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Item 15: Council Accreditation Scheme to Commence

The statutory framework for the accreditation of council employees as 'council accredited certifiers' has commenced.

Local Government Association of NSW and the Shires Association of NSW

tel: 02 9242 4000
fax: 02 9242 4111
email: lgsa@lgsa.org.au
website: www.lgsa.org.au
GPO Box 7003 Sydney 2001
Level 8, 28 Margaret St
Sydney NSW 2000

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A range of programs have been scheduled for March 2010 in Sydney.

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Councils can gain significant savings by having training workshops customised to their needs and supplied in house.

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The seminar will feature key issues in employment law and is an essential professional development opportunity for general managers, directors, managers, council legal officers, and human resource professionals.

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The Building Code of Australia (BCA) 2010 takes effect nationwide on 1 May 2010. Leading up to this date, a number of seminars will be held by the Australian Building Codes Board (ABCB) for the information of all parties with an interest in changes to the BCA.

Roads and Transport

Item 17: 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 Southern and South Western Regional Traffic Committees

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General Interest

Item 3: 2010 National Awards for Local Government - Entries Open

Nominations for these awards are now open.

These prestigious awards, now in their 25th year, reward councils for the innovative and important work they do in supporting local communities.

The Rudd Labor Government recognises the critical role of councils in making our communities more productive, liveable and sustainable.

The National Awards are an important plank of the Rudd Labor Government's partnership with Local Government.

This year, the National Awards have been revamped to recognise councils' efforts in delivering local infrastructure, collaborating with neighbouring councils, improving their asset and financial management planning and building their capacity to serve communities.

Councils are encouraged to submit entries that showcase best practice local projects and policies.

The national winners will be judged by an independent panel and announced at the third Australian Council of Local Government meeting at Parliament House in June.

Since their inception, thousands of projects have been recognised and have highlighted creative solutions to local and national challenges.

Key dates

Entries close 31 Mar 2010

Online information

www.infrastructure.gov.au/local/awards

For further information

Department of Infrastructure,
Transport, Regional
Development and Local
Government: 1800 065 113.

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General Interest

Item 4: Local Government Event Coordinators Network Meeting

Using technology to enhance the event experience will be the focus of our next meeting.

This free event for council event professionals is an excellent opportunity to learn and share knowledge and experiences with peers from other councils.

Engaging your audience

Good events offer meaningful and memorable experiences. They engage people physically, intellectually and emotionally.

For the attendee, the experience begins from the very first time they hear about the event and ends well after they leave. Event organisers need to continually find new ways to engage their audience to enhance the overall event experience.

Using the internet

The evolution of the internet has brought with it many tools an event organiser can use to their advantage. In this session, we'll find out what's happening in the web world and how event organisers can make use of this technology to promote events and engage communities.

The program includes presentations on:

- How social media is changing the way we engage on the web.
- Events in 2088: a view from Mosman.
- Social Events: 10 things event management taught me about social media.
- Creating Personas Workshop: user-centred design concept.
- Tweeps at the Web Directions Conference.

Join the network

Local Government professionals working in events, marketing, public relations, or a similar field are encouraged to join the Event Coordinators Network, which facilitates the exchange of information, education and networking amongst professionals.

The LGSA conducts three Event Coordinators' Network Meetings per year. Please contact the LGSA for a full program.

Please email Michelle Muller (details above) for more information.

R00/0012: MM

Key Dates

Mon 22 Mar 2010

Website

www.lgsa.org.au/EventsNetwork

Venue

Fairfax Media office, Sydney

Further information

Michelle Muller, Events
Coordinator, LGSA: 02 9242
4031,
michelle.muller@lgsa.org.au

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Community

Item 5: HACC Better Practice Project call for examples

Ageing, Disability and Home Care (ADHC) is seeking examples of better practice in HACC as part of The Better Practice Project.

The project is an Ageing, Disability and Home Care (ADHC) priority initiative that aligns with:

- the NSW HACC Triennial Plan 2008-2011;
- the NSW State Plan priorities of embedding early intervention into government services and reducing avoidable hospital admissions; and
- international evidence supporting a person-centred, strengths-based enabling approach to service delivery.

ADHC wants to showcase practical examples of better practice from every ADHC Region, and is encouraging service providers large and small and peak bodies to participate in the mapping initiative lead by Alt Beatty Consulting.

Better Practice includes HACC services or programs that:

- focus on each client and carer's strengths and abilities;
- respect and embraces a person's autonomy and independence;
- considers each client's goals and tries to achieve them with short term support;
- promotes health and restores client functioning through a 'use it or lose it' approach and by doing things with each client rather than for the client; and
- supports each client and carer's connections to the community.

Regional Demonstration projects are also being run in the Northern, Hunter, Metro North and Metro South Regions which will demonstrate an early intervention approach for selected frail older adults who have a willingness to participate and the capability of improving functioning in the short term (6 to 12 weeks).

File Reference: R96/0126

Key dates

Nominations close 19 Mar 2010

Online information

Better Practice FAQs are available from:

https://portal.dadhc.nsw.gov.au/_media/message-attachments/Better-Practice-FAQs.pdf

Other information

https://portal.dadhc.nsw.gov.au/_media/message-attachments/Better-Practice-Info-Sheet.pdf

Call for nominations form:

<http://www.dadhc.nsw.gov.au/NR/ronlyres/39C1876A-27F6-4C70-ABAD-CAD56D4F64E1/5098/CallforNominations.pdf>

For further information

Dianne Beatty:

diannebt@ozemail.com.au, 02 6775 2257,
www.dadhc.nsw.gov.au

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Community

Item 6: Draft Public Health Bill

NSW Health released the draft Public Health Bill and its Consultation Paper on 22 February 2010. LGSA are working with NSW Health to try to ensure an appropriate consultation with Local Government.

