



Councillor Information Bulletin

For the Ordinary Council Meeting
held on Thursday 20th February 2025

INDEX

1. **CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

2. **CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER’S REPORT**

3. **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT REPORT**

Wellbeing Update

Tourism Update

Hood-Penn Museum Update

4. **COUNCIL INFORMATION**

- **WALGA ROADWISE**

2018-2022 Local Government Road Safety Performance Reports

- **CONTAINERS FOR CHANGE**

Future Scheme Expansion

- **WALGA**

2025 Federal Election Priorities

- **CEACA**

Management Committee Update

- **DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, SPORT AND CULTURAL INDUSTRIES**

Superannuation Payments to Council Members



SHIRE OF WESTONIA

Feb/March 25

Date & Time	What	Where	Who
Thursday 20 February	Council Meeting	Chambers	Councillors, Senior Staff
Thursday 20 February	Electors Meeting	Old Hall	Councillors, Senior Staff
Monday 24 February	CEACA Board Meeting	Merredin	Cr DellaBosca & CEO
Tuesday - Friday 11 – 14 March	Student Immersion	Westonia	All Staff
Thursday 17 March	WEROC Board	Merredin	Shire President & CEO
Thursday 20 March	Council Meeting	Chambers	Councillors, Senior Staff

CEO'S REPORT

- **GENERAL MATTERS**

- The Pool Kiosk project is all but complete with the new BBQ gazebo being completed during the month. The project only requires the landscaping and some footpath work to be finalized. There has been excellent community and visitor feedback on how the new building compliments all of the infrastructure in the precinct.
- Ramelius management meetings have continued over the month to progress exit strategy issues such as
 - Proposed milestone dates of closures Truck carting 25/2, Camp 12/4, Houses 20/4.
 - Extension of Leases of Camp Site, Industrial shed and carpark area.
 - Security fencing of the Camp.
 - Transition of the WWTP to include a leach drain section once the treatment plant is decommissioned.
 - Assistance with some Museum images and items.
 - Proposed leasing of land for the Westonia Progress Association cropping.
 - Demolition of the old asbestos house on Lot 162 Warrachuppin Road.
 - Attendance of Council at the final gold pour.
 - Fibre Optic Internet access. This asset is owned by Telstra and will require an arrangement between the Council and Telstra.
 - Community event marking the end of this mining era.
- The New Museum Project has continued to progress with the announcement of funding assistance from Lotterywest. Building plans have been submitted to the Building Surveyor and associated trades are in readiness to commence the construction of the project.
- I met with Dan Hester and Greg Harvey Directors of Penagri Farms on Friday 24 January to discuss future management options for their landholdings within the Westonia Shire.
- Westonia Health Clinic now has a visiting Chiropractor with Amy Hampton Brook providing a service on a monthly basis.
- The Lifestyle Village Hub planning continues with successful funding from Lotterywest. Council has purchased a used pool table and dart board from a clearing sale that will be utilized in the new recreation room, a Department of Health application has been submitted for the Warm Water Pool and building plans have been submitted to the building surveyor for consideration.
- As discussed with Councillors with an out of session decision Pam Price has moved into the vacant unit 7 Quartz Street.
- I participated in a WNE SRRG zoom meeting held on Tuesday 18 February.
- I was an apology for the Great Eastern Zone and WEROC CEO meetings recently held as they clashed with other commitments.
- I have taken some annual leave during this period to attend some bowling carnivals, and some carers leave to care for a sick relative.
- Council has been offered and has purchased for \$ 700 the original WT 1 enamel Number plate which still has the old vehicle mounting frame which will be showcased in the Museum.



- Medical Students will be in Westonia from 11 – 14 March for the annual student immersion program.
- I will be taking annual leave from 27 February to 17 March for Country week bowls and holiday.

- **DELEGATED AUTHORITY ACTIONS**

- **ROADCREW**

- The crew are nearing completion of the Warralakin Road reconstruction project with sealing of the 3km section to be completed by 11 March.
- Peter Crews has been appointed to the Road Train Operator position vacancy during the month.
- Clean up of truck roll over on M040 Wednesday 22 January.

- **TOWN**

- A new Niche Wall has been constructed at the Cemetery which is in the same style as the original wall. This work was carried out by Aaron & Phaeton Gibbs and the workmanship was first class. Four of the spaces are already allocated.



- **PLANT HOURS**

The following is a list of plant and vehicle kilometre and hour readings for the period ending 31.1.25.

Item		16.12.24	31.1.25
P1	CAT 140 GRADER	3,192hrs	3,245hrs
P2	CAT 12M GRADER	9,571hrs	9,571hrs
P3	PRIME MOVER (KENWORTH)	33,410kms	36,014kms
P4	ROAD TRAIN (NEW FREIGHTLINER)	126,708kms	129,798kms
P5	JOHN DEERE LOADER	5,438hrs	5,481hrs
P6	CAT ROLLER (SKIP)	2,237hrs	2,272hrs
P7	MINI-EXCAVATOR	605hrs	611hrs
P8	TELEHANDLER JCB	163hrs	209hrs
P9	TOYOTA (GRADER UTE)	57,824kms	59,082kms
P10	mitsubishi CANTER	25,960kms	26,532kms
P11	TOYOTA HILUX (GARDENER) WT 35	112,335kms	112,586kms
P12	JOHN DEERE (5100)	2,705hrs	2,705hrs
P14	TOYOTA LANDCRUISER GXL (CEO)	30,150kms	38,503kms
P15	TOYOTA HILUX D/CAB (W/SUPER)	30,612kms	35,961kms
P16	TOYOTA RAV4 (Community)	649kms	3,111kms
P17	TOYOTA HILUX DUAL CAB	53,764kms	56,214kms
P19	FAST ATTACK	19,665kms	19,892kms
P20	FIRE TRUCK	7,223kms	7,393kms
P18	WESSY BUS	151,618kms	153,112kms
P22	KUBOTA RIDE ON MOWER (OVAL)	2,124hrs	2,129hrs
P23	TOYOTA MINI-BUS (WT COM V)	47,135kms	48,453kms
P24	CAT ROLLER (LOLA)	2,646hrs	2,676hrs
P25	MICK's BEAUT UTE	177,904kms	178,931kms
P27	TOYOTA PRADO GXL (DCEO)	724kms	4,555kms
P28	TOYOTA HILUX UTILITY (TOWN)	0kms	1042kms

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND WELLBEING REPORT

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT REPORT

Grant applications & award nominations submitted:

Bendigo Bank community grant – currently completing to request funding for Fireworks and Kids Arcade games for Wessy on the Green a total of \$14,000.00

Future grant opportunities & award nominations:

WELLBEING REPORT

Age Care

Westonia Home Care Services

We are continuing to provide community Wellbeing activities

We continue to provide Meals on wheels, Lite N Easy Equipment and Aids for our clients

Westonia Home Care Services Clients: **20 and 1 person on the waiting list to be assigned HCP or deciding on their provider.**

Staff delivering services: 7

Services: Administration and Package management, Cleaning and Household tasks, Medical, Personal Care, Social Support, Support work, Gardening & Maintenance

Community activities and resources

The Shire is very proud to announce the addition of a chiropractor to our health care team. Please welcome Dr Amy Hampton Brook, Amy brings a wealth of knowledge and experience and is passionate about seeing rural communities receiving health care within their own locations. Amy's first clinic was held Tuesday the 28th of January which was booked out with Amy seeing a total of 22 patients.

Wellbeing program and community activities – Plonk and Donk has begun with the first one held on 18/2/25 at 6pm this is to kick off our art project which will be unveiled at our art exhibition night on Friday 28th of March to be then show cased at WotG 25 the following weekend.

2025 Activities/ Events:

January was a little quiet but Kudos to the Scrabble and Bingo goers who still managed to attend their weekly games sessions.

Coming up:

Community Event Working Group are meeting every third Wednesday of the month to discuss community events ideas and initiatives

WESTONIA TOURIST PARK

The Park is maintained at an exceptional standard that is noticed and commented on by all visitors. We would like to extend great appreciation to our current caretaker for maintaining this standard.

