.

It is intended that the report be a key component of the LGSA political platform for the next state and federal elections.

To better illustrate the report, the LGSA are seeking photographs of Local Government road and bridge infrastructure.

We would particularly like to emphasise those parts of the local road network of key economic, employment or social importance, and which are either in poor condition or have been affected by funding shortfalls. Examples could include:

- Road pavements or timber bridges in poor condition;
- Load limited roads and bridges, or bypasses resulting from load limited infrastructure (including relevant signage);
- Photos illustrating key economic impacts of under-funded local road networks, e.g. heavy vehicles using local roads/bridges, tourism related traffic etc; and
- Photos illustrating other local road users impacted upon by the condition of the local road network, e.g. school buses, emergency vehicles etc.

We are also interested in photos of local or regional roads and bridges that have benefited from funding initiatives such as the Commonwealth Government's Roads to Recovery Program or the State Government's Regional Road Block Grant and Timber Bridge Funding programs.

File Reference: R90/0724:RC

#### Further Information

Please forward photos to Richard Connors, Senior Policy Officer, Roads and Transport, LGSA:  
02 9242 4073;  
[Richard.Connors@lgsa.org.au](mailto:Richard.Connors@lgsa.org.au).

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## Roads and Transport

### Item 25: Nominations sought for RTA Regional Traffic Committees

The Roads and Traffic Authority are seeking nominations from suitably qualified council staff to represent Local Government on their Sydney, Northern, Southern and South Western Regional Traffic Committees.

The Regional Traffic Committees provide independent technical advice on behalf of the Chief Executive, Roads and Traffic Authority on all matters relating to appeals on traffic matters and related issues from members of the Local Traffic Committees.

Local Government is represented on each of these Regional Traffic Committees by council staff nominated by the LGSA. These positions are generally filled by Directors or Managers of Engineering Services, Transport or Infrastructure Divisions of councils.

#### Nominees

Nominees should forward their name, position and contact details to the LGSA' Roads and Transport Policy Officer, Richard Connors by Friday 5 February 2010.

R92/0048:RC

#### Online information

[http://163.189.217.150/doingbusinesswithus/lgr/downloads/information/committees/traffic\\_committees.html](http://163.189.217.150/doingbusinesswithus/lgr/downloads/information/committees/traffic_committees.html)

#### Further Information

RTA: John Ronczka, Regional Traffic Committee Secretariat, Telephone 131782, email: [John.RONCZKA@rta.nsw.gov.au](mailto:John.RONCZKA@rta.nsw.gov.au)

LGSA: Richard Connors, Senior Policy Officer, Roads and Transport, 02 9242 4073, [Richard.Connors@lgsa.org.au](mailto:Richard.Connors@lgsa.org.au), fax 02 9242 4111.

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## Tourism

### Item 26: 2010 Local Government NSW Tourism Conference

**Conference registration is now open. This year's theme is 'The Business of Tourism.' Discounted earlybird registration closes 27 January.**

The Tourism Conference website includes the draft program, details regarding travel, accommodation and social events.

Hosted by Cowra Shire Council, the conference will discuss and examine the business of tourism - creating business opportunities, understanding what funding is available and what programs may be applicable. The sessions will also explore and debate who should hold the responsibility for funding tourism - is tourism council business?

#### Topic streams

Topic streams include the Business of Events; The Business of Tourism Funding; The Business of Tourism Marketing and Integrated Planning; and The Business of Developing Cultural Tourism.

#### Strengthen your tourism strategy

This conference creates a framework helping mayors, councillors, tourism staff and industry representatives strengthen their tourism strategy including information on:

- Funding opportunities: AusIndustry, TQUAL, Regional Funding, International Incentive funding and case studies from councils.
- Marketing models for Visitor Information Centres.
- The latest research into destination marketing.

#### Site inspection: Cowra POW camp

The site inspection to the Cowra POW Camp will highlight regional cultural tourism and the various case studies will include metropolitan examples of successful cultural tourism projects. Friday afternoon will see a hands-on workshop using the POW Camp site inspection as an example to create a collaborative marketing strategy, a financial and stakeholder plan and a plan for community involvement and infrastructure.