The draft Bill and paper is available from the NSW Health website.

The Department will consult widely on the draft Bill and will take written submissions on issues outlined in the Paper or on any other matter relating to the Draft Bill.

Please note that submissions will not be considered confidential and may be publically released.

Once submissions have been received, they will be considered by the Department to assist in the review of the draft Bill before its introduction into Parliament.

If you have any issues regarding the draft Bill or the consultation process or would like to be included in a Working Party to assist the process of ensuring a Local Government response to the draft Bill, please contact the Associations.

File Reference: R91/0217-02:HJ

Submissions

Due 19 Apr 2010

Post:

Centre for Health Protection
NSW Department of Health
Locked Bag 961
North Sydney NSW 2059

Email:

publichealth@doh.health.nsw.gov.au

Online information

http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/resources/aboutus/legal/phb2010_draft_pdf.asp

For further information

Helen Johnson, LGSA:
02 9939 8929,
helen.johnson@lgsa.org.au

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Community

Item 7: Rights of older people workshop

The Aged-care Rights Service (TARS) is holding a presentation on abuse of older people and guardianship and consumer rights.

The workshop is relevant to all staff working in community care.

Presentations include:

Abuse of Older People

This session, run by Jill McDonnell, an Education Officer / Advocate with TARS, includes definitions of abuse, types of abuse, principles for responding to abuse and how to respond.

Guardianship and Consumer Rights of Older People

This session, run by Meg Small, a solicitor with Older Person's Legal Service includes the difference between Power of Attorney and Guardianship, types of Powers of Attorney, Guardianship Appointment, Consumer Rights, Reverse Mortgages and Granny Flats.

File Reference: R90/1195

Key dates / Venues

9:30am-12:30pm,
16 Mar 2010,
Northside Community Forum Inc,
1 Chandos Street, St Leonards

Cost

\$20 HACC service workers,
\$60 Non-HACC services workers,
Volunteers free

Online information

Registration form:
<http://www.nsforum.org.au/files/Training/Registration-Form.pdf>

For further information

HACC Development Officer:
8405 4444,
ns-haccdo@nsforum.org.au.

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Community

Item 8: New legislation for Voluntary Out-of-Home Care

New legislation within the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act for Voluntary Out-of-Home Care (VOOHC) was proclaimed on 24 January 2010. VOOHC includes centre-based respite care, host family care, or residential placements.

The recent Special Commission of Inquiry into Child Protection Services in New South Wales recommended that legislation be introduced to better safeguard the interests of children and young people in voluntary out-of-home care (VOOHC), many of whom have disabilities.

Principal provisions of VOOHC legislation

- Sections 135, 135C and 156-156A of the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 ("the Act"); and
- Clauses 40C-40V and Schedules 4 and 5 of the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Regulation 2000 ("the Regulation")

Key changes

- Services that provide VOOHC need to be registered with the Children's Guardian.
- Services that provide VOOHC need to input information onto a Register being developed by the Children's Guardian each time a child or young person accesses VOOHC.
- If a child or young person stays in VOOHC for more than three months in a 12 month period, the placement needs to be supervised by a designated agency.
- If a child or young person stays in VOOHC for more than 180 days in a 12 month period, the supervising designated agency needs to ensure a formal case plan is developed to meet their needs.

The new legislation applies to all government and non-government organisations that provide or arrange VOOHC in NSW, irrespective of who funds those arrangements (private, NSW, Australian or Local Government).

The Children's Guardian have written to organisations that provide or arrange, or may provide or arrange, VOOHC advising them about the new legislation and the requirements of the new VOOHC system. They have also written to organisations representing parents and carers. Those organisations have been provided with the following information as applicable:

- Resource Kit for Designated agencies;
- Resource Kit for non-Designated agencies; and
- Information for parents and carers kit.

It is important to note that organisations that were providing or arranging VOOHC immediately before 24 January 2010 are automatically registered to provide or arrange VOOHC until 24 January 2011.

In relation to the VOOHC Register currently being developed by the Children's Guardian, VOOHC agencies will only have to enter information into the Register in respect of those children who are in VOOHC provided or arranged by the agency at or after the time the Register is operational. However, the Children's Guardian may request that the agency provide it with information in respect of any placements that concluded between 24 January 2010 and the Register becoming operational. The Children's Guardian may then enter this information into the Register.

File Reference: R96/0126

Online information

<http://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/>

Act and Regulation

www.legislation.nsw.gov.au.

For further information

Children's Guardian's switchboard: 02 8219 3600, request to speak to one of their Voluntary Out of Home Care Officers, or via email:

voohc@kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au

Brett Thomas: 02 8270 2054,

brett.thomas@dadhc.nsw.gov.au

Maja Patoor: 02 8270 2207,

maja.patoor@dadhc.nsw.gov.au

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Environment

Item 9: Sustainability Tool Selector: A Guide for Local Government – now available

The LGSA has released a new guide that will help councils break through the jargon surrounding sustainability and find out how they can improve the way they operate.

The guide is intended to save time spent researching tools and help reduce confusion about the differences between the tools.