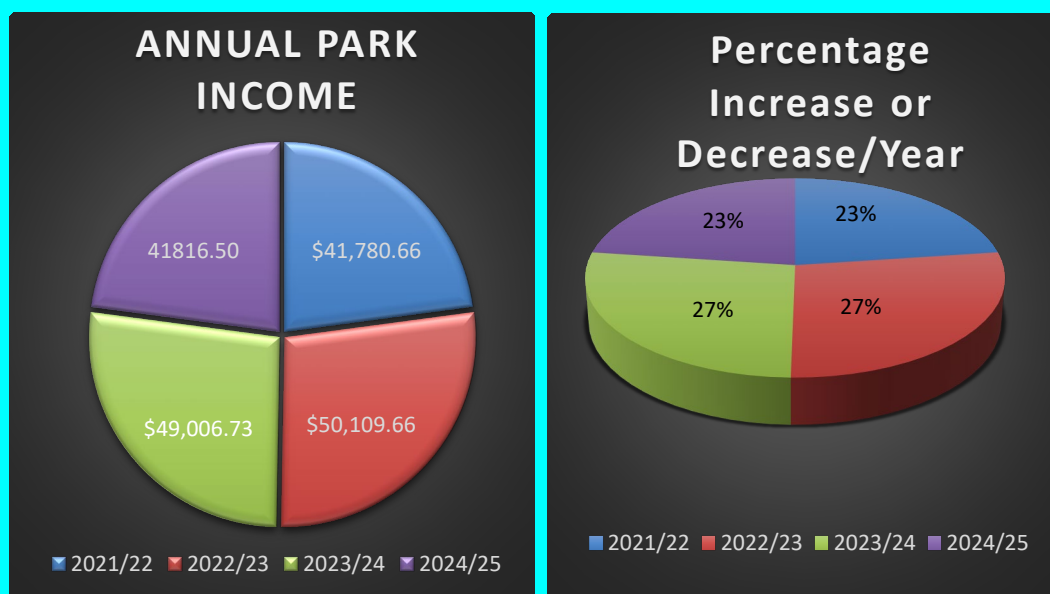
REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE

- Various minor repairs and maintenance ongoing. Focal area being bathroom maintenance (fixtures and disabled bathroom upgrade)
- Disabled toilet drainage will need some major work as tree roots have made their way into the pipes.

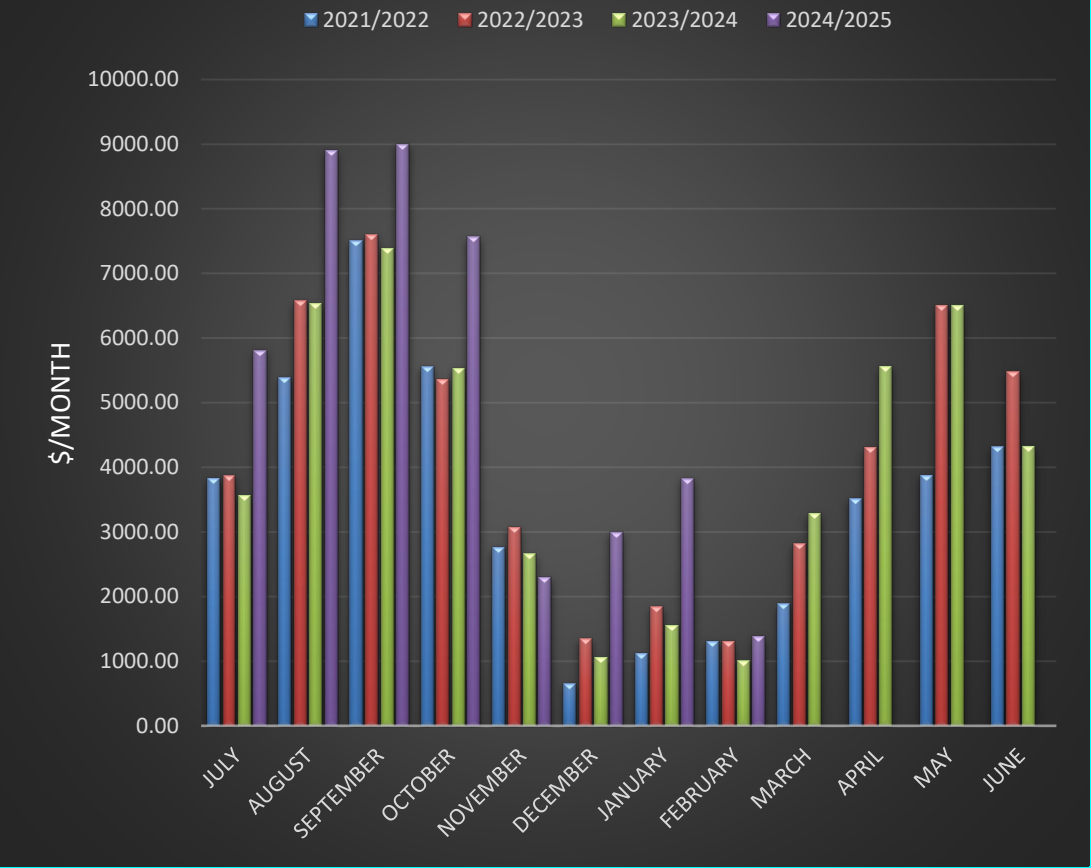
FUTURE PROJECTS

- Permanent signage required to say "If office is unattended, please ring the caretakers phone or Shire office alternatively you can visit the Shire office during business hours Monday to Friday to complete your booking".
- Overflow – new signs needed for sites and information sign needed to describe who to ring or see to book in and outline that you must un-hook. Defined bays might be a good idea for this area.

STATISTICS



MONTHLY PARK INCOME



HOOD-PENN MUSEUM

Earthworks for the extension is underway thanks to Ash Geier and Bob Lockyer for your hard work in the sweltering conditions this summer has thrown at us. This extension was made possible by Lotterywest funding, a huge thank you to Lotterywest for seeing Westonia's unique quirk, charm and vision and helping us further preserve Westonia's history



REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE

- Various minor repairs and maintenance ongoing

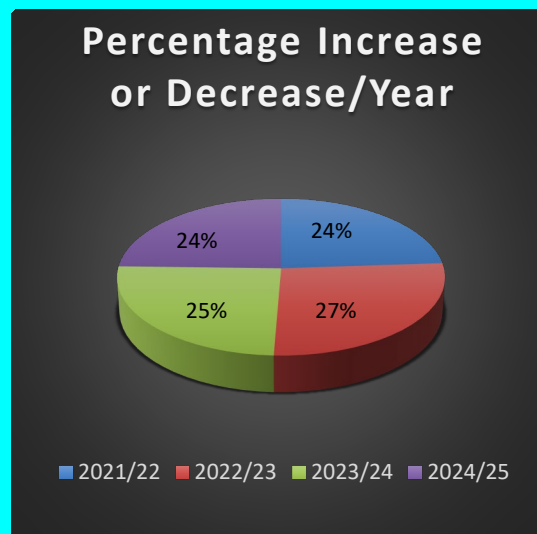
RECENT PROJECTS

- War Memorial moved from OM Hall and photo signs in progress with Thompson Signs Cunderdin. 2 x New Mannequins are being constructed (a pilot and a garage attendant).

