

Great Eastern Country Zone Minutes 11 June 2026

**Hosted via TEAMS
Commenced at 11:30am**

ZONE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The following items are the Zone's priority issues, as resolved at the April 2026 Zone meeting:

- Regional Health Services to include:
 - Hospitals
 - Aged Care
 - Future of Nurse Practitioner Service
- Energy, Transport and Road Network
- Regional Housing and GROH
- Telecommunications
- Agricultural Land Use
- St John Ambulance Service
- Education
- Waste Management
- Regional Subsidiaries

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1. OPENING, ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

1.1. OPENING

The Chair opened the meeting at 11:32am.

Note: Due to the Zone's Delegation to Perth, this meeting was a hybrid meeting.

Normal meeting arrangements will be in place for future Zone meetings.

1.2. ATTENDANCE (IN PERSON AND BY ELECTRONIC MEANS)

MEMBERS	2 Voting Delegates from each Member Council
Shire of Bruce Rock	Cr Stephen Strange Mr Mark Furr, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting (e)
Shire of Cunderdin	President Cr Alison Harris Mr Stuart Hobley, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting (e)
Shire of Dowerin	President Cr Darrel Hudson (e) Cr Ashley Jones (e) Cr Robert Trepp, deputy delegate (e)
Shire of Kellerberrin	Cr Emily Ryan (e) Ms Morgan Ware, Manager of Governance, voting delegate (e)
Shire of Kondinin	Deputy President, Cr Beverley Gangell (e) Cr Toni Smeed (e) Mr Bruce Wright, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting (e)
Shire of Koorda	Deputy President, Cr Gary Greaves (e) Mr Zac Donovan, Chief Executive Officer, deputy voting delegate (e)
Shire of Merredin	President Cr Donna Crook (e) Cr Paul Boehme (e) Mr Craig Watts, Chief Executive Officer, deputy delegate (e)
Shire of Mount Marshall	President Cr Tony Sachse Deputy President, Cr Nicholas Gillett (e) Mr Ben McKay, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting (e)
Shire of Mukinbudin	Ms Tanika McLennan, A/Chief Executive Officer, non-voting (e)
Shire of Narembeen	President Cr Holly Cusack (e) Deputy President, Cr Hannah Bald (e)
Shire of Nungarin	President Cr Pippa de Lacy Cr Gary Coumbe (e)

	Mr David Nayda, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting <i>(e)</i>
Shire of Tammin	President Cr Charmaine Thomson <i>(e)</i> Deputy President, Cr Tanya Nicholls <i>(e)</i> Mr Andrew Malone, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting <i>(e)</i>
Shire of Trayning	President Cr Melanie Brown
Shire of Westonia	President Cr Mark Crees Ms Jasmine Geier, A/Chief Executive Officer, non-voting <i>(e)</i>
Shire of Wyalkatchem	Deputy President, Cr Mischa Stratford <i>(e)</i> Mr Tom Kettle, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting <i>(e)</i>
Shire of Yilgarn	President Cr Bryan Close <i>(e)</i> Cr Donna Newbury <i>(e)</i> Mr Ben Forbes, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting <i>(e)</i>

GUESTS

Regional Development Australia WA	Mr Josh Pomykala, Director Regional Development <i>(e)</i>
Wheatbelt Development Commission	Ms Renee Manning, A/Chief Executive Officer <i>(e)</i>

WALGA

Mr Sam McLeod, Manager Commercial Services
Ms Habiba Farrag, State Council Governance Officer
Ms Jade Mains, Senior Policy Advisor Environment *(e)*

(e) electronic attendance

1.3. APOLOGIES

MEMBERS

Shire of Bruce Rock	President Cr Ramesh Rajagopalan
Shire of Kellerberrin	Mr Raymond Griffiths, Chief Executive Officer, voting delegate
Shire of Koorda	President Cr Jannah Stratford
Shire of Mukinbudin	President Cr Gary Shadbolt
Shire of Trayning	Mr Peter Naylor, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting
Shire of Dowerin	Mrs Manisha Barthakur, Chief Executive Officer, non-voting
Shire of Narembeen	Ms Rebecca McCall, Chief Executive Officer, deputy voting delegate
Shire of Westonia	Deputy President, Cr Ross Della Bosca Mr Bill Price, Chief Executive Officer

GUESTS

CBH Group	Ms Kellie Todman, Manager Governance and Industry Relations
Main Roads WA	Mr Mohammad Siddiqui, Regional Manager Wheatbelt
Water Corporation	Ms Rebecca Bowler, Manager Customer & Stakeholder – Goldfields & Agricultural Region
Wheatbelt District Emergency Management Committee	Ms Shelby Robinson

MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

Hon Melissa Price MP, Member for Durack
Mr Rick Wilson MP, Member for O'Connor
Hon Steve Martin MLC
Mr Lachlan Hunter MLA, Member for Central Wheatbelt
Mr Peter Rundle MLA, Member for Roe

WALGA

Ms Tracey Peacock, Road Safety Advisor

2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We, the Great Eastern Country Zone of WALGA acknowledge the continuing connection of Aboriginal people to Country, culture and community, and pay our respects to Elders past and present.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Elected Members must declare to the Chairman any potential conflict of interest they have in a matter before the Zone as soon as they become aware of it. Councillors and deputies may be directly or indirectly associated with some recommendations of the Zone and State Council. If you are affected by these recommendations, please excuse yourself from the meeting and do not participate in deliberations.

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Nil.

5. LOCAL GOVERNMENT 'VIRTUAL HOST'

Due to the Delegation to Perth, this meeting was held online, and therefore no host presentations took place. The Shire of Bruce Rock is invited to make a presentation to the August Zone meeting.

Cr Toni Smeed joined the meeting at 11:35am.

6. GUEST SPEAKERS

Guest Speaker Protocols

- *The main speaker or keynote address to the Zone will be generally 30 minutes with 15 minutes for questions*
- *Other guest speakers will have a time limit of 20 minutes with 10 minutes for questions.*

6.1. SPEAKERS FOR THE JUNE ZONE MEETING

Due to the Great Eastern Country Zone Delegation to Perth taking place between Tuesday 9 and Thursday 11 June, there were no external speakers at the Zone meeting.

Renee Manning joined the meeting at 11:38am.