The Sustainability Tool Selector: A Guide for Local Government was developed by the Institute of Sustainable Futures at the University of Technology Sydney, on behalf of the Urban Sustainability Support Alliance (USSA).

The guide showcases ten tools that can help council staff with evaluation, decision making, developing performance indicators and tracking progress towards sustainability at an organisational and project level. Case studies show how the tools have been used in practice by NSW councils, with a focus on resources required and outcomes achieved.

Guide launch

The tool will be launched in Sydney on 18 March. Attendees will hear about 10 tools from councils who have used them and meet the organizations who developed them. Allan Jones MBE, now City of Sydney, and the man who took Woking Borough Council in England off the electricity grid and introduced solar and tri-generation power, will be the key note speaker.

Hard copies of the Guide will be sent to all councils and will be available to participants at the launch.

Sustainability Tools workshops

Workshops will take place at the following locations:

- Hunter: 3 March
- Armidale: 9 March
- Richmond Valley: 11 March
- Queanbeyan: 16 March
- Bathurst: 23 March
- Fairfield: 31 March
- Wagga Wagga: 29 April

At these workshops, councils can explore in detail and learn how to apply four sustainability tools nominated by their region.

Participants will also receive copies of the guide.

File Reference: R07/0020-02

Download the Guide

<http://www.lgsa-plus.net.au/www/html/2435-organisational-change.asp?intSiteID=2>

Launch/workshop registration

<https://lgsa.wufoo.com/forms/sustainability-tools-workshop-registration/>

Workshop agenda

<http://www.lgsa-plus.net.au/www/html/2323-professional-development.asp>

For further information

Niki Carey: 02 9242 4159,
ussa@lgsa.org.au,
www.lgsa.org.au/ussa

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Learning

Item 10: Learning Solutions Councillor Professional Development Program

A range of programs have been scheduled for March 2010 in Sydney.

Workshop and date

The Effective Chair in Local Government

Monday 15 March (Evening module)

Financial Skills for Councillors

Friday 19 March

Connecting with the Community

Friday 26 March

File Reference: R95/0084:RN

Cost

Most modules are \$495 inclusive of GST per course. Evening modules are \$330 inclusive of GST.

Registrations

Register online at

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

download a form and fax to 02

9242 4188 or email

learning@learning.org.au

Further information

Ruth Niemczyk, Learning Solutions

ruth.niemczyk@lgsa.org.au

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Learning

Item 11: In house Training Services

Councils can gain significant savings by having training workshops customised to their needs and supplied in house.

Here are some of the one day skills programs that could be conducted on your premises:

Handling Difficult People – Staff members who need to be more assertive with aggressive clients or colleagues, who need to improve their communication; and who need to know a process to diffuse anger should attend this workshop.

Time Management – There is an old saying “I was given a book on time management but didn’t have time to read it.” If this is you then maybe you need this highly interactive workshop. All of examples are relevant to our industry.

Managing Information Overload: Speed Reading – We all have the potential to at least double or triple our reading speed and improve our comprehension. Depending on our motivation, we can read at thousands of words per minute. Enhance your performance by learning this new skill.

Improve Your Business Writing (Two day workshop) – If you struggle to write correspondence, reports, submissions etc that do not get the result you want, this practical workshop will help you. (For a more focused topic you can also do a Report Writing or English Grammar and Punctuation workshop).

To receive a comprehensive proposal within the next few days, just contact us with your details and the names of the courses you are enquiring about.

File Reference: I98/0012:RN

Online information

<http://www.lgsa.org.au/www/html/153-in-house-training-services.asp>

Further information

Darryl Rubiolo, Learning Solutions:
02 9242 4182,
learning@lgsa.org.au

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Learning

Item 12: Local Government Employment Law Seminar

The seminar features key issues in employment law and is an essential professional development opportunity for general managers, directors, managers, council legal officers, and human resource professionals.

There have been many legislative changes in employment law recently. The pace of the changes have left many people feeling overwhelmed and in some cases, resulted in managers overlooking basic principles of industrial relations and employment law, including managing injured workers. Accordingly, this year's seminar theme is 'Getting on with the Job.'

Topics

- The NSW State Industrial Relations System.
- Federal Employment Laws that apply to State System Employers.
- What You Need to Know about Employment Contracts.
- Electronic Media and the Workplace.
- Model OH&S Legislation.
- HR Management of Ill and Injured workers –What does the Case Law Say?
- Legal Aspects of Performance Management.
- Year in Review.

Speakers

- The Honourable John Robertson, NSW Minister for Industrial Relations, MLC;
- Mark Sullivan and Neil Napper, Partners, Lander and Rogers Lawyers; Paul Cutrone, Partner, Sparke Helmore Lawyers;
- Rod Marshall, Solicitor and Senior Associate, Fisher, Cartwright Berriman Workplace Lawyers and Consultants;
- Stephen Marriott, Solicitor, Moray and Agnew Solicitors;
- Erin Wilson, Associate, Maddocks; and
- Aaron Allegretto, Solicitor and Senior Industrial Officer, LGSA.

File Reference: I98/0012:RN

Date and Time

Thur 20 May 2010, 9am-4.45pm

Location

Menzies Hotel, Sydney

Cost

Early Bird: \$396 per person inc GST (register by 21 Apr)

General Registration: \$451 per person inc GST

Registrations

learning@lgsa.org.au

Further Information

LGSA Learning Solutions:

02 9242 4181,

learning@lgsa.org.au

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Legal

Item 13: Integrated Planning and Reporting Update

The Local Government (General) Amendment (Planning and Reporting) Regulation 2010 commenced on 1 March 2010.