#### Tourism Managers Exchange

The Tourism Industry Council (TIC) and Tourism NSW are also offering the Tourism Managers Exchange early on Wednesday 10 March – a free forum for council tourism managers. An optional afternoon session will explore The Business of Tourism Events.

#### Partners and Sponsors

The 2010 NSW Tourism Conference is partnered by Tourism New South Wales and supported by the Tourism Industry Council. It is sponsored by Countrylink, The Cowra Guardian, LPMA's Crown Land Division, CCIA, Aurora Research, Tourism Research Australia, Kempsey Shire Council, and City Marketing. (Sponsorship is still available at this time, so please enquire if you're interested).

R09/0005: MF

#### Register

[www.TourismConference.lgsa.org.au](http://www.TourismConference.lgsa.org.au)

**Earlybird registration closes**  
27 January

**Conference Date**  
10-12 March 2010

**Host**  
Cowra Shire Council

**Further information**  
Meg Fisher, Manager Events and  
Protocol: 02 9242 4044;  
[meg.fisher@lgsa.org.au](mailto:meg.fisher@lgsa.org.au).

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## **In the News**

### **Item 27: Media from the LGSA**

**View the latest media releases distributed by the LGSA**

#### **Local Government eager for Election Inquiry outcomes**

Wednesday, 6 January 2010

<http://www.lgsa.org.au/www/html/3191-06-january-2010-local-government-eager-for-election-inquiry-outcomes.asp?intSiteID=1>

NSW councils are awaiting the decision of the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters into the conduct and escalating costs of the 2008 Local Government elections.

#### **Councils actively helping small businesses**

Wednesday, 6 January 2010

<http://www.lgsa.org.au/www/html/3190-06-january-2010-councils-actively-helping-small-businesses.asp?intSiteID=1>

The Local Government and Shires Associations say that NSW Councils promote, support and facilitate small business in a variety of ways.

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## In the News

### Item 28: Local Government Media

#### View the latest Local Government media articles

[CBD Metro](#)

[Councils' behaviour is ripe for scrutiny](#)

[Coastal erosion](#)

[More perks than pay](#)

[Big blowout](#)

[Pool bouncers cool the hot-heads in a summer of violence](#)

[Tree Removal](#)

[Fat fees threaten to push personal trainers past their limits](#)

[Australia Day alcohol ban](#)

[Smoking fines not an idle threat this summer](#)

[Businesses prefer the tax man](#)

[Weed funding response a disgrace](#)

[Water](#)

[Drafting error puts rezonings in jeopardy](#)

[Give NSW full-time councillors](#)

[Grants will help our harbour sparkle](#)

[Farms not at risk: Tebutt](#)

[State reneges on emergency service charge guarantee](#)

#### CBD Metro

##### 2GB (Sydney), Monday 11 January

Host wonders when the NSW Govt will 'admit defeat' on the CBD Metro, a train line between Rozelle and the CBD that 'apparently, no one wants'. He says a new report due this week from the Sydney Metro Authority says that tens of thousands of commuters each day will face transport chaos that could last as much as three years while the Metro is constructed. He says that NSW Oppn Leader Barry O'Farrell says he'll can the project if elected in 2011. Host speaks to NSW Planning Minister Tony Kelly about the issue. Oldfield asks how Kelly can justify truck movements from 7am-7pm along Victoria Road for Metro construction. Kelly says the Dept of Planning has recommended the approval for the Metro. He says the proposal started with the Sydney Metro Authority launching a development application, which was then put on public exhibition. He says the public, as well as Govt departments including the RTA, Maritime Authority, Barangaroo Development, State Transit, and Dept of Environment, then puts forward submissions based on the application.

##### CityRail says capacity of CBD Metro not needed

##### Sydney Morning Herald, Wednesday 13 January

<http://www.smh.com.au/national/cityrail-says-capacity-of-cbd-metro-not-needed-20100112-m4u4.html>

CITYRAIL has undercut one of the main justifications for the Government's planned \$5.3 billion CBD Metro by insisting there is spare capacity on its trains, including those to western Sydney.