6.1.1. GREAT EASTERN COUNTRY ZONE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee provided a debrief on the Delegation to Perth to the Zone.

Noted

6.2. REQUEST TO PRESENT – LUMEN WHEATBELT STUDY HUBS

A request has been received from the Lumen Wheatbelt Study Hubs to present to the Zone at the 13 August meeting, at the Shire of Bruce Rock.

BACKGROUND

Lumen Wheatbelt Study Hubs is a federally funded, place-based program operating under the auspices of RDA Wheatbelt, focused on supporting university and TAFE students who reside in regional communities to successfully commence and complete their studies. Through our network of hubs in Northam, Narrogin, Merredin, Wongan Hills and York, along with our sister hub in Ellenbrook, we provide local access to study spaces, technology, and on-the-ground support that removes barriers to participation in tertiary education.

Alongside this, we work with partners to increase awareness of education and training pathways, support skill development, and connect community members to opportunities to upskill or reskill locally. We also engage directly with local schools, delivering sessions that help build aspiration in high school students and encourage them to explore further study options and pathways available to them.

Our outreach work across schools, community resource centres and the broader community is a key part of building aspiration and supporting locally driven workforce outcomes. Local government plays a key role in this space, particularly in raising awareness of education and training opportunities and helping connect community members to pathways that support local workforce needs. We see Lumen as contributing to locally driven workforce solutions and value the opportunity to engage directly with local government representatives.

RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Shire of Trayning
Seconded: Shire of Narembeen

That the Great Eastern Country Zone does support a deputation from Lumen Wheatbelt Study Hubs at the August 2026 Zone meeting.

CARRIED

7. AGENCY REPORTS

Agency Reports Protocols

The Zone appreciates and prefers written updates (circulated with the agenda) wherever possible. Agency representatives are invited to make brief (5 minute) remarks if the speaker wishes to provide context or a further update on a specific matter.

The Zone appreciates if time can be left for questions, typically for around 10 minutes. Briefings on a significant policy proposal or contentious topic are to be dealt with by the agency representative attending as a Guest or Keynote Speaker (item 6).

7.1. DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, INDUSTRY REGULATION AND SAFETY

The Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety report was attached to the Agenda.

Noted

7.2. REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AUSTRALIA WHEATBELT

Josh Pomykala, Director Regional Development

The Regional Development Australia Wheatbelt was attached to the Agenda.

Noted

8. MINUTES

8.1. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES FROM THE GREAT EASTERN COUNTRY ZONE MEETING HELD ON 23 APRIL 2026

The Minutes of the Great Eastern Country Zone meeting held on 23 April 2026 have previously been circulated to Member Councils.

RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Shire of Nungarin
Seconded: Shire of Cunderdin

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Great Eastern Country Zone held on 23 April 2026 be confirmed as a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

CARRIED

8.2. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE GREAT EASTERN COUNTRY ZONE MEETING HELD ON 23 APRIL 2026

8.2.1. HEAVY VEHICLE (RAV NETWORK) ROAD ACCESS

The Shire of Cunderdin raised concerns in relation to State Government decisions relating to access for Heavy Vehicle (RAV network) road access.

Several Zones have raised similar concerns to State Council. The issue was endorsed by State Council to be referred to the relevant policy team (Infrastructure Policy Team) for consideration.

This issue is also scheduled to be discussed with Main Roads as part of the Delegation.

Noted

8.3. MINUTES OF THE GREAT EASTERN COUNTRY ZONE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 19 MAY 2026

The Minutes of the Great Eastern Country Zone Executive Committee meeting held on 19 May 2026 were provided as an attachment to the Agenda.

RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Shire of Westonia
Seconded: Shire of Bruce Rock

That the Minutes of the Great Eastern Country Zone Executive Committee meeting held on 19 May 2026 be received.

CARRIED

8.4. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE GREAT EASTERN COUNTRY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 19 MAY 2026

Nil.

9. WALGA STATE COUNCIL EXECUTIVE REPORTS

Note: After the last Zone Meeting, the Executive Committee discussed moving the Executive Reports to earlier in the meeting. This allows for discussion on Zone meeting items to benefit from the State Councillor's debrief on the last State Council meeting, and other meetings of WALGA.

Some other minor changes have also been made, including no longer voting on whether to receive routine reports.

9.1. WALGA PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The WALGA President's Report was distributed with the Agenda.

Noted

9.2. STATE COUNCILLOR REPORT

Cr Stephen Strange

Noted

Stuart Hopley joined the meeting at 12:17pm.

9.3. STATUS REPORT

Noted

Agenda Item	Zone Resolution	WALGA Response	Update Last Provided	WALGA Contact
13 November 2025 Zone Agenda Item 16.2 Review of the Community Sporting and Recreation Facilities Fund (CSRFF)	That the Great Eastern Country Zone: 1. Express its concern at the ongoing review of the Community Sporting and Recreation Facilities Fund (CSRFF) without a timeline for completion or confirmation of the program's future structure or funding levels. 2. Request WALGA to advocate to the Minister for Sport and Recreation and the Department of Creative Industries, Tourism and Sport (CITS) for: a. Public release of the CSRFF review's scope, commencement date and expected completion timeline; b. Confirmation of the program's continuation and funding levels beyond the review period, with increases to reflect inflation, demand, and regional construction costs; c. Commitment that CSRFF will remain a merit-based, transparent, and equitable program accessible to regional and metropolitan communities alike; and d. Urgent communication of future funding round dates to enable regional local governments and community clubs to plan projects effectively. 3. Request WALGA to highlight to the Minister that the lack of certainty around CSRFF is jeopardising the fruition of regional projects vital to community wellbeing, participation, and sustainability.	CSRFF funding has been maintained at \$12 million per annum across the forward estimates in the 2026-27 State Budget. Funding is also maintained across other key sports and recreational infrastructure programs including the Club Night Lights Program and the Female Changerooms Fund. The Government's intentions with regard to future funding rounds and how much of this funding will be made available to Local Governments is unclear. WALGA wrote to the Minister for Sport and Recreation and the Department of Creative Industries, Tourism and Sport (CITS) on this issue in December 2025. The Minister responded on 17 February 2026, advising that investment in sporting infrastructure will focus on the delivery of the State Governments' PlayOn WA: 2030 by 2030 initiative and election commitments. The Minister further indicated this intent during parliamentary debate on 6 May 2026. WALGA is continuing to seek clarity regarding funding under these programs and will provide updates when available.	June 2026	Nicole Matthews Executive Manager Policy nmatthews@walga.asn.au 9213 2039