FUTURE PROJECTS

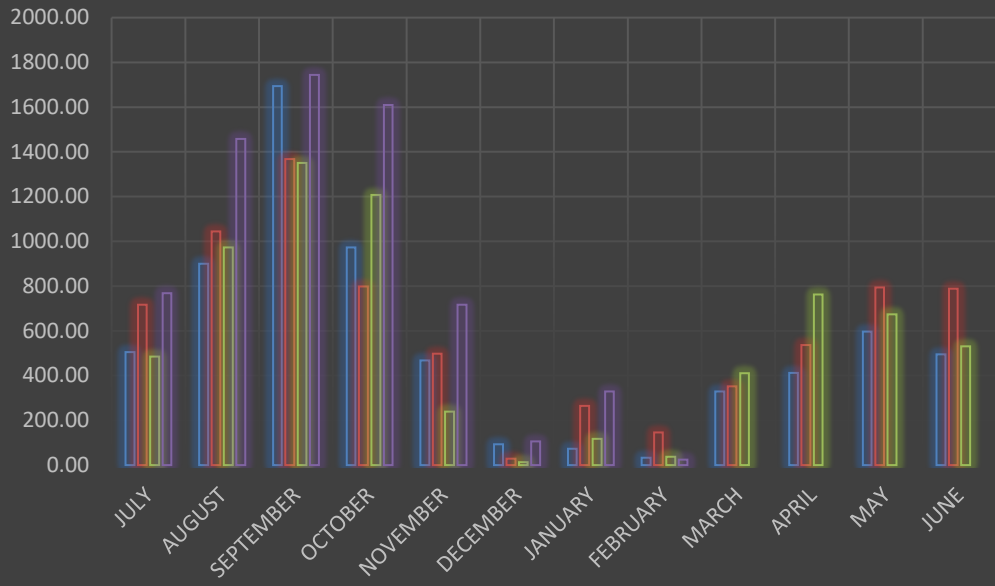
- New scenes to be created in the existing space of the old storage room to tell the stories of our primary industries of which Westonia was founded on.

STATISTICS



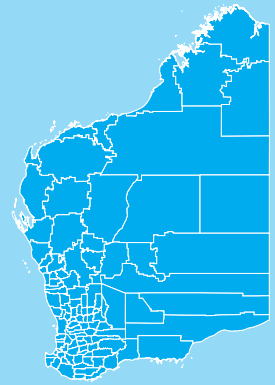
MONTHLY MUSEUM INCOME

2021/22 2022/23 2023/24 2024/25



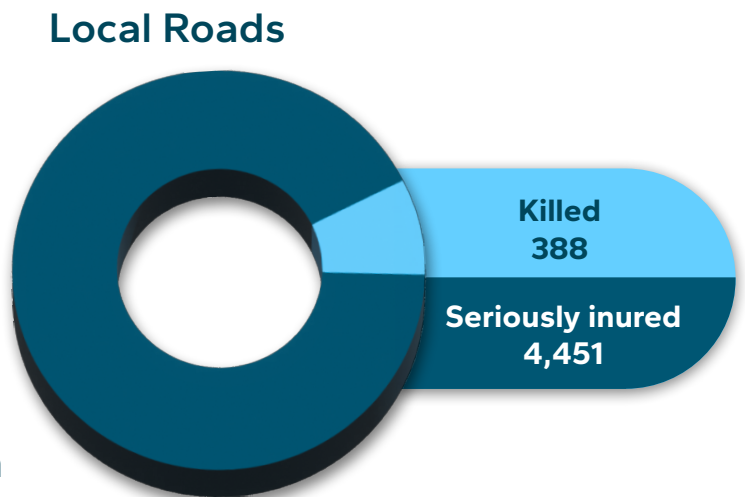
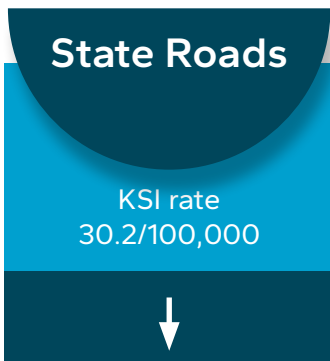
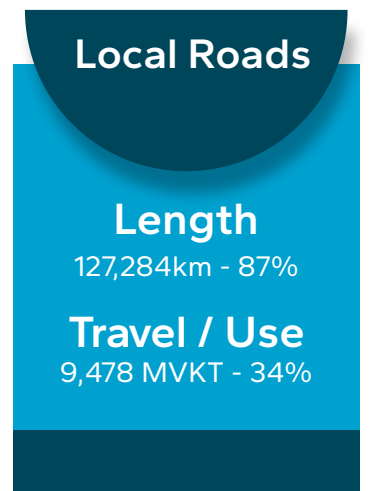
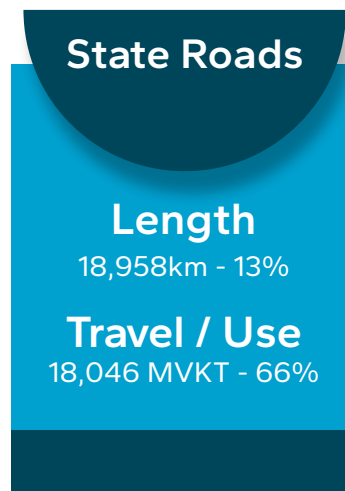
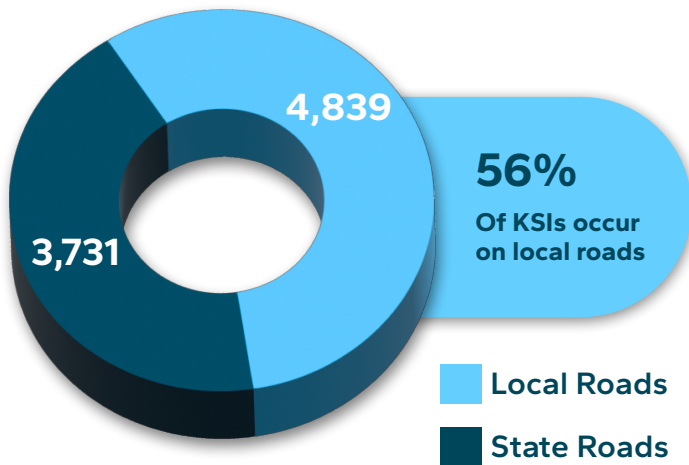
Road Safety Performance Local Government Roads 2018-2022