##### Inner West Courier, Tuesday 12 January

Link unavailable

DESPERATE Rozelle businesses are considering joining their counterparts in Pyrmont to launch a joint legal action against the CBD Metro. Rozelle Health and Beauty Pharmacy owner Chadi Tahan said the action coind at the very least buy those businesses involved a bit of time.

##### Councils' behaviour is ripe for scrutiny

##### Daily Telegraph, Tuesday 12 January

[http://blogs.news.com.au/dailytelegraph/piersakerman/index.php/dailytelegraph/comments/councils\\_behaviour\\_is\\_ripe\\_for\\_scrutiny/](http://blogs.news.com.au/dailytelegraph/piersakerman/index.php/dailytelegraph/comments/councils_behaviour_is_ripe_for_scrutiny/)

IN GREAT New Year's news, state Opposition Leader Barry O'Farrell says local government will be put under the microscope if Labor is voted out next year. The Planning Act will be explored particularly closely, O'Farrell told me, because of the disgraceful way it has been degraded under successive Labor premiers and planning ministers.

## **Coastal erosion**

### **ABC Broken Hill (Broken Hill); ABC Illawarra (Wollongong); ABC South East NSW (Bega), Tuesday 12 January**

The State Govt has told local councils they must have emergency plans for managing serious coastal erosion by June and has identified 19 key erosion hotspots.

## **More perks than pay**

### **Daily Telegraph, Wednesday 13 January**

<http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/money/money-matters/councils-live-it-up-at-our-expense/story-fn300aev-1225818573561>

COUNCILS have frittered away millions of ratepayer dollars on themselves - spending up on junkets, Blackberries and souvenirs. Council expenses are now so out of control they are, in some cases, nearly double councillors' pays. Clover Moore's Sydney City Council amassed \$598,595 of expenses - almost twice its councillor wage bill of \$309,260.

### **2UE (Sydney), Wednesday 13 January**

Aloisi reports that councils are under fire for expenditure. Aloisi notes one council spent \$50,000 on 'sustenance'. She wonders what happened to Nice biscuits and a cup of tea. Aloisi reports that some councils, including the City of Sydney Council reportedly spend more on councillors' personal expenses than on their salaries. Stanley defends the councillors, noting that some of the expenditure is on items like Blackberries and child care. Stanley does not like overseas visits.

### **2DU (Dubbo), Wednesday 13 January**

Interview with Genia McCaffery, President, Local Govt Association. Perno notes that an article in the Daily Telegraph local councils have spent millions of tax payer's dollars on council expenses, with some exceeding councillors' pays. McCaffery says it is nothing new and says this story is rehashed by the Telegraph every year around this time of the year because there is not a lot of news to report. She says the assertion that expenses are higher than salaries simply proves that councillors don't get paid enough. She notes that Dubbo councillors expenses are very low. She says they have criticised conferences, particularly their annual conference but she believes it is completely reasonable for councillors to meet annually about issues facing local govts. She says every councillor is accountable for their expenses and there are regulations which govern expenses. She doesn't believe the article is fair.

### **2GB (Sydney), Wednesday 13 January**

Host says today's Daily Telegraph frontpage story claims that some local councils are spending more in expenses than they get in wages. He says the councils are spending money on frivolities at the expense of ratepayers, but continually cry poor when it comes to providing decent services. He says it sounds like 'a complete rort'. He says he'll instead be speaking to Local Govt Association president Genia McCaffery, who joins him to discuss the matter. She says that councillors are poorly paid.

### **2GB (Sydney), Wednesday 13 January**

Caller Stephen says he supports host's comments about councils. He says he keeps a close eye on Hornsby Council, where he is a ratepayer. He says their wastage is 'breathtaking.' He says there is no review from the NSW Auditor General as to how much councils spend and what they spend it on. Oldfield says he hoped to ask NSW Local Government Minister Barbara Perry about this but she was unavailable. He says there is a quarry up in Hornsby, which was bought in an 'under the table deal.' He says that the agreement with the developer went 'pear shaped,' and now Hornsby rate payers have been lumped with a levy to pay off that \$26m. He says this was

never investigated properly. Stephen says he once complained about skid marks left by garbage collectors, but was told it is not Hornsby Council's problem.