18 August 2025 Zone Agenda Item 9.4.1 Local Government Elections – Four Year Terms, Two Yearly Election Cycle	That the Great Eastern Country Zone request that WALGA continues to advocate to the State Government to retain the current system of four-year terms with a two-year spill for Local Government elections	Following sector consultation, State Council endorsed WALGA's existing Advocacy Position in favour of four-year terms with a two-year spill at the meeting held on 7 May. The <u>Advocacy Positions Manual</u> has been updated. COMPLETE	June 2026	Kirsty Martin, Executive Manager, Member Services 9213 2051 kmartin@walga.asn.au
13 February 2025 Zone Agenda Item 14.1 WA Telstra Automatic Transfer Unit Pilot Deployment Program	That the Great Eastern Country Zone requests WALGA organise a roundtable with WALGA, Telstra, Department of Fire and Emergency Services and Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development to discuss the drafting of Community Support Agents Agreement for the implementation of the WA Telstra Automatic Transfer Unit Pilot Deployment Program.	Negotiations with Telstra / InfraCo and the State Government through DPIRD are continuing with the objective of implementing clear backup generator deployment arrangements in place for the 2026/27 high threat season. Progress has been made in relation to required qualifications and training for people to connect the generators to an ATU. Significant challenges remain regarding the indemnities sought by Telstra from Local Governments and / or the State Government.	June 2026	Ian Duncan Executive Manager Infrastructure iduncan@walga.asn.au 9213 2031

10. ZONE BUSINESS

10.1. UPDATE ON ZONE CORRESPONDENCE

Since the 23 April 2026 Great Eastern Country Zone meeting, the Zone has received the following correspondence.

- **Letter received from the Great Southern Country Zone** (Attachment 5) regarding Cost Shifting to Local Government, requesting support from Zones to request that WALGA advocate on behalf of the sector to both State and Federal Governments on this issue.

Secretariat Comment

While cost-shifting is a very important issue for Local Government, addressing cost-shifting needs to consider the full range of issues and policies which cause costs to be incurred by Local Government. Grouping the issues may risk diluting the directness and effectiveness of advocacy, since the issue does not sit specifically with any single decision-maker.

Advocacy which addresses issues and policies directly (i.e. specific to particular government portfolios, laws, or decisions) has the greatest prospect of achieving the objective of reducing costs borne by Local Government. For this reason, WALGA ordinarily structures advocacy in this way.

Therefore, breaking the issue down into individual policy issues and resulting costs could be the best way to plan any future advocacy.

Some solutions to cost shifting may also be arrived at through measures such as: cost avoidance; improved efficiency of service delivery; or increasing/diversifying revenue - rather than only being based on minimising costs borne by one party.

RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Shire of Nungarin
Seconded: Shire of Trayning

That the Great Eastern Country Zone:

1. **Receive and acknowledge the Great Southern Country Zone's letter regarding cost shifting dated 20 May 2026.**
2. **Request the Executive Committee consider a response to the letter.**

CARRIED

10.2. 2027 ZONE FORUM

Planning has been progressing on the 2027 Zone forum, indicative scheduled for Thursday, 11 March 2027 at Cunderdin. Key to the success of any forum event is working closely with all speakers and the Master of Ceremonies to ensure the event program and script is cohesive, and provides for engagement and structure to keep delegates engaged for the duration of the event. This work includes:

- Designing the structure of the day and designing each session
- Undertaking supporting research to ensure session content is timely and relevant;
- Identifying effective and engaging speakers;
- Developing engaging panel and Q+A sessions – especially trying to ensure speakers with different perspectives and audience members can contribute;
- Briefing and liaising with speakers to ensure their content is relevant; and
- Finalising an event script and consolidated PowerPoint.

For the 2025 Forum, WALGA had available staffing capacity to support design and planning of the Forum, working closely with the MC to deliver the event to a professional events management standard. The Zone's two allocated staff members dedicated approximately two weeks of effort in the lead up to the event. An estimate of the total time spent is below:

Main Tasks	Detail	Organiser Hours	Manager Hours
Develop program	Meetings with subcommittee to discuss concepts and Committee suggestions for speakers Prepare and refine outline of forum	15	10
Recruit Speakers & MC	Draft and finalise all invitation letters, including content descriptions Liaise with speakers Confirm speakers	25	10
Develop Program	Drafting, reviewing and finalising program (including speaker abstracts) Liaising with policy subject matter experts to ensure speakers and content is relevant and timely	15	20
Arrange suppliers (AV, catering, decoration, etc)	Source suppliers Supplier liaison Raise POs, make payments	10	2
Preparation of event 'run sheets'	Liaise with MC to design session format (presentation, panels, Q+A) Scheduling event running time	10	2.5
MC script (Including presenter bios), speaker briefings, and merging presentations	Numerous calls, meetings, and emails with speakers. Collating material from presenters, merging presentations, preventing duplication and ensuring focus on topics for session Drafting script with MC	5	20
RSVPs	Issue invitations and reminders Monitor RSVPs Attendance register	5	0.5
Travel, set up and event	Travel, bump in, managing event, bump out.	15	15
Totals		100 (2.5 weeks)	80 (2 weeks)

WALGA's events, policy, and other staff provided other input for the 2025 event. For instance, WALGA's policy specialists engaged with external speakers to ensure the speakers were briefed on Local Government issues and prepared to provide relevant information for delegates. All this support and associated costs was contributed in-kind by WALGA.

While WALGA will still be able to provide in-kind support to the Zone, scheduling and expected capacity limitations in March 2027 will mean that there will not be the same degree of capacity available to directly manage the core event design, programming, scripting, and coordination work in the months prior to the forum. This work is critical to the quality of the forum.

Following initial discussions with the Executive Committee, WALGA sought initial estimates of the cost for a professional events consultant to design and deliver a program. Under this model, the consultant would be responsible for designing and scripting the event, with WALGA providing the logistics and administrative support needed to deliver the event. However, due to the workload required, the costs of professional event design and scripting are substantial. While other potential contractors may provide lower rates, the degree of effort involved will still incur significant costs. The quality of the event also depends on the skill of the provider, who ideally would then facilitate the event content as the MC.

