



Director General's Report

August 2014

Reform of WA's metropolitan local governments has moved closer, with the Local Government Advisory Board (LGAB) calling for public submissions on three proposals. LGAB will be putting forward its recommendations on reform to Local Government Minister Tony Simpson in late August.

The Department of Local Government and Communities (DLGC) continues to support metropolitan local governments during the reform, including providing \$15 million over three years in grants to assist with implementation. A further \$45 million will be available from the State Government in low-interest loans.

Another exciting move forward for local government has happened in the Pilbara, where the Shire of Roebourne became the City of Karratha on 1 July. DLGC looks forward to continuing to work with the city as it embraces this milestone achievement.

DLGC's community funding programs are a great example of partnerships in action. Recently approved grants have been awarded under the community gardens and beyond gambling programs.

Another excellent example of government and community collaboration is Seniors Week, which is a partnership between DLGC and Council on the Ageing WA. As part of the event, local governments and community sector organisations are being encouraged to apply for a Seniors Week Community Grant to celebrate seniors in their local community. The WA Seniors Awards were also launched recently and DLGC and COTA WA welcome your nominations.

I hope you enjoy the August edition of the Director General's Report. As DLGC finds better ways of working and keeping our stakeholders informed, the report will soon be moving to an online publication. I look forward to sharing more from DLGC in the coming months.

Jennifer Mathews
Director General



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Reform moves a step closer

The call for public submissions on three of the proposals received for local government reform in metropolitan Perth is another clear signal changes are getting closer.

The Local Government Advisory Board has advertised its intended recommendations on the three proposals submitted by the Cockburn Community Steering Committee, the City of Armadale and the City of Melville.

Board chairman Mel Congerton said that, as required by the *Local Government Act 1995*, the board was calling for public submissions on the intended recommendations that were significantly different from the original proposals it received.

Submissions must be received by 4pm on Thursday 14 August. Maps, information about the proposals and how to make a submission are available at: www.dlgc.wa.gov.au/MetroInquiries

The board is expected to complete its report by the end of August.

The final decision on the board's recommendations will then be made by Local Government Minister Tony Simpson who can accept or reject the recommendations, but cannot change them.

Minister Simpson has reaffirmed the State Government's commitment to the reform process and plans for new local governments to start operating from 1 July 2015.

Roebourne clinches city status

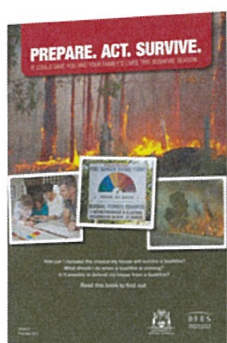
The Shire of Roebourne became the City of Karratha on 1 July in a ceremony attended by council representatives, members of parliament and local business leaders.

At the ceremony, Mayor Peter Long said the region had come a long way since its early pastoral and pearling days. The council had worked hard to improve the standard of infrastructure and the delivery of community services and facilities to meet the needs of the city's growing population.

The City of Karratha is home to 25,000 residents.

Under the *Local Government Act 1995* a shire can become a city when it has more than 20,000 residents, half of whom live in an urban area.

Achieving city status will help build the City of Karratha's profile and is likely to attract more investment, diversify the local economy and create better opportunities for residents and businesses.



Bushfires – Are You Ready?

Prepare. Act. Survive. Share the bushfire ready message.

Visit areyouready.wa.gov.au for more information.

Harvey Town Hall celebrates centenary

The Harvey Town Hall centenary was celebrated 1914-style at a civic reception hosted by the Shire of Harvey and the Harvey Town Hall Preservation Committee. About 200 people attended the event, where more than 1,000 photos of Harvey's history were showcased.



Shire councillors and staff dressed for the occasion in period costume and held the ordinary council meeting in the Lessor Hall. During the meeting, the minutes of the Harvey Road Board meeting on 4 July 1914 were tabled by chief executive officer Michael Parker and a motion was passed to receive them for prosperity to mark the centenary.

Councillors and senior staff celebrate the centenary. Image courtesy of the Shire of Harvey.

Reminder to lodge returns

Local governments are being reminded to ensure their primary and annual returns are lodged on time and are complete. Incomplete lodgement, late lodgement and failure to lodge may result in fines under the *Local Government Act 1995*.

Annual returns can be lodged with local government CEOs until 31 August. More information is available at: www.dlgc.wa.gov.au

Grants commission welcomes new members

The WA Local Government Grants Commission has welcomed new members. Shire of Manjimup councillor Paul Omodei has been appointed country rural member, City of Kwinana Mayor Carol Adams is the metropolitan member and Shire of Mundaring councillor Stephen Fox was appointed deputy metropolitan member.