### **2GB (Sydney), Wednesday 13 January**

Some councils are spending more money on workers' expenses than the total amount of councillors' wages, where the City of Sydney Council amassed almost \$600,000 in expenses compared to \$300,000 in wages. Chris Hartcher, NSW Opposition Spokesman for Intergovernmental Relations, says people should be concerned.

### **2UE (Sydney), Wednesday 13 January**

It has been revealed some of NSW's local councils are racking up almost twice as much in expenses as they do in salaries. Sydney City Council and Liverpool Council were two councils noted.

### **Vega 95.3FM (Sydney), Wednesday 13 January**

Sydney Councils are being criticised for spending \$millions of rate payers' money on travel, Blackberries, and child care costs, according to the Daily Telegraph. Clover Moore's Sydney City Council spent nearly \$600,000 in expenses, nearly twice the wage bill for councillors.

### **2DAY FM (Sydney), Wednesday 13 January**

Councillors are spending more on expenses than they earn in wages according to the Daily Telegraph. Overseas trips, child care, and souvenirs were bought. Sydney City Council had the highest spenders, with nearly \$600,000 in expenses, almost double the wage bill for the council.

### **2SM (Sydney), Wednesday 13 January**

Gilbert says we should be angry at our councils today. He says it has been revealed some of NSW's local councils are racking up almost twice as much in expenses as they do in salaries. Sydney City Council amassed \$598,595 in expenses, it's wage bill was \$309,000. He says Canterbury Councillors travelled the world on residents money according to the Daily Telegraph. He says they lost hundreds of millions few years ago on sports complexes.

### **2UE (Sydney), Thursday 14 January**

host says that local NSW councillors want to be paid full time, because they believe they are overworked. He says they are working up to 30 council hours on top of their full time job. He says they believe that rate payers would get a better deal if councillors were paid full time. He says the past records of councils are not good. Genia McCaffery, Local Govt Assn President says many mayors are working full time, and are not paid for it. She says this is unfair. She says it is harder to attract young people, and a broad range of candidate, for council representation. She says she could never be the Mayor of North Sydney, as well as have a full time job. She says she doesn't know how some mayors do this. She says the salaries would be the equivalent of an MP. She says performance would be measured by elections.

## **Big blowout**

### **Blacktown Advocate, Wednesday 13 January**

Link unavailable

BLACKTOWN Council is looking to recoup some of the costs it incurred from the last local government election after its expenses skyrocketed from \$460,000 in 2004 to \$821,700 in 2008. The council recorded the highest election cost among NSW councils in the last poll.

### **2EC (Bega), Thursday 14 January**

The Eurobodalla and Bega Valley Shire Councils say they are anxiously awaiting the findings of a new Parliamentary inquiry into the conduct and costs of the 2008 Local Govt Elections. The State Govt took over the conduct of the last local govt poll, previously run by councils themselves, and then billed the Eurobodalla and Bega Valley for the cost. Councils complained to the Premier about the way polls were run as well as the huge increase in costs since the 2004 poll. Eurobodalla Shire General manager Paul Anderson said their bill almost doubled, and there were

costs on top of that due to the state govt in the form of council staff liaising with returning officers and others.

## **Pool bouncers cool the hot-heads in a summer of violence**

**Daily Telegraph, Wednesday 13 January**

<http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/lifestyle/pool-bouncers-cool-the-hot-heads-in-a-summer-of-violence/story-e6frf00i-1225818576157>

NIGHTCLUB-style security measures are being implemented in public pools across NSW to crack down on summer youth violence. The moves, which include bouncers, discreet cameras recording bag inspections and identification checks, are designed to lock down the pools. Parramatta and Newcastle City Council, along with private theme park operators, have been among the first to bring in the measures to keep the peace amid extreme heat and overcrowding at what were once child-friendly environments.

## **Tree Removal**

**Channel 7 (Sydney), Tuesday 12 January**

Home owners are threatening legal action against Sydney Councils for refusing to let them cut down dangerous trees. Nick Tnokovski, Homeowner, says Bankstown Council rejected his application to have a dangerous tree removed. Ryde resident, Jim Hook, is facing a similar problem. Tony Kelly, NSW Minister for Planning, says councils do a good job of assessing trees.