While the Zone has been interested in recruiting a keynote speaker, cost pressures will also mean that an interstate or international speaker would consume a significant proportion of the total working budget. Costs for other expenses (food, AV, etc.) are estimated to increase around 5% - 10% from 2025 due to inflation. For these reasons, an indicative budget of \$40,000 has therefore been proposed in the Zone's 2026-27 budget.

A breakdown of costs and the basis of estimates is available on request (please email the secretariat), but these estimates have not been included in these public papers to ensure any quotations are not impacted by the budget estimate.

Noted

10.3. ZONE BUDGET – 2026-27

No comments were received on the draft budget following the last Zone meeting. The following budget for 2026/27 is submitted for consideration. This budget includes an allocation for the Zone Conference, which is expected to be refined through further planning.

	BUDGET 2025-26	FORECAST 2025-26	BUDGET 2026-27	Comments for budget
Income	\$	\$	\$	
General Subscriptions (16@ \$1,500)	24,000	24,000	24,000	16 members x \$1500 each
Interest income	6,000	8,013	9,000	4.5% interest on 200k TD
Total Income	30,000	32,013	33,000	
Expenses				
Zone Expenses - Audit fees	1,100	2,375	1,890	5% increase in fees of \$1800
Zone Expenses - Ordinary Meetings	5,250	3,864	12,000	Catering and other meeting expenses
Zone Initiatives - Advocacy	13,050	14,546	20,000	General allowance
Zone initiative - Face to face training in the Zone	24,000	10,000	\$Nil	Discontinued
Zone Initiatives - Conference			40,000	Held every 2nd year - this estimate assumes professional facilitator assists to develop programme, etc.
Zone initiative – Convention Rebate	\$Nil	\$Nil	\$Nil	Propose to discontinue the specific training rebate
eLearning Subscription Grant	32,000	6,000	\$Nil	
Zone Representative - Honoraria	2,102	2,102	2,300	5% increase assumed from prior year
WALGA Travel to Zone	1,000	250	-	Moved to general expense line above
Total Expenses	78,502	39,137	76,190	
Profit / Loss	(\$48,502)	(\$7,125)	(\$43,190)	
Cash Reserves				
Opening Balance	231,102	215,967	208,842	
Movement	(\$48,502)	(\$7,125)	(\$43,190)	It is considered very unlikely that all budget funds would be expended
Closing Balance	182,600	208,842	165,652	This projection is therefore considered unlikely.

RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Shire of Cunderdin
Seconded: Shire of Trayning

The Great Eastern Country Zone:

- 1. Endorse the draft Budgeted Statement of Income and Expenditure for the year ending 30 June 2027.**
- 2. Authorise WALGA's external auditors to conduct an annual audit of the Zone's accounts for 2025-26.**

CARRIED

11. ZONE REPORTS

11.1. CHAIR REPORT

President Cr Tony Sachse

RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Shire of Westonia
Seconded: Shire of Cunderdin

That the Zone Chair's report be received.

CARRIED

11.2. WHEATBELT DISTRICT EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (DEMC)

President Cr Tony Sachse

RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Shire of Nungarin
Seconded: Shire of Cunderdin

That the Wheatbelt District Emergency Management Committee Report be received.

CARRIED

11.3. WALGA ROADWISE

Tracey Peacock, Road Safety Advisor

Elected Members and staff are encouraged to attend the Safe System for Local Government Workshop being held at The University Club of WA (UWA), Tuesday 4 – Thursday 6 August 2026. These workshops are designed to provide Local Governments across Western Australia with practical strategies to apply the Safe System approach and create safer roads for their communities.

Delegates can email Main Roads at SSLG@mainroads.wa.gov.au for more information on how to register.

Noted

12. WALGA STATE COUNCIL AGENDA

Zone Delegates are invited to read and consider the WALGA State Council Agenda, which has been provided as an attachment with this Agenda and can be found via the link [here](#).

The Zone can provide comment or submit an alternative recommendation on any of the items, including the items for noting. The Zone comment will then be presented to the State Council for consideration at their meeting.

The State Council Agenda items requiring a decision of State Council are extracted for Zone consideration below.

12.1. CLIMATE CHANGE ADVOCACY POSITION – STATE COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM 8.1

By Rebecca Brown, Policy Manager, Environment and Waste

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- A new climate change Advocacy Position is proposed to replace the position endorsed by State Council in 2018.
- WALGA released a Consultation Paper and draft Climate Change Advocacy Position in January 2026 for Council endorsed feedback by 1 May 2026.
- 39 Council endorsed submissions and two officer level comments were received:
 - 18 (44%) supported the draft Position.
 - 18 (44%) supported the draft Position with comments and/or proposed changes.
 - four (10%) did not support the draft Position and proposed an alternative.
 - one (2%) did not support the Advocacy Position.
- The draft Advocacy Position has been refined in response to the feedback received, noting that the majority of submissions either supported the draft position in its entirety or supported with comment and/or amendment:
 - *"to meet the needs of their communities"* has been added to Point 1 to better reflect Local Government context.
 - Point 2b has been revised to:
 - Include explicit reference to increasing risk and expanded legislative requirements and align with language in the *Local Government Act* (mitigation, rather than emissions reduction).
 - Be clear that Local Government must be provided with the funding, guidance and practical support required to meet increasing risk and legislative requirements.
- At its meeting on 25 May 2026, the Environment Policy Team considered this item and recommended that State Council replace the current Climate Change Policy Statement and Advocacy Position 4.1 with the new Advocacy Position.

ATTACHMENT

- [Climate Change Advocacy Position Consultation Report](#)

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLICATIONS

This item aligns with WALGA's Strategic Pillars:

- **Influence:** Lead advocacy on issues important to Local Government and lead policy development for the Local Government sector.
- **Support:** Anticipate, understand and respond to Member needs.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

It is proposed that the [Climate Change Policy Statement](#) and **current** Advocacy Position 4.1 Climate Change as follows:

Local Government acknowledges:

1. *The science is clear: Climate change is occurring and greenhouse gas emissions from human activities are the dominant cause.*
2. *Climate change threatens human societies and the Earth's ecosystems.*
3. *Urgent action is required to reduce emissions, and to adapt to the impacts from climate change that are now unavoidable.*
4. *A failure to adequately address this climate change emergency places an unacceptable burden on future generations.*

Local Government is committed to addressing climate change.