The Ministerial Order identifying those councils placed in Group 1 for implementing the new planning and reporting framework has also been gazetted. The list of councils identified in groups 1, 2 and 3 is available in the Division of Local Government (DLG) Circular to councils 10-04 dated 26 February 2010.

The amendments to the Regulation will apply to Group 1 councils from 1 July 2010, Group 2 councils from 1 July 2011 and Group 3 councils from 1 July 2012.

Councils are reminded that they are required to comply with the requirements in the Planning and Reporting Guidelines for Local Government in NSW, released on 21 January 2010. A support manual is also available to help councils implement the new requirements. The Guidelines and Manual are available on the DLG website

R03/0025-04

For further information

Frank Loveridge, LGSA:
02 9242 4125,
frank.loveridge@lgsa.org.au

Karen Legge, DLG:
02 4428 4182,
karen.legge@dlg.nsw.gov.au

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Legal

Item 14: Review of the role of Special Constables

The Department of Premier and Cabinet, Law Enforcement Policy Branch, has announced a review of the role of Special Constables.

In NSW, Special Constables are appointed to undertake a range of law enforcement duties, but they are not sworn NSW Police Force Officers.

There are currently more than 4100 recognised Special Constables in NSW. Approximately half are serving police officers from other jurisdictions, followed by NSW Police Force employees and employees of other NSW law enforcement bodies and government agencies such as RSPCA inspectors, councils and Area Health Services.

In February 2010, the NSW Government approved the release of the discussion paper, 'Special Constables: a case for reforming the current system for consultation. The discussion paper is available in PDF form from the Associations.'

As Special Constables in NSW may perform vastly different roles for different employers, the discussion paper proposes a multi-tiered solution to ensure that Special Constables are granted a suite of powers commensurate with their duties.

The Associations are seeking feedback from all councils so as to provide a whole of Local Government submission to the review.

File Reference: R90/0975-03

Feedback

Please send to the Associations by Fri 2 Apr 2010.

Further information/discussion paper

Frank Loveridge, Legal Officer,
LGSA: 02 9242 4125,
frank.loveridge@lgsa.org.au

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Planning

Item 15: Council Accreditation Scheme to Commence

The statutory framework for the accreditation of council employees as 'council accredited certifiers' has commenced.

From this date, the Building Professionals Board will be able to issue certificates of accreditation to employees of council who carry out building certification work.

In summary

- Councils have six months from 1 March 2010 to ensure they have sufficient numbers of accredited certifiers to undertake all building certification work.
- Council accredited certifiers have a year's free accreditation and reduced fees after this.
- A three year transition period has been provided to allow all officers to be accredited – and time for employees to graduate to more senior levels of accreditation.
- A new Category A4 – Building Inspectors has been introduced to create a pathway for trainees to enter the industry.

Details of the amending legislation and a summary of the new accreditation scheme are available from Department of Planning Circular PS 10-003 dated 26 February 2010 on the Department of Planning website.

File Reference: R90/0559

Key dates

Council accreditation scheme commenced 1 March 2010.

Online information

See 'What's new' at www.planning.nsw.gov.au

For further information

Contact the Building Professionals Board: 02 9895 5950, bpb@bpb.nsw.gov.au

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Planning

Item 16: BCA 2010 Seminars

The Building Code of Australia (BCA) 2010 takes effect nationwide on 1 May 2010. Leading up to this date, a number of seminars will be held by the Australian Building Codes Board (ABCB) for the information of all parties with an interest in changes to the BCA.

For those involved in the building industry, these half-day seminars are an important opportunity to be updated on the amendments that have been made to the BCA in the upcoming 2010 edition.

A major focus of this year's seminars is energy efficiency and attendees will hear about the changes incorporated into BCA 2010.

Handbooks providing detail on the new provisions will be provided to seminar attendees, included in seminar satchels, along with other key information relating to the 2010 edition.

Knowledge of these changes to the BCA is important for all professionals involved in the design, construction and certification of buildings. Two information seminars will be held.

The Australian Institute of Refrigeration, Air-Conditioning and Heating (AIRAH) will also be presenting an afternoon workshop on Section J of BCA 2010. Registration for the AIRAH workshop is required separately from the BCA 2010 Seminar.

File Reference: R90/0564

ABCB workshop

Wed 31 Mar & Thur 1 Apr 2010,
The Theatre, Australian National
Maritime Museum
9:30am to 12:30pm.

AIRAH workshop

On Wed 31 Mar, 1:30-5pm.

Online information

Visit www.abcb.gov.au or
www.airah.org.au

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Roads and Transport

Item 17: 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 Southern and South Western Regional Traffic Committees

The Regional Traffic Committees will 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 Associations. These positions are generally filled by directors or managers of Engineering Services, Transport or Infrastructure divisions of councils.

Nominees should forward their name, position and contact details to the Associations' Roads and Transport Policy Officer, Richard Connors – details right.

R92/0048:RC

Online information

http://163.189.217.150/doingbusinesswithus/lgr/downloads/information/committees/traffic_committees.html

For further information:

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

John Ronczka, RTA Regional Traffic Committee Secretariat: 131 782, John RONCZKA@rta.nsw.gov.au

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In the News

Item 18: Media from the LGSA

Following are the latest media releases issued by the LGSA

Drought affected communities to benefit from funding extension

Monday 1 March, 2010

<http://www.lgsa.org.au/www/html/3212-01-march-2010-drought-affected-communities-to-benefit-from-funding-extension.asp?intSiteID=1>

The NSW Shires Association has welcomed a Federal Government announcement extending Exceptional Circumstances (EC) funding to 14 of 15 areas for an additional 12 months.