All of Western Australia



Nov 2024

Killed & Seriously Injured

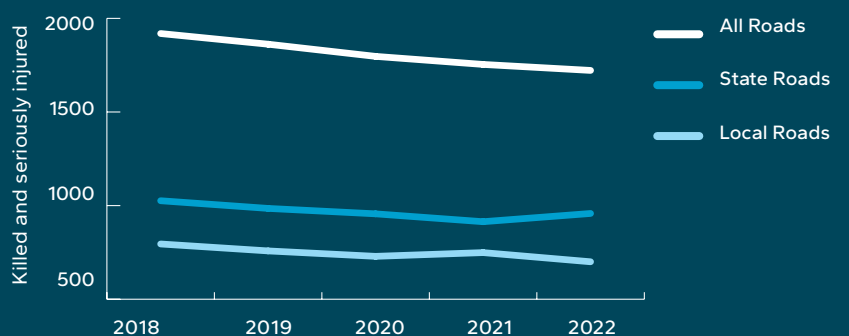


Average Cost Per Annum
\$1.03B Local roads

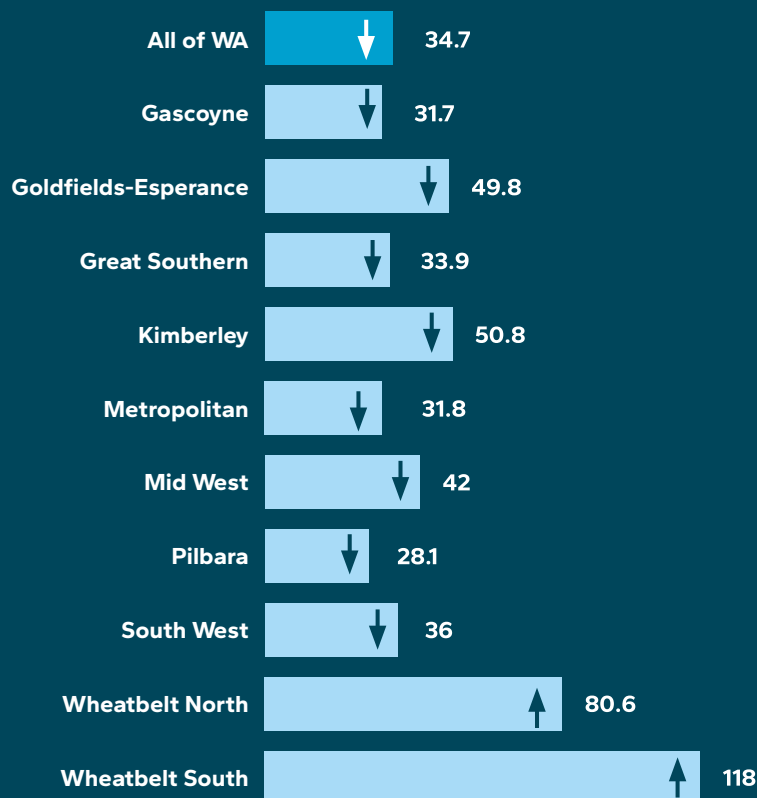

RoadWise


WALGA

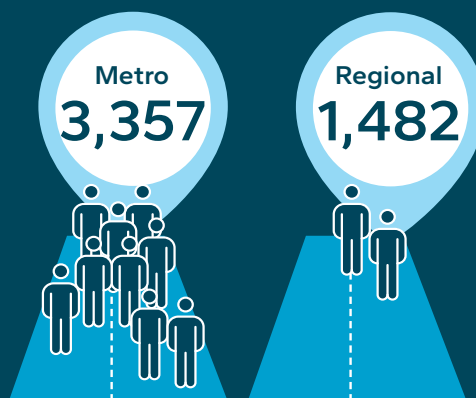
www.roadwise.asn.au
roadwise@walga.asn.au
(08) 9213 2000



Average Annual KSI Rate per 100,000 population by Region



Killed & Seriously Injured



Crash Type

Crash Type	KSI	% KSI 2018-2022	Change from 2017-2021
Right Angle	1,084	22.4%	↓
Off Carriageway Hit object	1,000	20.7%	↑
Right Turn Thru	532	11.0%	↓
Hit Pedestrian	468	9.7%	→
Rear End	438	9.1%	↑
Non-collision	421	8.7%	↓
Head On	204	4.2%	↑
Sideswipe	185	3.8%	↑
Off Carriageway Non-collision	181	3.7%	↑
Other	148	3.1%	↑
Hit Object	134	2.8%	↓
Hit Animal	44	0.9%	↑
Total	4,839	100%	

Priority Treatment Areas

33.4%	Intersection
24.4%	Run-off-road
9.7%	Hit pedestrian

Road User Type

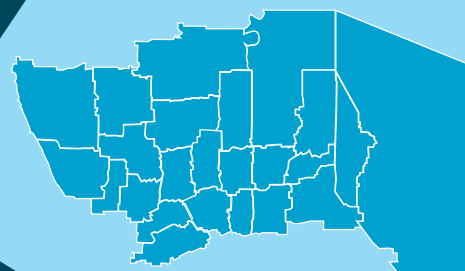


Primary source: Government of Western Australia, Road Safety Commission, February 2024.

Scan the QR code to access supporting notes.

Road Safety Performance Local Government Roads 2018-2022

Wheatbelt North Region



Nov 2024

State Roads

Length

2,004km - 8%

Travel / Use

1,098 MVKT - 86%

KSI rate
109.9/100,000



Local Roads

Length

23,905km - 92%

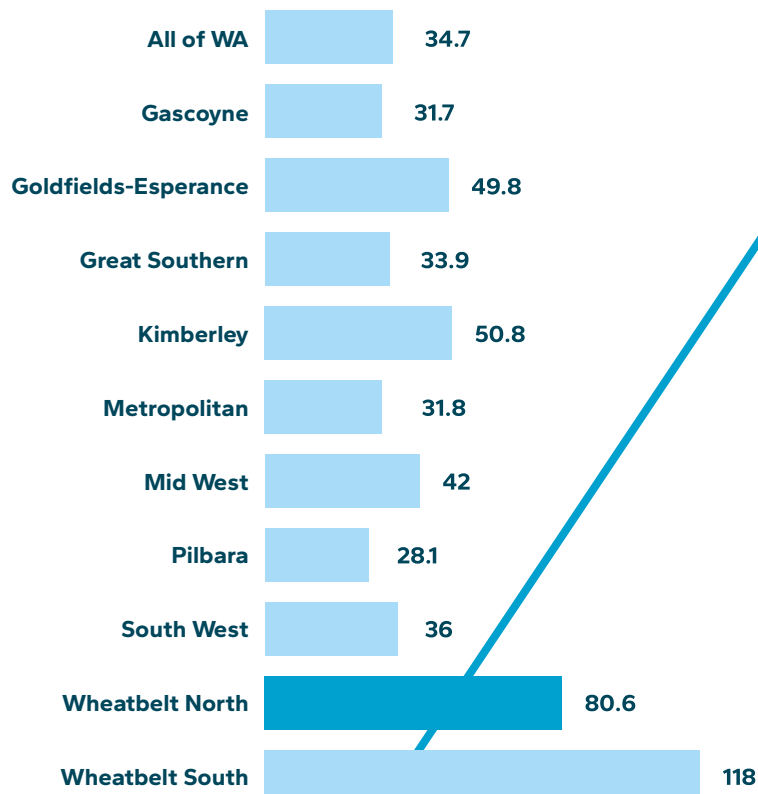
Travel / Use

183 MVKT - 14%

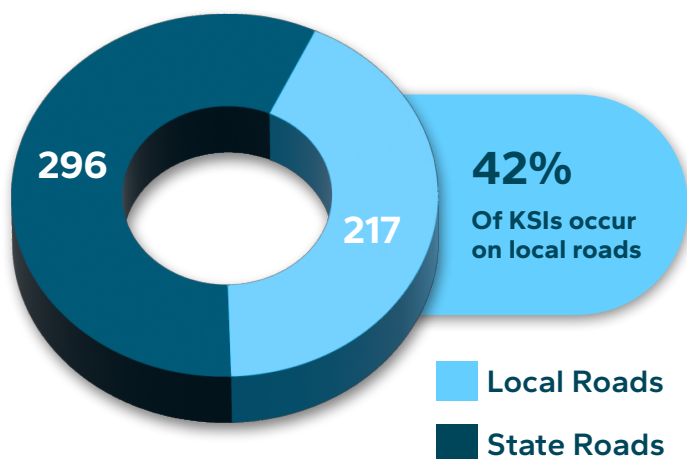
KSI rate
80.6/100,000



Average Annual KSI Rate per 100,000 population by Region



Killed & Seriously Injured



RoadWise



WALGA

www.roadwise.asn.au
roadwise@walga.asn.au
(08) 9213 2000

People Killed & Seriously Injured on Local Government Roads

Local Government	Killed	Seriously Injured	Total KSI
Chittering	4	16	20
Cunderdin	1	2	3
Dalwallinu	1	6	7
Dandaragan	4	12	16
Dowerin	1	1	2
Gingin	10	21	31
Goomalling	0	2	2
Kellerberrin	1	3	4
Koorda	0	7	7
Merredin	0	3	3
Moora	1	2	3
Mount Marshall	2	6	8
Mukinbudin	0	1	1
Northam	5	29	34
Nungarin	2	4	6
Tammin	0	1	1
Toodyay	7	23	30
Trayning	0	0	0
Victoria Plains	2	3	5
Westonia	0	4	4
Wongan - Ballidu	0	9	9
Wyalkatchem	0	3	3
Yilgarn	1	4	5
York	2	11	13
Total	44	173	217



Crash Type

Crash Type	KSI	% KSI 2018-2022	Change from 2017-2021
Off Carriageway Hit object	94	43.3%	↓
Off Carriageway Non-collision	35	16.1%	↑
Non-collision	30	13.8%	↓
Right Angle	16	7.4%	↑
Head On	13	6.0%	↑
Hit Object	8	3.7%	↓
Hit Pedestrian	8	3.7%	↑
Hit Animal	6	2.8%	↑
Right Turn Thru	3	1.4%	↑
Other	2	0.9%	↓
Rear End	2	0.9%	↑
Sideswipe	0	0.0%	↓
Total	217	100%	

Priority Treatment Areas

59.4%	Run-off-road
13.8%	Non-collision
8.8%	Intersection



Primary source: Government of Western Australia, Road Safety Commission, February 2024.