Local Government is calling for:

1. *Strong climate change action, leadership and coordination at all levels of government.*
2. *Effective and adequately funded Commonwealth and State Government climate change policies and programs.*

be **replaced** with (changes following consultation underlined):

1. *Local Government acknowledges the risks associated with, and is committed to addressing, climate change to meet the needs of their communities.*
2. *WALGA calls on the Australian and Western Australian Governments to:*
 - a. *provide the necessary climate leadership, coordination and action to ensure an orderly transition to achieve emission reduction targets and address the impacts of climate change.*
 - b. *ensure that Local Government has the funding, guidance and practical support required to meet increasing risk and expanded legislative requirements to plan for, mitigate and adapt to climate impacts.*

BACKGROUND

In 2018, State Council endorsed a [Climate Change Policy Statement](#) and Advocacy Position, following extensive sector consultation. Since this position was adopted there have been significant legislative, policy, technological and scientific changes, including:

- The national *Climate Change Act 2022* and the Western Australian Climate Change Bill 2023.
- Increased legislative responsibilities, including the *Local Government Amendment Act 2023*, which expanded Western Australian Local Governments' general function under Part 3 s3.1(1A) of the *Local Government Act 1995*:
 - a. To promote the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the district;
 - b. To plan for, and to plan for mitigating, risks associated with climate change; and
 - c. In making decisions, to consider potential long-term consequences and impacts on future generations

- The release of the Australian Government's [National Climate Risk Assessment](#) and [National Adaptation Plan](#) in 2025.
- Escalation of the transition to renewable energy, uptake of electric vehicles and energy efficiency standards under the National Construction Code.
- Climate science and projections ([international](#), [national](#) and [WA specific](#)) have also become clearer regarding the risks posed by climate change and the need for action to address the consequential impacts.

Work commenced on the review of the current position in 2024. An updated draft position was considered at the March 2025 State Council meeting, with the position referred back to the Environment Policy Team for further development. In January 2026, WALGA released a Consultation Paper and draft Advocacy Position, with Council endorsed feedback requested by 1 May 2026.

COMMENT

Responses were received from 41 Local Governments, 39 Council endorsed submissions and two officer level comments (Karratha and Melville):

- 18 (44%) supported the draft Advocacy Position:
 - Metropolitan: Joondalup, Stirling, Bayswater, Kalamunda, Bassendean, Canning, Cockburn, Melville, Rockingham, Cambridge, Subiaco and Serpentine Jarrahdale.
 - Regional: Harvey, Victoria Plains, Gnowangerup, Kalgoorlie Boulder, Ngaanyatjaraku and Karratha.
- 18 (44%) were supported with comment and/or proposed changes:
 - 7 sought minor wording refinements or small additions:
 - Metropolitan: Belmont, Gosnells and Kwinana.
 - Regional: Dumbleyung, West Arthur, York and Mingenew.
 - 11 proposed more substantial amendments:
 - Metropolitan: Mundaring, Armadale, Victoria Park, East Fremantle, Fremantle, Perth and Vincent.
 - Regional: Augusta Margaret River, Busselton, Kent and Cocos (Keeling) Islands.
- Four (10%) did not support the draft Advocacy Position and proposed an alternative position:
 - Regional: Waroona (alternative position). Quairading, Wagin and Cue provided the Central Country Zone position.
- One (2%) did not support the draft Advocacy Position and did not provide an alternative:
 - Regional: Collie.

Responses were received from Local Governments across all Metropolitan Zones and from all but two Country Zones.

Across both metropolitan and regional submissions, Local Governments emphasised that the roles and responsibilities of each level of government in climate change mitigation and adaptation remain unclear, while legislative obligations placed on Local Governments have expanded without a sustainable funding model to support implementation. Small, rural and remote Local Governments raised concerns about their communities' heightened exposure to heat, extreme weather and infrastructure failure, combined with limited local capacity and resources to respond effectively.

The draft Advocacy Position has been refined in response to the feedback received, noting that the majority of submissions either supported the draft position in its entirety or supported with comment and/or amendment:

- “to meet the needs of their communities” has been added to Point 1 to better reflect Local Government context.
- Point 2b has been revised to:
 - Include explicit reference to increasing risk and expanded legislative requirements and align with language in the Local Government Act (mitigation, rather than emissions reduction).
 - Be clear that Local Government must be provided with the funding, guidance and practical support required to meet increasing risk and legislative requirements.

The Position has been kept high level, noting that many of the specific matters raised in the feedback are included in other WALGA Advocacy Positions (or will be incorporated when these positions are reviewed) and/or will inform WALGA's more detailed climate advocacy.

A [Climate Change Advocacy Position Consultation Report](#) providing a summary of feedback received and rationale for the changes to the position is attached.

At its meeting on 25 May 2026, the Environment Policy Team considered this item and recommended that State Council replace the existing Climate Change Policy Statement and Advocacy Position 4.1 with the new Climate Change Advocacy Position.

RECOMMENDATION

That State Council replace the Climate Change Policy Statement and Advocacy Position 4.1 with a new Climate Change Advocacy Position as follows:

1. *Local Government acknowledges the risks associated with, and is committed to addressing, climate change to meet the needs of their communities.*
2. *WALGA calls on the Australian and Western Australian Governments to:*
 - a. *Provide the necessary climate leadership, coordination and action to ensure an orderly transition to achieve emission reduction targets and address the impacts of climate change.*
 - b. *Ensure that Local Government has the funding, guidance and practical support required to meet increasing risk and expanded legislative requirements to plan for, mitigate and adapt to climate impacts.*

RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Shire of Bruce Rock

Seconded: Shire of Narembeen

That the Zone supports the WALGA recommendation for State Council Agenda item 8.1 as contained in the State Council Agenda and as provided above.