## **Fat fees threaten to push personal trainers past their limits**

Sydney Morning Herald, Wednesday 13 January

<http://www.smh.com.au/executive-style/fitness/fat-fees-threaten-to-push-personal-trainers-past-their-limits-20100112-m4u5.html>

PERSONAL trainers who are feeling the burn as more Sydney councils charge a fee for the use of parks, sporting fields and beaches have warned they will have to pass the cost on to their clients. Leichhardt Council will begin to charge trainers for an annual permit to use parks and sporting grounds next month, with costs ranging from \$300 for one-on-one sessions to \$1500 for large group classes.

**ABC 702 Sydney (Sydney), Wednesday 13 January**

Genia McCaffery says she is passionate about open space being open for the public for free, but large boot camps and repetitive wear from personal training does have a major impact on turf, which costs money. She says North Sydney Council eventually came down on the side of keeping the parks open to everyone for free, but may revisit this. Compere says Leichhardt Council and Waverley Council came to a different conclusion. McCaffery says Councils are after funds, and yet are expected to do more and more things. She says she cannot see using resident permits as an option.

**ABC 702 Sydney (Sydney), Wednesday 13 January**

Compere says personal trainers are up in arms all over Sydney, as Councils start charging them high fees to use their facilities, such as parks, lawns, and ovals. Margie Harris says she is at Gold's Gym, Surry Hills, training a client. She says she uses Jubilee Park, Rushcutters Park, and Centennial Park, and Sydney Council touted the idea several years ago but took it no further. She says she does not know what Sydney Council is doing. She says boot camps are corporate-organised events, and she understands charging them, but she is a personal trainer who does one-on-ones and she is saving the Government health bills down the track. She says this is just revenue raising. Compere says the newspaper today says Leichhardt Council wants to charge from \$300 per year for one-on-one sessions to \$1500 per year for large group classes. Harris says her clients are rate payers in the area, so they are already paying for the facilities. Compere says she is trying to get hold of Leichhardt Council for an explanation.

## **Australia Day alcohol ban**

**Beer canned in push to clean up Australia Day**

## **Sydney Morning Herald, Thursday 14 January**

<http://www.smh.com.au/national/beer-canned-in-push-to-clean-up-australia-day-20100113-m71p.html>

FINDING a spot to enjoy a cold beer by the beach on Australia Day will be tougher this year. Randwick Council has announced that beachside parks and roads around Coogee, an area known for problems related to alcohol, will be "dry" from sunset on January 25 until sunrise on January 27.

## **Channel 7 (Sydney), Thursday 14 January**

Several Sydney Councils have imposed bans on public drinking over Australia Day. Police are also calling for pubs to stop selling full strength alcohol to help crack down on violence. But hotels say it won't solve the problem. John Green, Australian Hotels Association, the community focus should be on the small number of people committing crimes. Alcohol bans will be enforced on Manly, Bondi, Tamarama, Bronte or Cronulla. Of the 19 arrests made last Australia Day 13 were in Coogee - mostly for assault.

## **Smoking fines not an idle threat this summer**

Sydney Morning Herald, Thursday 14 January

<http://www.smh.com.au/national/smoking-fines-not-an-idle-threat-this-summer-20100113-m71n.html>

THE list of rules and regulations at Sydney's most popular beaches has expanded to include volleyball, kite flying and shell collecting in recent years. But one of the more significant bylaws - the ban on smoking - is going virtually unenforced. Manly and Waverley councils introduced smoking bans at four of Sydney's most popular beaches including Bondi and Manly in 2004 in response to environmental and health concerns.

## **Businesses prefer the tax man**

**Central, Wednesday 13 December**

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A NEW survey shows that local councils are more annoying to small businesses than the tax office. The Red Tape survey by the NSW Business Chamber in December 2009 involved more than 400 small businesses, with 24 per cent saying they were frustrated with red tape at all levels of government, but especially local government. The Red Tape survey demonstrates that the real laggards in terms

## **Weed funding response a disgrace**

**Cowra Guardian, Wednesday 13 January**

<http://www.cowraguardian.com.au/news/local/news/general/weed-funding-response-a-disgrace/1724074.aspx>

Cowra Shire Councillor and Shires Association president Bruce Miller has described a Noxious Weeds Advisory Committee response to a request for weeds funding as "an absolute disgrace". Cr Miller's comment followed a request from the Lachlan Valley Weeds Advisory Committee (LVWAC) for funding for weed control in the Lachlan Valley.