Scan the QR code to access supporting notes.

Future Scheme expansion announced by WA State Premier

Hi Bill,

On Saturday 8 February 2025, the State Government announced plans to expand our range of accepted containers in their next tenure.

What does this mean for you?

It's good to be across announcements that impact WA's container deposit scheme, however, no action from you is necessary.

No new containers will be accepted at refund points or via our collection service until the official launch date is announced by the government, which is yet to be advised.

For now, do not return the proposed new containers. Keep doing what you're doing, and dispose of these containers in the relevant bin as per the WasteSorted guidelines.

Need a reminder of what is accepted?

- Most single-serve water and fizzy drink containers up to and including 3L
- Most single-serve alcohol containers, like beer bottles and pre-mixed spirits
- Flavoured milk containers that are 150mL to 999mL
- Coconut water, pure fruit, or vegetable juice containers that are 150mL to 999mL

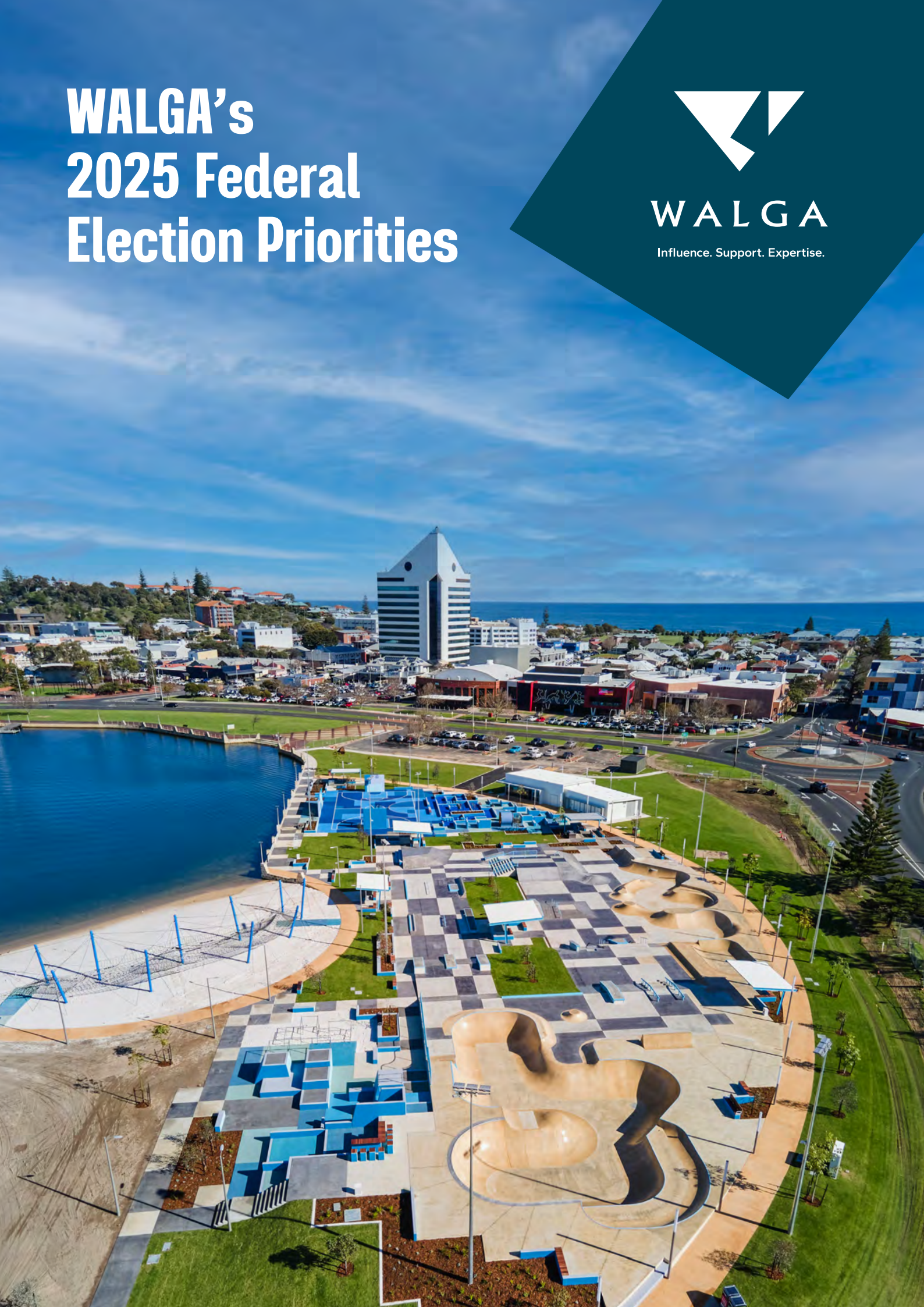
Thank you for your continued support of our container deposit scheme.

WALGA's 2025 Federal Election Priorities



WALGA

Influence. Support. Expertise.



ABOUT WALGA

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

Our membership includes all 139 Local Governments in the State. WALGA uses its influence, support and expertise to deliver better outcomes for WA Local Governments and their communities.

We do this through effective advocacy to all levels of Government on behalf of our Members, and by the provision of expert advice, services and support to Local Governments.

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

CONTENTS

About WALGA	2
Introduction	3
Local Government in WA	4
Community Infrastructure	6
Coastal Management	8
Emergency Management	10
Regional Health	12
Safer Roads	14
Telecommunications	16

INTRODUCTION

As the 2025 Federal election approaches, communities across Australia are facing a range of challenges.

The cost-of-living crisis, more frequent natural disasters and extreme weather events, a shifting demographic profile and the transition to a low-carbon economy are placing strain on families and our most vulnerable.

Building community resilience is a crucial strategy to address these pressing issues. Resilient communities are better equipped to respond to, recover from, and adapt to challenges. They foster inclusivity, sustainability, and local economic development, creating a robust foundation to overcome any obstacles.

This election presents an important opportunity for the incoming government to prioritise building community resilience, ensuring a brighter future for communities across the nation.

WALGA's *2025 Federal Election Priorities*, presents a plan to build community resilience through strategic investments and policy reforms in critical areas such as community infrastructure, coastal management, emergency management, regional health, road safety, and telecommunications.

As a trusted partner of the Australian Government, WA Local Governments are ready and committed to work with the incoming Australian Government to address these critical areas to support stronger, more resilient communities across Western Australia and the nation.



LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN WA



139
Councils



1,136
Elected Members



24,600
employees

*WALGA Salary and Workforce Survey



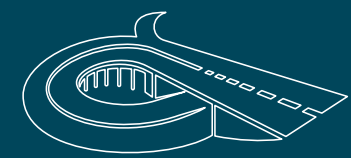
\$4.5bn
expenditure per annum

*Australian Bureau of Statistics



\$49bn
of assets

*Australian Bureau of Statistics



87%
of all public roads managed

*WALGA Road Asset and Expenditure report

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENTS ARE DIVERSE IN:



Land size:
ranging from
less than
1.1² km to over
372,000² km



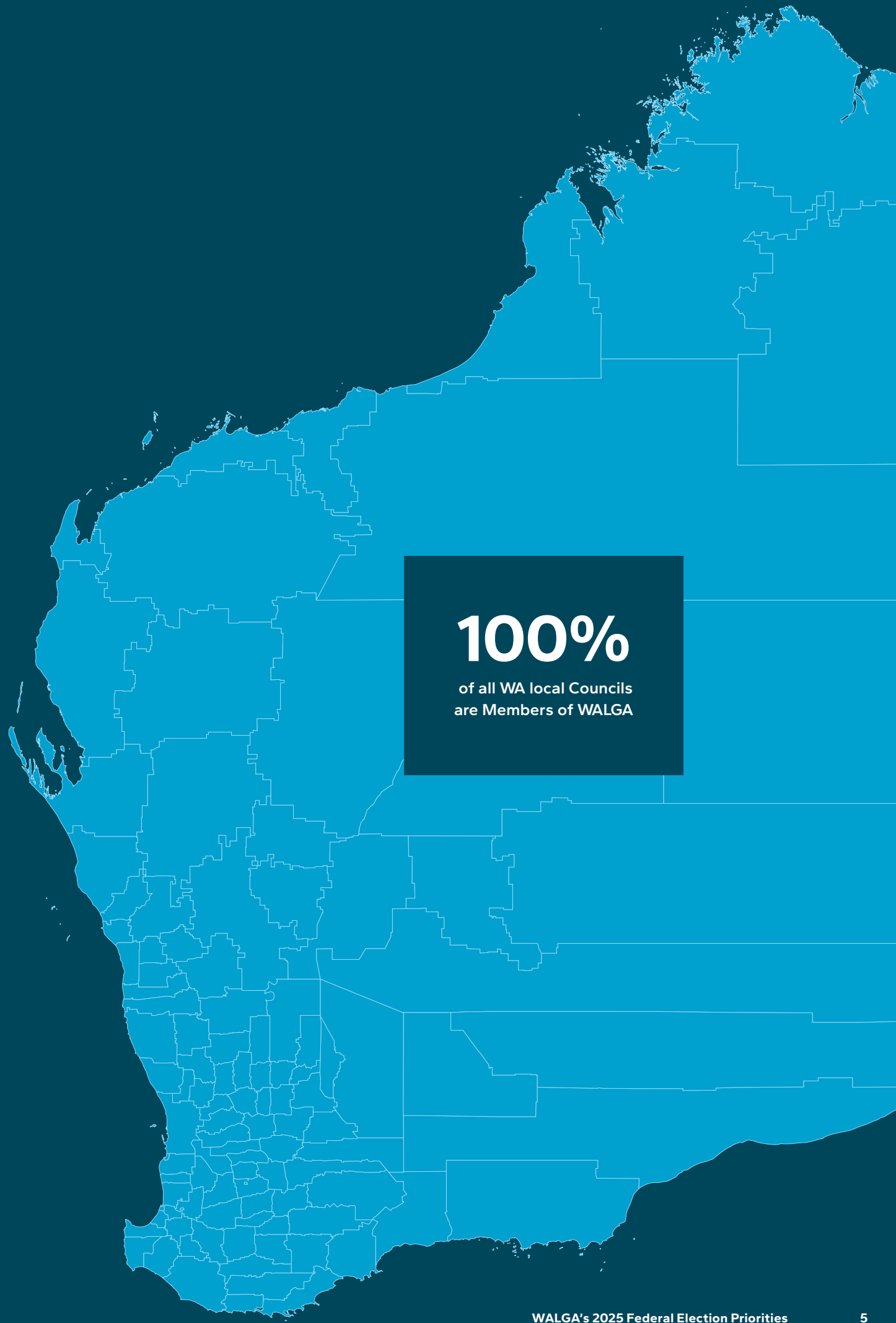
**Number of
staff employed:**
from **13** to
over **1,200**
per council



Populations:
range from
89 to more
than **224,000**
people



**Revenue
received:** which
in 2022-23,
ranged from
\$3 million
to just over
\$294 million



100%
of all WA local Councils
are Members of WALGA

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

Action Required:

- **Provide additional ongoing, formula-based targeted funding streams for Local Governments to provide certainty and enable effective planning for community needs.**
 - **Housing and community infrastructure: \$1.1 billion per year for housing infrastructure and \$500 million per year for community infrastructure.**
 - **Emergency management mitigation, resilience, and capacity: \$900 million per year.**
 - **Climate adaptation: \$400 million per year initially, increasing to \$800 million per year after five years.**



Local Governments face significant challenges in raising the necessary revenue to meet the growing needs of their communities. As community needs evolve and the scope of Local Government services expands, these challenges become even more pronounced.

Rates are a key source of revenue for the Local Government sector. However, structural differences across Local Governments mean that regional Councils with relatively smaller populations often have a lower capacity to generate rate revenue and are more dependent on grants from other levels of government. For instance, rate income can range from as low as 2% in remote areas to as high as 87% of total revenue in inner urban areas. These constraints mean that many Local Governments are reliant on external funding to fulfill their responsibilities.

Financial Assistance (FA) Grants play a crucial role in the financial sustainability of Local Governments, particularly for those in rural and remote areas with limited revenue-raising capacity. Untied funding allows Local Governments to allocate resources according to local conditions and community preferences and has

lower administrative costs for both Local Government and the Australian Government.

Maintaining untied direct funding under FA Grants is essential, but there is also a need for additional ongoing, formula-based targeted funding to provide certainty and enable effective planning for community needs.

A proven model of efficient and effective funding is the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program (LRCIP). The LRCIP aligns with key principles such as:

- Funding allocation based on policy objectives, ensuring equitable service levels across all communities.
- Autonomy for Local Governments to identify and prioritise local needs.
- A non-competitive program structure.
- Low administrative costs.

Western Australian Local Governments delivered around 2,000 local priority projects through the first three phases of the LRCIP. These projects reflect the diverse needs of each community and include:

- Energy efficiency upgrades to community buildings.
- Access and inclusion improvements.
- Upgrades to lighting and change facilities to enhance the use of sporting facilities.
- Renewal of sports playing surfaces.
- Repurposing underutilised facilities to meet current demands.
- Construction of youth precincts and skate parks.
- Development of paths to encourage active travel, including walking, cycling, and scooting.
- A wide range of other community-focused projects.

To build on this success, the Australian Government should look to create dedicated funding streams linked to specific national outcomes, ensuring a guaranteed, council-only funding pool.

By adopting additional untied funding streams, we can ensure that Local Governments have the resources they need to continue delivering essential services and infrastructure, fostering resilient and vibrant communities across the nation.

FUNDING BETTER FUTURES - RATE INCOME IS AS LOW AS 2% OF TOTAL REVENUE IN REMOTE AREAS MAKING SMALLER LOCAL GOVERNMENTS RELIANT ON EXTERNAL FUNDING.

COASTAL MANAGEMENT

Action Required:

- ▶ **Develop a National Coastal Hazards Adaptation Strategy and fund a dedicated Coastal Hazard Adaptation program.**

Climate change-induced sea level rise, increasing storm intensities and changes to wave and wind patterns are increasing the risk of coastal erosion and inundation around Australia.

Most of Australia's population live in coastal areas. 80% of WA's population lives within 10km of the coast. Coastal areas are critical to the State's environment and economy, providing locations for essential infrastructure such as ports, road and rail, energy and telecommunications, as well as commercial, industrial and residential development, recreation and tourism.

In 2011, the Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency estimated that more than \$226 billion of public and private assets across Australia will potentially be exposed to coastal hazards within the next 80 years. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has estimated that more than 200,000 commercial, light industrial and residential buildings, and 27,000km of road and rail assets will be impacted by coastal erosion or inundation across Australia under sea level rise projections of 1.1 metres. In WA, between 18,700 and 28,900 residential buildings may be at risk.

In 2019, the WA Government identified 55 coastal erosion hotspots — 15 in metropolitan areas and 40 in regional areas — where coastal erosion is expected to impact on public and private physical assets and require management and adaptation action within the next 25 years, with an additional 31 locations likely to be threatened in the longer-term. The cost of managing these hotspots is estimated at \$110 million over 5 years, with more funding needed over the longer term. Additional coastal inundation hotspots

are currently being mapped which will require further management and adaptation action. While Local Governments are largely responsible for managing coastal hazards, they do not have sufficient financial capacity to do so at the scale required.