CARRIED

12.2. TRAIN STATION PRECINCTS ADVOCACY POSITION – STATE COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM 8.2

By Coralie Claudio, A/Manager Planning and Building

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- In November 2025, the State Government [announced](#) it would commence the preparation of Improvement Plans and Improvement Schemes for ten train station precincts across the Perth metropolitan region.
- A new Train Station Precinct Advocacy Position is proposed, which identifies the need for collaborative, place-based, and infrastructure-led precinct planning that enables housing delivery while respecting local planning frameworks and maintaining community confidence, supported by strong State Government coordination and funding.
- The position is intended to support timely and direct engagement with the State Government on sector priorities for current and future State-led train station precincts.
- The draft position has been informed by a review of Council resolutions and feedback from Local Governments, including those associated with the initial ten identified train station precincts.
- The Environment Policy Team endorsed the position at its meeting on 18 May 2026.

ATTACHMENT

- [Rationale New Advocacy Position: Train Station Precincts](#)

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLICATIONS

This item aligns with WALGA's Strategic Pillars:

- **Influence** – Lead advocacy on issues that are important to Local Government, including coordinated precinct planning and housing delivery.
- **Support** – Anticipate, understand, and respond to Member needs, ensuring Local Governments are effectively engaged in State-led precinct planning processes.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

It is proposed that the **new** Train Station Precincts Advocacy Position be **endorsed**.

This draft position is consistent with, and builds upon, Advocacy Position 6.1 Planning Principles and Reform:

- 1. The Local Government sector supports an efficient and effective planning system guided by legislation, policy, and processes that:*
 - a. facilitates the creation of sustainable and liveable communities and places;*
 - b. has a focus on strategic planning that delivers on long-term objectives and outcomes that balance social, environmental, cultural, and economic interests;*
 - c. is easy to understand, accessible and transparent;*
 - d. recognises the diversity of Western Australia and ensures that local environment, context, communities and character are appropriately reflected in planning frameworks and decision making;*
 - e. ensures decisions are made by the level of government closest to and most impacted by a planning proposal; and*
 - f. establishes consistent planning frameworks and streamlines planning processes where there is a demonstrated benefit in doing so.*
- 2. Reforms to the planning system should:*

- a. *be guided by the above principles;*
- b. *deliver community benefit;*
- c. *promote system efficiency, including through the use of technology;*
- d. *be evidence-based and informed by robust, transparent data;*
- e. *proceed at an appropriate pace to enable effective implementation;*
- f. *be informed by engagement with the community; and be amended only with WALGA involvement and consultation with Local Government.*

BACKGROUND

Planning around train stations, including the establishment of local planning frameworks and the determination of development applications, has historically been the responsibility of Local Governments.

In November 2025, the State Government announced it was commencing the establishment of Improvement Plans and Schemes around ten train station precincts across the Perth metropolitan region to streamline planning and development and facilitate housing development. Through this process, the State would become responsible for setting planning frameworks, including elements such as height and zoning, and determining development applications.

The ten station precincts, involving 14 directly affected Local Governments, are listed below:

- Ballajura (City of Swan);
- Bassendean (Town of Bassendean);
- Carlisle/Oats Street (Town of Victoria Park);
- Claisebrook (City of Perth and City of Vincent);
- Cottesloe (Town of Cottesloe and Shire of Peppermint Grove);
- Glendalough (City of Vincent and City of Stirling);
- Morley (City of Bayswater);
- Mosman Park (Town of Cottesloe, Town of Mosman Park and Shire of Peppermint Grove);
- Redcliffe (City of Belmont); and
- Swanbourne (Town of Claremont, City of Nedlands and Town of Cottesloe).

Improvement Plans and Schemes for the Ballajura and Redcliffe stations were already underway prior to this announcement. Importantly, the announcement noted these were only the first stations, indicating additional state-led station precincts may be identified in the future.

At its December 2025 meeting, State Council resolved that:

1. *State Council request WALGA to prepare an Advocacy Position in consultation with Members, regarding the transport and planning principles required to ensure quality outcomes in the newly announced "Station Precinct Improvement Plans and Schemes" in Metropolitan Perth and regional stations if included.*
2. *The Advocacy Position will include transport and place-making outcomes on both government controlled and private land that maximise liveability and use of the public transport network.*

RESOLUTION 069.5/2025

To inform the development of the Advocacy Position, WALGA sought feedback from Local Governments associated with the initial ten station precincts, including collecting and reviewing relevant Council reports and resolutions from ten Local Governments.

The draft position supports a coordinated approach to station precinct planning and makes the following key recommendations to support effective development and implementation of Improvement Plans and Schemes:

- Promote housing density, diversity and delivery while ensuring place-responsive and transit-oriented development outcomes.
- Recognise the State Government's critical role in coordination and investment, including redevelopment of underutilised State land.
- Call for recognition of existing and progressing local planning frameworks and meaningful engagement with Local Governments and communities.
- Support a strategic, evidence-based and transparent approach to identifying and delivering future State-led station precincts.

The draft advocacy position was circulated to the sector for feedback over a two-week period until 7 May. WALGA received 22 responses, all from metropolitan Local Governments, including nine of the 14 Local Governments directly affected by the initial ten identified train station precincts.

COMMENT

This Advocacy Position is intended to enable WALGA to make timely and direct representations to the State Government on the sector's priorities for State-led train station precincts.

The proposed new Advocacy Position will complement WALGA's planning Advocacy Position, 6.1 Planning Principles and Reform, which notes that planning frameworks and decision-making should reflect local environment, context, communities and character, and that decisions should be made by the level of government closest to and most impacted by a planning proposal.

The draft position has been informed by a review of relevant Council resolutions and Local Government officer input, including feedback from WALGA's Planning Advisory Group.

The draft advocacy position was refined following sector consultation to emphasise that a planning framework alone will not deliver on-the-ground outcomes. Instead, it highlights the substantial scale of State Government collaboration, coordination and funding required to enable and accelerate precinct delivery, including a stronger focus on the redevelopment of underutilised State Government land.

The position was also refined to avoid blanket support for all State Improvement Plans and Schemes, instead clarifying the circumstances in which State-led planning may be appropriate for future station precincts.

The Environment Policy Team recommended that State Council endorse the position at its meeting on 18 May 2026.