Councils vow to help clean up crime

Tuesday 2 March, 2010

<http://www.lgsa.org.au/www/html/3220-02-march-2010-councils-vow-to-help-clean-up-crime.asp?intSiteID=1>

Councils in the state's west have called on the State Government to provide funding for rehabilitation

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DA Determination times

Northern Daily Leader, Monday 1 March

Council determined to keep applications moving

Link unavailable

AS FAR as development application processing times go, Inverell Shire Council is the Speedy Gonzales of NSW councils. The council had the lowest average processing time for projects valued between \$5 million and \$20 million in the state in 2008/2009.

Council gets speed tick but improvement needed

Namoi Valley Independent Publication, Tuesday 2 March

Link unavailable

Council gets speed tick but improvement needed Press Clip: GUNNEDAH Shire Council has been praised for the time it takes to process multi-million dollar developments. But an assessment expert says it must improve further if it does not want to risk scaring off further lucrative schemes.

Prime North Coast (Lismore), Thursday 4 March

The framework for development applications will change, with local councils forced to modify their planning guidelines by the NSW Govt. Port Macquarie-Hastings Council will adopt a new local environment plan. The NSW Govt wants planning standardised across the State.

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Western Division meeting

ABC Riverina (Wagga Wagga), Monday 1 March

Murray and Riverina councils are calling for an end to water buy backs. The F Division Meeting of the Shires Association in Jerilderie has resolved to make urgent representations to Phil Costa, NSW Minister for Water. Lindsay Renwick, chairperson, F Division Councils of the Shires Association says Costa must act to stop the destruction of communities from the accelerated water buy backs negotiated by Nick Xenophon, SA Independent Senator

ABC Riverina (Wagga Wagga), Monday 1 March

Concerns about water shortages will be dominating discussion at a meeting of Western Division Councils in Bourke today. The Western Division of the Shires' Association represents about 40% of the state including the Central Darling, Moree Plains, Hay, Carrathool, Balranald and Wentworth Councils. They are meeting to discuss increases in water allocations, objections to buy backs under the new Murray Darling Basin Plan and a push to standardise water restrictions across the state. Ray Longfellow, mayor, Central Darling Shire Council and president, Western Division Councils says roads, funding and policing will also be discussed.

Interviewee: Ray Longfellow, mayor, Central Darling Shire Council and president, Western Division Councils

ABC New England North West (Tamworth), Monday 1 March

The Bourke conference of the Shires Association and local councils in Bourke will focus on western region water concerns, roads funding and policing.

ABC Broken Hill (Broken Hill), Monday 1 March

Councillors from the western regions are in Bourke today for the annual Western Division Shires Conference. Issues to be discussed include judicial sentencing and road maintenance. There will also be discussion about the recent decision by the NSW govt to limit rate increases.

Barrier Daily Truth, Wednesday 3 March

Councils snubbed

Link unavailable

Central Darling Shire mayor Ray Longfellow has taken a swipe at the NSW Government over its "lack of commitment" to western NSW. No government minister attended the three-day Western Shires Division conference in Bourke, which wound up yesterday. Around 100 delegates from 13 councils attended the conference which discussed topics ranging from rural doctors to road maintenance.

ABC Western Plains NSW (Dubbo), Tuesday 2 March

Interview with Ray Donald Vice President NSW Shires Association about a meeting of Western Division Shires with the NSW Shires Association in Bourke. Donald discusses the meeting and the topics which were discussed including water allowance and water storage. Donald discusses recommendations that have come out of the meeting in regards to services and infrastructure funding. Donald notes the Premier was invited but didn't attend and Tony Kelly had to pull out. Donald notes a push to for the local govt to become one association and this is gaining some momentum.

ABC Broken Hill (Broken Hill), Tuesday 2 March

Interview with Ray Longfellow, Mayor, Central Darling Shire Council. Longfellow says that in his role as president of the Western [Shires] Division he is holding a conference in Bourke, which he says is going well, despite being without any NSW Govt ministerial representation. Longfellow says the conference will discuss Exceptional Circumstances, law and order, infrastructure funding, and like Cr Neville Gasmier [Broken Hill City Council] said earlier, mining. Longfellow says flooding in the area is of great concern as not all councils will receive disaster area funding and will face a large financial impact. Longfellow says road repairs have not started in the Central Darling Shire with preliminary work to get traffic through ongoing and he notes that some roads are still cut by water.

ABC Western Plains NSW (Dubbo), Thursday 4 March

The Western Division of the Shires Association wants election commitments from the NSW Govt and Opposition to subsidise air services to the far west.

ABC Western Plains NSW (Dubbo), Thursday 4 March

The Western Division of the Shires Association wants election commitments from the NSW Govt and Opposition to subsidise air services to the far west after Brindabella Airlines recently withdrew it's expression's of interest to reinstate flights to Walgett, Cobar and Bourke.

Central GTS/BKN Broken Hill (Broken Hill), Thursday 4 March

Numerous issues will be raised at this week's Western Shires Conference in Bourke. Major issues raised were Country Water's proposed price hike, and funding for the Outback Regional Tourism Association. Wincen Cuy, major, Broken Hill City Council, says the water issue already has three separate motions. Another issue was whether the Local Government Association and Local Shires Association should become one organisation.