This is a national issue involving complex strategic planning that requires a coordinated response across Local, State and the Australian Government.

WALGA considers that the development of a National Coastal Hazards Adaptation Strategy should be progressed as a priority in the next term of Government.

Identified by Infrastructure Australia as a priority initiative in 2020 and recommended by the Intergovernmental Coastal Hazards Working Group in 2023, WALGA believes this National Strategy should be informed by an updated climate change coastal risk assessment and form the basis of coordinated action to address and manage coastal hazards over the next 15 years.

Building on the Disaster Ready Fund, implementation of the Strategy should be accompanied with an additional dedicated Coastal Hazard Adaptation funding program to support Local Governments' efforts to plan and implement significant and more complex adaptation projects.



**PROTECTING OUR
COASTLINES AND ASSETS
FOR GENERATIONS TO
COME - 55 COASTAL
EROSION HOTSPOTS HAVE
BEEN IDENTIFIED TO
REQUIRE ACTION WITHIN
THE NEXT 25 YEARS.**



EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Action Required:

- ▶ **Implement the findings of the Colvin Review to invest in Local Government Emergency Management by providing additional untied funding streams, allocating dedicated Emergency Management resources and support officers, and enhancing training programs.**
- ▶ **Reform the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements to ensure they are consistent, equitable, and streamlined, reducing the administrative burden on Local Government.**
- ▶ **Incorporate betterment into all reconstruction activities as a core component of the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements.**
- ▶ **Enhanced training and exercise opportunities for Local Governments to build capability and provide structured learning pathways and nationally recognised qualifications for Local Government Emergency Management practitioners.**

Australia is experiencing more frequent and severe disasters driven by climate change. Since 2020, WA has faced 42 declared disasters, creating significant challenges for 80 Local Governments across the State.

Local Governments, alongside the Australian and State Governments, play a critical role in emergency management through preparedness, response, and recovery activities.

WA is the only jurisdiction where Local Governments manage Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades. In WA, 111 Local Governments oversee 563 Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades, comprising approximately 20,000 Volunteers who are the first responders to fires across 91.8% of the State's geographical area.

However, Local Governments in WA have varying levels of emergency management capacity and capability. A 2023 survey by WALGA highlighted that community preparedness and the ability of Local Governments to respond to and recover from major emergencies are critical issues for most councils. Currently, when disasters significantly impact essential public assets in WA, there is no funding available for reconstruction to be more

resilient leaving infrastructure vulnerable to repeated damage.

To improve the capacity of communities to withstand, adapt and positively recover from future events it is critical that there is increased emphasis and investment in reducing risk, enhancing Local Government emergency management capabilities and reducing the vulnerability of essential public infrastructure through dedicated betterment funding.

This approach will not only reduce the impact of natural hazards but will reduce the cost of recovery when the next event occurs.

A strategic shift towards disaster risk reduction and resilience is supported by the recommendations of the reviews of Commonwealth Disaster Funding and National Natural Disaster Governance. The Colvin Review advocates for a significant capacity uplift for Local Government, an enhanced national training and exercise regime to build Local Government capacity, and reforms to Commonwealth disaster funding. These measures aim to create a disaster management system that is scalable, sustainable, effective, equitable, transparent, and accessible.



STRONG COMMUNITIES READY FOR ANY DISASTER – SINCE 2020, WA HAS EXPERIENCED 42 DECLARED DISASTERS, AFFECTING 80 LOCAL GOVERNMENTS ACROSS THE STATE.

REGIONAL HEALTH

Action Required:

- **Address the systemic failures in regional primary healthcare provision through the development of adequate and appropriate funding models for rural primary healthcare services.**

All Australians, regardless of where they live, deserve equitable access to primary healthcare services. However, the current system is failing to provide adequate healthcare for many of the 7 million Australians and over 500,000 Western Australians who live in rural, regional and remote areas.

These individuals experience poorer health outcomes and are more likely to die at a younger age from disease than people living elsewhere in Australia, with poorer access to primary healthcare services contributing to higher rates of hospitalisations, deaths, and injuries (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2022, 2024). The burden of disease from many preventable, chronic illnesses is higher and the prevalence of people living with two or more long-term health conditions is highest in regional areas. Despite this inequitable distribution of disease, GP availability is lower in rural and remote areas.

The Australian Government is responsible for developing national health policy and the funding and regulation of primary healthcare through Medicare and for the funding of public hospital services in conjunction with State Governments. The collective, systemic failure of the health system to deliver adequate primary healthcare services in many parts of rural Western Australia, in particular general practitioners, is forcing Local Governments to step in to secure these services for their communities, including funding for accommodation, vehicles, medical centre operations, as well as competing in the open market for healthcare professionals.

According to WALGA's Local Government Primary Healthcare Services Survey, in 2021-22, 69 Local

Governments spent \$6.8 million to support the provision of primary healthcare services in their communities and 92% of respondent Local Governments with populations between 1,000 and 5,000 provided financial or in-kind support for general practice services.

The need for Local Governments to fund this essential service for their communities is placing significant pressure on Local Governments' already stretched budgets, diverting funds away from the provision of other essential community services and infrastructure. Local Governments should not, and cannot, continue to bear this cost.

According to the National Rural Health Alliance (NRHA), there is a national rural health spending deficit of \$6.5 billion. The incoming Government must take action to close this gap and implement system wide, long-term reforms that support and incentivise the equitable provision of general practice and primary healthcare for regional, rural and remote communities, including adequate and appropriate funding models and workforce training, recruitment and retention strategies.



HEALTHCARE WITH NO AUSTRALIAN LEFT BEHIND – THE BURDEN OF DISEASE FROM MANY PREVENTABLE CHRONIC ILLNESSES IS HIGHER IN REGIONAL AREAS.

SAFER ROADS

Action Required:

- ▶ **\$276 million over four years for the Australian Government's contribution to applying proven road safety countermeasures on 439 WA Local Government roads, totalling 8,208 km.**

Reducing fatalities and serious injuries on Local Government roads is essential to meeting the National Road Safety Strategy target of a 50% reduction in fatalities and a 30% reduction in serious injuries from road trauma by 2030.

Between 2017 and 2021, more than 500 people lost their lives and over 2,900 were seriously injured on regional roads in WA. Alarming, half of these crashes happened on Local Government roads. In 2022, the fatality rate in regional WA was 18.7 per 100,000 people, compared to just 2.84 per 100,000 in the Perth metropolitan area.

Over 70 % of fatal and serious injury crashes in regional WA are due to run-off-road or head-on collisions. Improving safety on these roads is challenging because of their extensive and remote nature.

The \$855.7 million Regional Road Safety Program is delivering significant improvements in road safety on National and State Highways. Analysis across 163 Regional Road Safety Program projects over the last two years shows positive outcomes. Compared to the previous five years, a 50% reduction in fatalities and 35% reduction in serious injuries has been observed.

Significant benefits can be achieved by extending this approach to high-speed regional local roads.

A business case led by the RAC in partnership with WALGA and Main Roads WA, prepared by the Australian Road Research Board (ARRB), proposes a program to reduce the disproportionately high rate of fatal and serious injury crashes on high-speed Local Government roads in regional and peri-urban areas. This Business Case prioritises

439 high-speed Local Government roads covering 8,208 km - approximately one-third of WA's sealed rural road network - and provides a process for selecting appropriate, proven, cost-effective countermeasures, a safety assessment and a return-on-investment analysis.

To support the implementation of this business case, co-funding from the Australian Government and State Government is required to a total \$552 million.

To evaluate the program's effectiveness, assessments were conducted that included before-and-after comparisons of star safety ratings and estimates of KSI (Killed and Seriously Injured) reductions. The analysis shows significant road safety benefits:

- ▶ **A reduction of 138 fatalities and 489 serious injuries over the 30-year lifespan of the countermeasures.**
- ▶ **An average Star Rating Score improvement from 38.4 to 29.1 after implementing the countermeasures.**
- ▶ **A 23.6% improvement in the Star Rating Score, indicating a relative risk safety improvement.**

The program aligns with both National and State road safety goals, particularly in WA's Road Safety Framework, focusing on "building safer roads and road systems" and emphasising the importance of regional roads in the Driving Change, Road Safety Strategy for WA 2020 – 2030.