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council endorse the following new Advocacy Position:

Train Station Precincts

1. *Local Government supports a coordinated approach to the planning and development of train station precincts that is transport-orientated, place responsive and provides for increased housing density and diversity.*

2. *In developing Train Station Precinct Improvement Plans and Schemes the State Government should:*
 - a. *Respect, acknowledge and build on existing and progressing local planning frameworks.*
 - b. *Ensure effective collaboration, partnerships and coordination across Government agencies and with Local Government.*
 - c. *Prioritise redevelopment of State-owned land to deliver optimal housing and mixed-use outcomes.*
 - d. *Undertake meaningful and ongoing community engagement.*
 - e. *Directly fund and/or implement funding mechanisms to deliver public realm and infrastructure requirements.*
3. *Decisions on any future State-led train station precincts must be evidence-based, transparent and made in consultation with Local Government.*

RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Shire of Cunderdin

Seconded: Shire of Trayning

That the Zone supports the WALGA recommendation for State Council Agenda item 8.2 as contained in the State Council Agenda and as provided above.

CARRIED

12.3. SUBMISSION ON THE CAT ACT REVIEW – STATE COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM 8.3

By Rebecca Brown, Policy Manager Environment and Waste and Felicity Morris, Manager Governance and Procurement

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- On 13 February 2026 the Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety (LGIRS) opened consultation on the second statutory review of the *Cat Act 2011* (the Cat Act).
- All elements of the Cat Act are under review, including registration, enforcement/compliance, sterilisation, microchipping, breeding and limits on the number of cats.
- WALGA used current Advocacy Positions, previous submissions, a webinar with the sector and opportunity to comment on a draft submission to gather feedback.
- The submission identifies that reform to the legislation is required, in relation to:
 - Consolidation of the Cat Act and *Dog Act 1976*;
 - Stronger provisions for consistent non-compliance;
 - Clear definitions for owned and unowned cats;
 - Development of a Model Cat Local Law;
 - A limit on the number of cats; and
 - Lowering the age of sterilisation.
- Consultation by LGIRS closes at 5:00pm on Monday, 31 August 2026.
- A joint meeting of the Governance and Environment Policy Teams on 25 May 2026 recommended that State Council endorse the submission.

ATTACHMENT

- [Submission on the Review of the *Cat Act 2011*](#)

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLICATIONS

This item aligns with WALGA's Strategic Pillars:

- **Influence:** Lead advocacy on issues important to Local Government and lead policy development for the Local Government sector.
- **Support:** Anticipate, understand and respond to Member needs.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This submission has been developed based on current WALGA [Advocacy Positions](#):

- 2.12.1 Review of the *Cat Act 2011* and *Dog Act 1976*; and
- 2.12.2 Dog and Cat Management.

And previous submissions and positions on the legislation.

BACKGROUND

On 13 February 2026, the Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety (LGIRS) opened [consultation](#) on the review of the *Cat Act 2011* (the Cat Act), the second statutory review of the legislation. The previous review was undertaken in 2019. The Cat Act provides for the control and management of cats and aims to promote and encourage the responsible ownership of cats, and for related matters.

As articulated in the Second Reading Speech, the Cat Act was introduced with the aim to reduce the number of stray cats being euthanised each year, encourage responsible cat ownership and provide for better management of the unwanted impacts of cats on the community and environment.

The submission provides recommendations on provisions in the Cat Act and identifies some of the issues Local Governments experience with implementing the legislation. WALGA

used current Advocacy Positions, previous submissions, a webinar with the sector and opportunity to comment on a draft submission to gather feedback.

The webinar, held on 26 March 2026, had 61 registrations from Local Government. Feedback was received, and incorporated, on the draft submission.

The submission was considered, and is recommended to State Council for endorsement, by a joint meeting of the Governance and Environment Policy Teams on 25 May 2026.

COMMENT

In this submission WALGA has identified several areas where reform to the legislation is required, including:

- Consolidation of the Cat Act and *Dog Act 1976*;
- Stronger provisions for consistent non-compliance;
- Clear definitions for owned and unowned cats;
- Development of a Model Cat Local Law;
- A limit on the number of cats; and
- Lowering the age of sterilisation.

In drafting the submission, WALGA has also identified implementation challenges for the sector in particular low registration rates for cats, the lack of a centralised database for registration and limited resourcing.

Cat containment is out of scope of this submission, as the State Government is progressing the [Cat Amendment \(Local Laws\) Bill 2026](#) to enable Local Governments to make cat containment Local Laws. WALGA is engaging separately with the sector on this matter.

WALGA RECOMMENDATION

That State Council endorse the submission on the Review of *Cat Act 2011*.

RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Shire of Nungarin
Seconded: Shire of Wyalkatchem

That the Zone supports the WALGA recommendation for State Council Agenda item 8.3 as contained in the State Council Agenda and as provided above.

CARRIED

Submission on the Review of the *Cat Act 2011*

May 2026

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 advocate to all levels of Government on behalf of our Members, and provide expert advice, services and support to Local Governments.

WALGA's vision is for agile and inclusive Local Governments enhancing community wellbeing and enabling economic prosperity.

Acknowledgement of Country

WALGA acknowledges the continuing connection of Aboriginal people to Country, culture and community. We embrace the vast Aboriginal cultural diversity throughout Western Australia, including Boorloo (Perth), on the land of the Whadjuk Nyoongar People, where WALGA is located and we acknowledge and pay respect to Elders past and present.

Introduction

WALGA appreciates the opportunity to provide comment on the review of the *Cat Act 2011* (Cat Act) being undertaken by the Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety (LGIRS). The Cat Act intends to:

1. Provide for the control and management of cats
2. Promote and encourage the responsible ownership of cats, and for related matters.

As articulated in the Second Reading Speech, the Cat Act was introduced with the aim to reduce the number of stray cats being euthanised each year, encourage responsible cat ownership and provide for better management of the unwanted impacts of cats on the community and environment.

The Cat Act requires all cats that have reached six months of age to be sterilised, microchipped and registered with the Local Government in which the cat is ordinarily kept. Cats must be wearing registration tags when in public places to enable identification. Cat control notices, seizing cats, cat management facilities and breeding of cats are also matters covered in the Act. The Cat Act gives Local Governments the power to administer and enforce the legislation and make Local Laws under the Act.

All elements of the Cat Act are under review, including registration, enforcement/compliance, sterilisation, microchipping, breeding and limits on the number of cats. LGIRS is further seeking insights on related cat management approaches that have been successful in other Australian States and Territories.