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NOROC opposes new environmental planning framework

Northern Star, Monday 1 March

Councils take up cudgels against new State planning laws

Link unavailable

BALLINA'S natural environment will be more poorly protected under a new environmental planning framework being imposed on councils by the State Government, councillors have warned.

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Mining royalties

Newcastle Herald, Monday 1 March

Coalmining town seeks a fairer go

<http://www.theherald.com.au/news/local/news/general/hunter-valley-coalmining-town-seeks-a-fairer-go/1763296.aspx>

MUSWELLBROOK Mayor Martin Rush has once again called for a larger slice of the mining royalties pie as the council struggles to maintain services and infrastructure in a stage of rapid expansion.

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Rail branch lines

WIN Orange (Orange), Friday 26 February

More than \$40 million will be needed over the next 20 years to reopen one of the local branch lines recently suspended by the NSW State gov't. An independent study related to the Cowra track has been released, detailing significant benefit to central west economies. \$10.5 million has been identified in capital spending which could be used to restore the track to working order, with a further \$9 million being required every 5 years. Russell Holden, Chair, Lachlan Valley Transport says that when looked at in the long term the upgrade is good value. Maurice Simpson, Weddin Shire Mayor says that a new freight terminal in Cowra could generate profit of \$2.3 million a year. Cr Bill West, Cowra Mayor says the restored line could also save money by reducing the number of trucks used in the area. A meeting with the NSW Transport Minister David Campbell this week saw the NSW gov't commit \$15,000 towards the project, which Cr Bruce Kingham, Blayney Mayor says will be used to investigate the viability of haul freight on the line.

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Binge drinking prevention campaign

Prime Wagga Wagga (Wagga Wagga), Friday 26 February

Tumut has been singled out for a massive campaign designed to stop young people binge drinking. The Federal Gov't will give 175,000 dollars to Tumut shire council and just four other

councils nationwide. The council will use the money to employ a youth worker for two years.
Interviewee: Cr Trina Thomson, Mayor of Tumut Shire

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Tourism funding

WIN Orange (Orange), Friday 26 February

The Centroc group of councils wants to see value for money before it agrees to any increase in contributions to any increase in contributions to central NSW tourism. Centroc mayors will meet with NSW Tourism Minister Jodi McKay to resolve the problem. Neville Castle, CENTROC Chairman says that so far Centroc has not seen a great deal of service from their current contributions. Cr Paul Toole, Bathurst Mayor says they wish to be in a position where the increases can be justified as tax payers' money is being used. John Miller, Central NSW Tourism Chairman says the requirements for additional funding come after cost cutting by the NSW state govt.

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New child restraint legislation

Forbes Advocate, Friday 26 February

New legislation discussed

Link unavailable

Local child restraint retailers, fitters and child family health nurses met in Parkes on Wednesday to discuss the new child restraint legislation which comes into effect across the State on March 1.

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Councils sue for LGFS investment

Sydney Morning Herald, Saturday 27 February

Councils sue after deals 'imploded'

<http://www.smh.com.au/business/councils-sue-after-185m-investment-imploded-20100226-p8zz.html>

Twelve councils in NSW are bringing actions against Local Government Financial Services, the body that invests council workers' superannuation, for misleading and deceptive conduct and breach of fiduciary duty.

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Sea level rise

Northern Star, Wednesday 3 March

It's a sea change our coast could well do without

Link unavailable

SEA levels will rise by close to a metre by the end of the century, putting Northern Rivers coastal communities at risk, no matter what the world does to combat climate change.

ABC North Coast NSW (Lismore), Tuesday 2 March

Delegates from around Australia are attending the Australian Coastal Councils conference in Byron Bay this week. Key note speakers will include Dr John Church, Centre for Australian Weather and Climate Research.

ABC Mid North Coast NSW (Coffs Harbour), Wednesday 3 March

Scientists at the Australian Coastal Councils Conference in Byron Bay have told local govt bodies their biggest challenge will be managing coastal erosion and storm damage over the next few years.

NBN Coffs Harbour (Coffs Harbour), Tuesday 2 March

More than 40 coastal councils are attending the Annual Australian Coastal Councils Conference in Byron Bay to discuss the problem of beach erosion. Dr John Church, CSIRO Marine & Atmospheric Research, describes some of the possible measures available for councils to adopt in dealing with the problem. Jennie George, Chairwoman, Climate Change Committee, says some councils, like Byron (Bay) Council is leading planning initiatives, while others are more reticent to get involved. She calls on the govt to provide consistent national data and fund research into the impacts of climate change. Councillor Paul Green, Shoalhaven City Mayor, says millions and dollars worth of property may be sterilised by any new laws made. The committee is waiting on the govt to respond to its 47 recommendations.

Northern Star, Thursday 4 March

Turning the tide on having a bigger say

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THE talking is done, now the lobbying begins. The Coastal Councils Conference wrapped up yesterday with a war cry as councils from all along the Australian coast began a push to give them a bigger say in the national policy debate and a greater share of government funding.

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Flood damage bill

ABC 702 Sydney (Sydney), Wednesday 3 March

The damage bill from recent flooding and heavy rain in western NSW is expected to reach \$20m. The majority of the councils in the western region have been declared natural disaster zones. Brewarrina Shire Council has already spent more than \$1m on emergency works and expects its bill to reach \$6m. The Coonamble and Warrumbungle Shires have both lodged claims with the RTA. The Cobar and Central Darling Councils are the latest to be eligible for funding.