## **Water**

**Troubled waters for Keneally**

**The Land, Thursday 14 January**

NSW Premier, Kristina Keneally, is under heavy pressure to let a large slice of the precious water from the recent floods across North West NSW flow into the parched lower reaches of the Murray River in South Australia. But her Water Minister, Phil Costa, says the fledgling Premier (pictured at Coonamble during the height of the floods) won't buckle under the pressure and will stick to the present water-sharing deal with SA.

## **Murray-Darling funding agreed**

**Australian Financial Review, Thursday 14 January**

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The Federal Government has reached agreements with state and territorial governments on a \$3.7 billion commitment for major water infrastructure projects in the Murray-Darling Basin. Federal Water Minister Penny Wong says a deal was finalised with South Australia yesterday, while her spokeswoman says that each bilateral agreement set a timeline for states to meet reform commitments.

## **WIN Dubbo (Dubbo), Thursday 14 January**

Water engineers have wrapped up an investigation to build a \$40m emergency pipeline from Macquarie River to Orange. Bathurst Regional Council claims it should have been consulted before the work started. Orange City Council says it plans to consult its neighbours once it has established where along the river the water will be sourced. Local councils are collectively applying for Fed Govt funding. Local authorities plan a trip to Canberra next month to gauge the Commonwealth support for a plan to expand Lake Rowlands near Blayney. Central Tablelands Water says increasing capacity is expected to cost \$231m but insists it will be worth every cent.

## **Drafting error puts rezonings in jeopardy**

**Sydney Morning Herald, Thursday 14 January**

<http://www.smh.com.au/environment/drafting-error-puts-rezonings-in-jeopardy-20100113-m71m.html>

HOST of local rezoning policies across NSW are under a legal cloud because of a legislative error made while the Premier, Kristina Keneally, was planning minister. The Land and Environment Court ruled yesterday that the rezoning process for a controversial residential development at South Tralee, near Canberra Airport, was invalid because it was conducted under laws which contained a rudimentary numerical error.

## **Give NSW full-time councillors**

**Daily Telegraph, Thursday 14 January**

[http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/news/give-this-state-full-time-councillors/story-e6freuy9-1225819000098?from=public\\_rss](http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/news/give-this-state-full-time-councillors/story-e6freuy9-1225819000098?from=public_rss)

SYDNEY councillors are demanding they go full-time after revelations they work harder but are paid thousands of dollars less than their colleagues in Queensland backwaters. Some Sydney councillors get \$14,080 a year, while Townsville councillors earn \$83,529 more than \$69,000 extra.

## **Grants will help our harbour sparkle**

**North Shore Times, Friday 15 January**

<http://north-shore-times.whereilive.com.au/news/story/grants-will-help-our-harbour-sparkle/>

LANE COVE, Hunters Hill, North Sydney and Mosman will benefit from new state government grants to improve the foreshores of Sydney Harbour and waterways. Premier Kristina Keneally announced \$1.1 million in grants, spread across 13 Sydney councils, last week.

## **Farms not at risk: Tebutt**

**Barrier Daily Truth, Friday 15 January**

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The NSW and South Australian governments on Tuesday reached an in-principle agreement to release "reasonable environmental flows" across the border. Murray-Darling Basin officials met on Wednesday, but a figure is yet to be put on the amount of water set to flow over the border.

## **State reneges on emergency service charge guarantee**

**Cowra Guardian, Friday 15 January**

Despite being given an "ironclad guarantee" that there would be no increase to its emergency services levy Cowra Shire Council was this week told that it would have to pay an additional \$23,000 for the service. The news caused a firestorm of its own at this week's Combined Corporate and Operations meeting of the council with Shires Association president Cr Bruce Miller leading the charge.

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