**SAVING LIVES AND
REDUCING INJURY ON
HIGH-SPEED LOCAL
ROADS – BETWEEN
2017 AND 2021, MORE
THAN 500 PEOPLE LOST
THEIR LIVES AND OVER
2,900 WERE SERIOUSLY
INJURED ON REGIONAL
ROADS IN WA.**



TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Action Required:

- ▶ **Implement measures that require telecommunications carriers to identify the most vulnerable parts of their mobile and broadband networks and implement programs to greatly increase resilience against power failures and other impacts.**
- ▶ **Examine opportunities for new technologies such as satellite services to achieve cost effective, resilient, equitable access to telecommunications services for people outside major cities, and to ensure reliable communication during emergencies.**

Reliable telecommunications are essential for Local Governments to fulfill their emergency management responsibilities, economic development objectives, and community aspirations for safe, attractive, and liveable places.

However, Local Governments in peri-urban, rural, regional and remote areas are concerned about the adequacy of telecommunications services, specifically:

- **Reliability and resilience of telecommunications services** - Power outages, which are more frequent and prolonged in rural areas, heavily impact telecommunications services. During emergencies such as bushfires and storms, the lack of reliable telecommunications hampers effective response and communication.
- **Inequitable access to mobile service coverage** - Many areas lack adequate service, and the current mobile coverage maps are often inaccurate, failing to reflect the true service availability at a local level. Feedback indicates that the shutdown of 3G networks in November 2024 resulted in coverage not being provided where it previously was.
- **Poor mobile and internet performance** - Performance is a key concern during peak tourist seasons or increased mining activities. The telecommunications infrastructure often cannot handle the increased demand during these periods, affecting businesses and residents.

- **Limited choice of service providers** - Outside urban areas, Telstra is often the only viable mobile service provider, limiting consumer choice and leading to higher costs.

The 2021 Regional Telecommunications Review provides recommendations to address these challenges, which have not been implemented. These issues are being further considered in the 2024 Regional Telecommunications Review, which is due to report to the Australian Government by 31 December 2024. Implementing the recommendations of the review should be a priority.

A key recommendation of the 2021 Review was to redefine the Universal Service Obligation to focus on service levels, cost, reliability, and resilience, allowing for flexible technology solutions. This remains a priority. Specific service standards for mobile and broadband services in regional Australia should also be included.



FORGING EQUAL ACCESS FOR ALL WEST AUSTRALIANS – MANY AREAS LACK ADEQUATE SERVICE, AND THE CURRENT MOBILE COVERAGE MAPS ARE OFTEN INACCURATE, FAILING TO REFLECT THE TRUE SERVICE AVAILABILITY AT A LOCAL LEVEL.



Other priorities include:

- ▶ A thorough audit of mobile coverage to identify service levels at each location and ensure that mobile service coverage does not diminish with the transition from 3G to 4G and 5G.
- ▶ Continued co-investment with the telecommunications industry to expand mobile service coverage.
- ▶ Requiring carriers to monitor and report broadband and mobile service levels, adjusting capacity to meet peak demand.

- ▶ Refining the Mobile Black Spot Program to provide effective coverage without requiring multiple SIMs and mobile plans.
- ▶ Identifying and addressing the parts of the network most vulnerable to power failures and developing standalone power supply systems.

A critical part of any response should be to consider the role for new technologies such as satellite services to achieve cost effective, resilient, equitable access to telecommunications services for those living and working outside Australia's major urban centres and to provide resilience during emergencies.



Further information

Please contact Nick Sloan, WALGA CEO,
via email nsloan@walga.asn.au



WALGA

Influence. Support. Expertise.

ONE70
Level 1, 170 Railway Parade
West Leederville WA 6007

08 9213 2000
info@walga.asn.au

walga.asn.au

From: [Bill Price](#)
To: [Chantelle Pedrotti](#)
Subject: FW: Management Committee Update - January 2025
Date: Friday, 14 February 2025 12:33:05 PM

From: Jo Trachy <jo.trachy@ceaca.org.au>
Sent: Monday, February 3, 2025 3:35 PM
To: Mark Furr <mark.furr@brucerock.wa.gov.au>; stephenstrangecots@icloud.com; CEO <ceo@dowerin.wa.gov.au>; ceo <ceo@kellerberrin.wa.gov.au>; gardiner@kellerberrin.wa.gov.au; ceo@mtmarshall.wa.gov.au; crsachse@mtmarshall.wa.gov.au; ceo@merredin.wa.gov.au; Bradley Anderson <cranderson@merredin.wa.gov.au>; ceo@mukinbudin.wa.gov.au; crshadbolt@mukinbudin.wa.gov.au; Rebecca McCall <ceo@narembreen.wa.gov.au>; Holly Cusack <crcusack@narembreen.wa.gov.au>; Natalie Ness <natalie.ness@quairading.wa.gov.au>; Bill Price <ceo@westonia.wa.gov.au>; Ross DellaBosca <cr.DellaBosca@westonia.wa.gov.au>; ceo@wyalkatchem.wa.gov.au; cr.stratford@wyalkatchem.wa.gov.au; Brian Jones <ceo@yilgarn.wa.gov.au>; cr_wdellabosca@yilgarn.wa.gov.au
Cc: Richard Marshall <richard.marshall@ceaca.org.au>; tuck.noels@bigpond.com
Subject: Management Committee Update - January 2025

Good afternoon all,

I hope that 2025 has started well for you.

Please note a brief update on the Government funding submissions to build fifty-four (54) new houses across eleven Wheatbelt shires:

- State Government (Department of Communities) - submission for \$13.6m lodged on 20 January 2025. Decision expected by April 2025.
- Federal Government (Housing Australia, HAFFF) - submission for \$13.6m lodged on 31 January 2025. The submission was lodged by the Department of Communities as part of a WA statewide funding submission. Decision expected by May 2025.

The proposed funding model includes \$3m (10%) to be funded by the eleven Wheatbelt shires.

Please contact me with any queries.

Regards

Richard Marshall
Executive Officer
Central East Accommodation and Care Alliance Inc
Level 2, Building C
355 Scarborough Beach Road, Osborne Park WA 6017
Mb: 0411 056 576
Em: richard.marshall@ceaca.org.au

Bill Price
Chief Executive Officer

41 Wolfram Street, WESTONIA WA 6423
Phone: (08) 9046 7063
Fax: (08) 9046 7001

From: [Bill Price](#)
To: [Chantelle Pedrotti](#)
Subject: FW: New provisions for superannuation payments to council members
Date: Friday, 14 February 2025 12:33:27 PM

From: Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries <newsletter@dlgsc.wa.gov.au>
Sent: Friday, January 31, 2025 10:14 AM
To: Bill Price <ceo@westonia.wa.gov.au>
Subject: New provisions for superannuation payments to council members



New provisions provide for local governments to pay superannuation to council members

New provisions will commence on 1 February 2025 to streamline the process for local governments to pay superannuation to council members.

The changes are part of the work to implement the *Local Government Amendment Act 2024* and will allow local governments to resolve to pay superannuation to council members by an absolute majority decision.

From 19 October 2025, it will be compulsory for all [class 1 and 2 local governments](#) to pay superannuation to council members. This will remain optional for [class 3 and 4 local governments](#).

This reform encourages greater diversity across local governments, as well as assisting to attract and retain council members.

Other amendments have been made in the regulations to clarify that the nominees of companies on the owners and occupiers roll must be an officer or employee of that company in future. These changes also take effect from 1 February 2025.

[Learn more about these changes](#)

Local government reform webinar

Please join us at our first local government reform webinar for the year for an update on these regulations and other reforms currently under consultation.

Monday 3 February 2025
2:00 pm to 4:00 pm

[Register for the webinar](#)