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Natural disaster funding

Coffs Coast Advocate, Wednesday 3 March

Funding will make it easier to prepare for disasters

http://findarticles.com/p/news-articles/advocate-the-coffs-harbour-qld/mi_8076/is_20100303/funding-prepare-disasters/ai_n50443781/

EMERGENCY Services Minister Steve Whan has announced more than \$17 million in funding for projects to make communities safer and more resilient to the impacts of natural disasters.

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Amalgamation – Uralla, Guyra, Armidale

ABC New England North West (Tamworth), Tuesday 2 March

Interview with Ron Filmer, Uralla Shire Council Mayor. Filmer says that he is not being naive. He says that amalgamation is a potential option but it is not the one we prefer. He says that he wasn't surprised about hearing the Guyra Shire Council opinion that talks had broken down. Filmer says that his concern is what we do is what our rate payers ask us to do. He says talks have not broken down. He says if Guyra wants to talk more we are happy to talk with them.

NBN Tamworth (Tamworth), Tuesday 2 March

Talks have broken down between some of the former members of the defunct New England Alliance. Armidale Dumaresq, Uralla and Guyra Councils have been unable to agree on alternative model to ensure their long term future in terms of amalgamations.

ABC New England North West (Tamworth), Tuesday 2 March

Interview with Guyra Shire Council Mayor Hans Hietbrink on talks between councils in the former New England Strategic Alliance. Hietbrink says that at the meeting there was a lack of willingness between councils to look at one particular model. He says none of the councils apart from Armadale want to amalgamate. Hietbrink says that amalgamation is not a foregone conclusion. He says it is important for communities to know what is happening in the discussions. He says he hope the Uralla Shire recognise we believe that it is naive to ignore the possibility of amalgamation.[cont]

ABC New England North West (Tamworth), Tuesday 2 March

Ron Filmer, Uralla Shire Council mayor, will not consider sharing services with Guyra and Armadale Shire Councils. The State Govt has launched an enquiry into the services provided by the former New England Strategic Alliance Councils. Talks have broken down because Guyra and Armadale favour amalgamation.

New governance model

ABC 702 Sydney (Sydney), Wednesday 3 March

Spencer says the Committee for Sydney is suggesting a new governance model should be examined that would consider not just smaller, local Councils, but larger, Greater Sydney Government and regional-based representation. He says it is an issue that has been raised before, and it has significant clout behind it, including former Labor Senator and National Party President Stephen Loosley. Loosley says the Committee is arguing the Productivity Commission should examine whether the 19th century structure of Government should be replaced by a 21st structure. He says the Committee has been impressed by Richard Florida's work on clusters of cities in the US. He says Newcastle, the Hunter, Greater Sydney, Wollongong, and Illawarra are a cluster. He says Greater Sydney should be given a greater voice in the Councils of Government in Macquarie St and Canberra.

Daily Telegraph, Wednesday 3 March

Sydney, is this all we've got?

<http://www.couriermail.com.au/sydney-is-this-all-weve-got/story-e6frezhr-1225836271495>

CLIMB the Harbour Bridge, look at the sails of our Opera House, but after that there's not much to keep visitors to Sydney interested, a new report claims. And the State Government and local councils, which have let Sydney down, should be replaced by a single authority similar to those in London and New York.

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Water

3SR FM (Shepparton), Monday 1 March

The Local Govt and Shires Association has called for NSW Catchment Management Authorities to be given more responsibility for environmental water following a meeting of its F-Division. President, Bruce Millar says last week's meeting was dominated by various water issues. Deniliquin Shire President, Bruce Miller says last week's meeting was dominated by various water issues.

ABC Ballarat (Ballarat), Tuesday 2 March

The Fed Govt has announced its first round of funding to improve irrigation infrastructure after months of lobbying from irrigation groups and the National Farmers Federation. \$27 million will be allocated to 12 councils across Australia to invest in water-saving projects. The Lachlan Shire will receive over \$9 million and Mayor, Des Manwaring says the money will go towards the construction of an emergency pipeline.

ABC Illawarra (Wollongong), Tuesday 2 March

The Commonwealth has awarded \$27m to 12 councils across the country to invest in water saving projects as part of the Strengthening the Basin Communities Program. The Lachlan shire is receiving the largest amount at more than \$9m. Locke plays a report by Caitlin Furlong. Des

Manwaring, Mayor, Lachlan Shire says the town was thrilled at the announcement from NSW Premier Kristina Keneally and Fed Minister for Water Penny Wong. He mentions how critical the water shortage is, and notes the funding will be used to build a pipeline west of Lake Cargelligo.

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Waste Levy

ABC Illawarra (Wollongong),

Mike Beard, NSW Opposition Treasury Spokesperson, says that councils will know exactly how the NSW waste levy is spent under a Coalition Govt. This comes after complaints by Shoalhaven Council that they pay \$2m per year towards the levy, but maintaining that they have no idea where their money is going. Beard says that the NSW Govt lacks transparency in its operations.

ABC Upper Hunter (Muswellbrook), Friday 5 March

Upper Hunter, Muswellbrook and Singleton Councils all want out of the state gov't's Waste and Environment Levy. They were added to program in July last year. State Opposition will support efforts to scrap the levy, with Shadow Minister Mike Baird saying there is no transparency in how the money is spent.