The commission has completed its calculation of the 2014-15 financial assistance grants and anticipates that about \$280 million will be distributed among 138 Western Australian local governments in local road and general purpose grants.

In the lead up to the 2015-16 grant determinations, the commission has identified tourism, FIFO workers, regional centres, expenditure on doctors and animal control as areas to be reviewed.

Honouring WA's outstanding seniors

Seniors Week 2014 will be held from 9–16 November.

It is a week-long series of events and activities encouraging West Australians to celebrate the contributions of seniors and to promote active, healthy lifestyles among our older citizens.



WA Seniors Awards

Seniors Week kicks off with the WA Seniors Awards on 8 November. Local governments and community sector organisations are being encouraged to nominate for the awards.

A partnership between DLGC and Council on the Ageing WA (COTA WA), the WA Seniors Awards recognise seniors, and those who work with and volunteer for seniors, for their outstanding contributions to Western Australian communities.

This year age-friendly community sector organisations and age-friendly local governments will be recognised with two new award categories.

Nominations close on 29 August and finalists will be announced in October.

Seniors Week grants

Local governments, community sector organisations and other groups are invited to apply for grants of up to \$3,000 to host activities and events during Seniors Week.

The Seniors Week grants program is administered by COTA WA in partnership with DLGC and Lotterywest. Applications close Friday 15 August.

Seniors Week 2014 is sponsored by Bendigo Bank, Juniper, Channel Seven, 6PR and Have a Go News and supported by Lotterywest. More information is available at www.dlgc.wa.gov.au or www.cotawa.org.au

Communities to bloom with new grants

Community gardens

DLGC has approved grants of almost \$100,000 to establish community gardens in Gosnells and Willetton, support gardens in Broome and improve gardens in Victoria Park, Greenbushes, Mt Barker, Mandurah and Rockingham.

The projects were successful due to their sound planning and local government support. Community gardens are an important social hub for communities, providing sustainable food as well as knowledge-sharing.

Reducing problem gambling

Projects that raise awareness and reduce the impact of problem social gambling have received a total of \$840,000 from the Beyond Gambling Grants Program. They include a youth radio project, an African youth recreation-based project and a diversion program for Aboriginal people in a Kimberley community.

More information is available at: grants@dlgc.wa.gov.au or visit www.dlgc.wa.gov.au

Mining scholarships a boost for women

Three West Australian women have been awarded the inaugural Women in Mining WA's (WiMWA) mentoring program scholarships. Sponsored by DLGC, the scholarships aim to help improve the economic independence of women and increase their participation in leadership roles.

The scholarship recipients are mining engineering graduate Stephanie Graskoski, geologist Sarah Connolly and chemical engineer Lacey Filipich. DLGC plans to continue its funding of the scholarships in 2015.

Pilbara dance group wins top award

Port Hedland youth dance group The Hood Academy was chosen from the finalists of the Community Services Excellence Awards to win the prestigious Community Sector Choice Award. The youth-led hip hop academy was voted the stand-out favourite by attendees at the awards ceremony.

The Hood Academy was established in 2009 after boredom and anti-social behaviour were identified as major issues facing young people in Port Hedland. Dance is used as a tool to engage, equip and empower young people through initiatives such as peer mentoring and youth leadership.

The Community Services Excellence Awards are funded by DLGC, Lotterywest, Department of Regional Development, Synergy and the Water Corporation, with support from Hesta and Beyond Bank Australia.



Minister Simpson presents The Hood Academy with the Community Sector Choice Award.

Protecting the role of carers

Unpaid carers have the opportunity to have important legal and other questions answered at a Carers Future Planning Session in October.

It is important for carers to have plans in place for the future, and for carers to be aware of the legal arrangements that can impact on their caring role.

The free session will include presentations on powers of attorney and guardianship, advanced health directives, the role of the Public Advocate in protecting adults with decision-making disability, wills and the administration of deceased estates.

It will be held on 14 October at Redcliffe Park Community Centre. The Carers Future Planning Session 2014 is a partnership between DLGC, Office of the Public Advocate, Public Trustee, City of Belmont and Carers WA. For more information phone (08) 6551 8320 or contact jo.brooker@dlgc.wa.gov.au.

Celebrating children and volunteers

WA Children's Week Awards

DLGC is proud to support the WA Children's Week Awards which celebrate children's creativity and identify groups of children throughout Western Australia who participate in initiatives that promote health and wellbeing.

The annual awards program includes the Communities Award category which is sponsored by DLGC and recognises outstanding services and projects that work with children aged 3–12 years. Nominations close 8 August 2014.