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Lower hunter council merger

Newcastle Herald, Thursday 4 March

Press Clip: <http://media.mediamonitors.com.au/ArticlePresenter.aspx?GUID=04f1ee5a-689c-47f0-8e39-44e3e0146754&ArticleID=65653704&output=pdfsearchable>

Text Link: <http://media.mediamonitors.com.au/ArticlePresenter.aspx?GUID=04f1ee5a-689c-47f0-8e39-44e3e0146754&ArticleID=65653704&output=text>

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Graffiti removal

North Shore Times, Thursday 4 March

Graffiti the target of action day

Link unavailable

RESIDENTS can take a stand against vandals who target buildings, trains and buses by organising a cleanup as part of the state's first anti-graffiti day. Business owners are tearing their hair out over graffiti vandals scrawling unsightly tags on their property and being saddled with the clean up costs.

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Councils asked to fund feasibility study

Inner West Courier, Thursday 4 March

Government goes back to council coffers

<http://inner-west-courier.whereilive.com.au/news/story/govt-goes-back-to-council-coffers/>

AFTER demanding local councils put up \$140,CfIO to pay for a feasibility study into the extension of light rail in the Inner West, the NSW Government is now asking councils to put that money toward the environmental assessment of the project.

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LGSA Tourism conference

Cowra Guardian, Friday 5 March

Cowra to host statewide tourism conference next week

Link unavailable

The Local Government and Shires Associations' (LGSA) Tourism Conference for 2010 opens in Cowra next Wednesday, bringing one hundred and seventy people to town. "It is a great credit to Cowra that we were able to secure hosting rights for this state-wide conference," said Mayor, Bill West.

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Commercial Air services

ABC Western Plains NSW (Dubbo), Friday 5 March

The NSW Govt has said it can assure operators like Brindabella Airlines it will book flights on commercial air services to the far west, but it can't underwrite them. The Shires Association and Member for Barwon Kevin Humphries claims the Govt must subsidise the service to ensure the flights resume.

ABC Western Plains NSW (Dubbo), Friday 5 March

The NSW Govt has said it can assure operators like Brindabella Airlines it will book flights on commercial air services to the far west, but it can't underwrite the them. The Shires Association and Member for Barwon Kevin Humphries claims the Govt must subsidise the service to ensure the flights resume.

ABC New England North West (Tamworth), Friday 5 March

The NSW Govt says it can assure operators it will book flights on commercial air services to the far west, but it cannot underwrite the routes. Brindabella Airlines has recently withdrawn its interest in reinstating flights to Walgett, Cobar and Bourke, because it could not secure financial support. The Shires Association and Member for Barwon, Kevin Humphries, say the NSW Govt must subsidise the service to ensure the flights resume, but David Borger, Assistant Transport Minister, says this is not possible.

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Pacific Highway visit

Daily Examiner, Friday 5 March

Still no word

Link unavailable

IT'S now 29 days since the mayors of Clarence Valley, Ballina, Richmond Valley and Coffs Harbour councils sent letters to the NSW Premier Kristina Keneally and Opposition Leader Barry O'Farrell inviting them to take a tour of the Pacific Highway between Coff Harbour and Ballina.

Daily Examiner, Friday 5 March

Take a bow, Mr O'Farrell

WE promised when the mayors of Coffs Harboui Clarence Valley, Richmond Valley and Ballina first invited the Premier Kristina Keneally and Opposition Leader Barry O'Farrell to the North Coast to inspect the condition of the highway that if they accepted the invitation we would sing their praises.

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Support for coal-fired power plants

AAP Newswire, Wednesday 3 March

Link unavailable

New power stations will ruin renewables: environmentalists The approval of two new power stations will destroy NSW's renewable energy industry and the state's green credentials, environmental groups says. The NSW government on Wednesday approved concept plans for additional baseload stations near existing coal-fired facilities at Muswellbrook, in the Upper Hunter, and Lithgow, west of Sydney.

Newcastle Herald, Thursday 4 March

New power station approved for Hunter

<http://www.theherald.com.au/news/local/news/general/new-power-station-approved-for-hunter/1766925.aspx>

THE Upper Hunter will get another baseload power station, after the NSW Government approved yesterday Macquarie Generation plans for "Bayswater B".

ABC 702 Sydney (Sydney), Thursday 4 March

The Lithgow business community will prepare for the arrival of nearly 1,000 construction workers should the expansion of the Mount Piper power station proceed. Planning Minister Tony Kelly visited Portland yesterday to announce approval for the proposed extension.

AAP Newswire, Thursday 4 March

Opposition supports coal-fired power plants

<http://news.smh.com.au/breaking-news-business/opposition-backs-coalfired-power-plants-20100304-pkv8.html>

NSW government plans to build two new power stations have bipartisan support but are unlikely to go ahead, the state opposition says

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Riverina Red Gums

ABC Riverina (Wagga Wagga), Friday 5 March

Riverina councils affected by the NSW Govt plan to protect red gums through national parks say they are concerned about the future. The Wakool and Balranald Shire Councils say the timber industry provides 235 jobs in the area. Chris Chapman, spokesperson, Wakool Shire says he expects around half those jobs will be lost as a result of the industry's exclusion. Phillip Wells, mayor, Murrumbidgee Shire says Darlington Point will be devastated by the plans to protect the forests. This week's announcement included news the Darlington Point sawmill has chosen to exit the industry immediately. Wells says up to 30 jobs could be lost.

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