The WA Children's Week Awards are hosted by Meerilinga and are a highlight of WA Children's Week, which will be held from 18–26 October. For more information visit www.childrensworld.org.au

Volunteering service badge

The WA Volunteer 50 Years of Service Badge is awarded to long-serving volunteers who have contributed 50 years or more of volunteer service to one organisation.

Nominations for the badge can be submitted at any time by an organisation. To have a badge presented by Seniors and Volunteering Minister Tony Simpson at Thank a Volunteer Day on 5 December, nominations must be received by 1 October. For more information visit www.dlgc.wa.go.au

The best start to NAIDOC day

Midland Best Start participated in the NAIDOC Family Fun Day hosted by the Town of Bassendean and Derbarl Yerrigan Health Services in July.



The Best Start stall was very popular and visitors were encouraged to help create a 'weaving gate' sculpture, which is now proudly on display at the Middle Swan Children and Family Centre.

DLGC's Best Start program aims to improve the life opportunities of Aboriginal children aged up to five years. Torres Strait Islander families are also welcome to attend. The program develops and delivers a range of activities and promotes information sessions and projects that will improve health, educational opportunities and social and cultural development.

Midland Best Start coordinator Cynthia Dann at the NAIDOC Family Fun Day.

Brookton director claims national award

The head of a Shire of Brookton child care centre has been named Australia's best early childhood director. Milly Molly Mandy's director Bobbi Wheeler received the Early Childhood Director of the Year Award at the 2014 Australian Family Early Education and Care Awards in June.

This major accolade recognises the dedication of Ms Wheeler to improving outcomes for children in her community.

In 2012–13, Milly Molly Mandy's received \$10,000 from DLGC through the Regional

Community Child Care Development Fund. Grants of up to \$25,000 are available to build the long term capacity and sustainability of regional early childhood education and care centres.

Thinker tackles children's resilience

DLGC was proud to partner with the Commissioner for Children and Young People WA in the 2014 Thinker in Residence program in May.

Thinker in Residence Dr Michael Ungar, an international child resilience expert, hosted a seminar for parents in Fremantle, which was opened by Communities Minister Tony Simpson, as well as an LGMA (WA) workshop at the City of Rockingham for local government professionals. A video of each session will soon be available at the DLGC website. Dr Ungar specialises in improving the wellbeing of children and young people through greater resilience.



L–R: Minister Simpson, Dr Ungar and Commissioner for Children and Young People Jenni Perkins.

Cultural training attracts diverse interest

The popularity of the Office of Multicultural Interests' (OMI) Diverse WA program has resulted in it being rolled out to community sector organisations and considered for use by the Family Court of Australia.

Diverse WA is a free online cultural competency training program that is being used by the public sector and local governments. More than 5,800 people from 117 public sector agencies and another 120 from local governments have registered for the program since its inception two years ago.

Due to demand, the program has recently been made available to community sector organisations and in the past three months more than 50 have registered to use the program.



OMI has been approached by agencies in other states that would like to customise the Diverse WA program. Negotiations are also underway to modify it for use by the Family Court of Australia. More information about Diverse WA is available at www.omi.wa.gov.au

Learnings from Logan

Local government professionals will have the chance to learn about an innovative Queensland initiative that drove social change through sector collaboration, at a seminar on 22 August.

The Logan: City of Choice Collective Impact Seminar hosted by DLGC and WACOSS will explore the collective impact approach adopted by the Logan City Council to tackle the complex issues of social disadvantage, social cohesion, education and health.

Logan City Council Deputy Mayor Russell Lutton, deputy CEO Oliver Simon and Matthew Cox from Australian Red Cross will share their experience

in planning and implementing this successful program.

The seminar will be held at Herb Graham Recreational Centre in the City of Stirling. Registrations for the event are limited and can be made at www.trybooking.com

Have your say

DLGC is calling for public comment on proposed changes to the *Caravan Parks and Camping Grounds Act 1995*. The consultation period ends on 1 September.

For more information visit www.dlgc.wa.gov.au



ABR cracks geocoding upgrade

The Australian Business Register (ABR) has been upgraded to incorporate two new features. The new capabilities may help agencies with policy development and planning and support local governments in their response to emergency situations.

One change is the geocoding of business location information in the ABR. Geocoding is a user-friendly, web-based tool that assigns geographic coordinates from street addresses, helping to build a detailed picture of business locations in Australia.

In addition, details about companies that have multiple physical business locations can now

be captured in the ABR. These addresses will also be geocoded and linked to statistical standards that will allow comparative analysis with other sources of information. More information is available by contacting the ABR on (02) 6216 4991.