In this submission WALGA has identified several areas where reform to the legislation is required, including:

- Consolidation of the Cat Act and *Dog Act 1976*
- Stronger provisions for consistent non-compliance
- Clear definitions for owned and unowned cats
- Development of a Model Cat Local Law
- A limit on the number of cats
- Lowering the age of sterilisation.

This submission has been developed based on [WALGA Advocacy Positions](#) (2.12.1 Review of the *Cat Act 2011* and *Dog Act 1976* and 2.12.2 Dog and Cat Management), previous submissions and positions on the legislation (see [Attachment 1](#) for WALGA State Council's resolution on the Proposal for Domestic Cat Control Legislation) and with input from Local Governments via a webinar held on Thursday, 26 March 2026. The submission provides recommendations on provisions in the Cat Act and identifies some of the issues Local Governments experience with implementing the legislation.

Cat containment is out of scope of this submission, as the State Government is progressing the [Cat Amendment \(Local Laws\) Bill 2026](#) to enable Local Governments to make cat containment Local Laws.

Review - Legislation

Consolidation of the Cat Act and Dog Act 1976

Many requirements in the Cat Act replicate Dog Act provisions, including registration, microchipping and some enforcement provisions. WALGA is supportive of combining the Cat Act and *Dog Act 1976* to form a Companion Animals Act. A combined Act would reduce and simplify administrative burden, provide a consistent approach to the administration and enforcement of the legislation, and reflect the actions of most other Australian States and Territories. It would also have the advantage of allowing much-needed amendments to the *Dog Act 1976* to be progressed.

Stronger provisions for consistent non-compliance

Local Governments raised concerns about cat owners who demonstrate consistent non-compliance with provisions in the Cat Act. The sector considers that provisions should be included in the Cat Act that allow stronger action to be taken by Local Governments where cat owners repeatedly fail to comply with cat control notices and where infringements are not a sufficient deterrent. Local Governments also support the strengthening of the powers of seizure, cancelling registrations and penalties for failing to comply with cat control notices.

Clear definitions for owned and unowned cats

In contrast with other cat management policies at the Australian and State Government levels, the Cat Act does not provide clear definitions for the different categories of cats. The Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water's Threat Abatement Plan for Predation by Feral Cats 2024 uses 'feral cat' terminology to describe cats that are not formally owned (sometimes referred to as 'stray cats') and 'pet cat' terminology to describe cats that are owned. Similarly, the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development uses 'feral cat', 'stray cat' and 'domestic cat' terminology in its Feral Cat Policy, with only domestic cats being classified as owned and subject to the Cat Act.

The sector considers that definitions should be included in the Cat Act to distinguish between cats that are owned (registered and microchipped) and unowned (not registered and not microchipped). A clear definition of cats that are unowned, would enable Local Governments to begin the process of re-homing an impounded cat faster and provide clarity on the appropriate course of action if a person attempts to collect a cat without proof of ownership. WALGA identified this issue and proposed the resolution, cats either being owned or unowned, in its submission on the Proposal for Domestic Cat Control Legislation in August 2010.

Importantly, the implementation of these definitions would require a transition period and education campaign for owners to register and microchip their cats to limit any unintended consequences (e.g. ownership not being able to be confirmed).

Development of a Model Cat Local Law

The sector is supportive of State Government developing a Model Cat Local Law for Local Governments to adopt and/or tailor to meet local community needs. This Model Local Law would address the scope of matters for which a Local Law may be made under the Cat Act.

Currently, matters under section 79(3) of the Cat Act are included in a number of different Local Laws made by Local Governments, illustrated in this [map](#) created by WALGA. In summary:

39% of Local Governments have adopted or sought to progress a Cat Local Law

4% of Local Governments have included cats in an Animals Local Law

9% of Local Governments have included cats in an Animals, Environment and Nuisance Local Law

2% of Local Governments have included cats in a Consolidated Local Law

28% of Local Governments have included cats in a Health Local Law

18% of Local Governments have no mention of cats in any Local Law.

Adoption of a Model Cat Local Law would support a consistent approach to implementing the Cat Act across Local Governments and further support cat owner compliance when moving between Local Government districts.

Where cat containment is concerned, the Model Cat Local Law should incorporate transitional arrangements to ensure consistency, equity and animal welfare outcomes.

Including a limit on the number of cats

The Cat Act prescribes a Local Law may be made to limit the numbers of cats that can be kept at premises. This means that the number of cats allowed can vary between Local Governments. The sector supports a maximum number of cats that can be kept at premises being included in the Cat Act to ensure consistency across Local Governments. This provision would align with the *Dog Act 1976*, which sets a maximum number of dogs that can be kept in, or at, premises to six.

Lowering the age of sterilisation

The Cat Act requires the owner of a cat that has reached six months of age to ensure the cat is sterilised by a veterinarian, unless the cat is exempt. The sector strongly supports lowering the age of cat sterilisation on the basis that cats can reach sexual maturity much earlier than six months of age. In New South Wales, cats are required to be sterilised by four months of age, unless their owner is granted an exemption/permit.

Review - Implementation

Low registration rates

The Cat Act requires the owner of a cat that has reached six months of age to ensure the cat is microchipped and registered with the Local Government in the district in which the cat is ordinarily kept. Despite this being a requirement, feedback from Local Government indicates the registration of cats remains low across the State.

Limited compliance with this provision in the Cat Act, in combination with the absence of an 'owned cat' definition, causes issues when cats are impounded. Cats that are not registered and microchipped have very low collection rates across the State, with many Local Governments reporting less than 20% of impounded cats being reclaimed by owners. Holding an unregistered cat and attempting to find the owner requires significant Local Government resources and the owner may never be identified.

In its submission on the Proposal for Domestic Cat Control Legislation (2010), WALGA advocated for registration fees being set at full cost recovery (see Attachment 1). Additionally, in its [Dog and Cat Management Advocacy Position](#), WALGA advocates for Local Governments to achieve full cost recovery in ensuring compliance with the Cat Act through a combination of appropriate fees and

State funding that encourages cat owner compliance and serves the interests of all Western Australians regardless of where they live. Access to State funding that could be used as an incentive to increase cat registration rates may prevent some of the issues Local Governments currently face as a result of the low registration of cats.

Centralised database

The sector also experiences difficulties with finding the owners of impounded cats even when they are microchipped. Such circumstances include when registration details are not updated when a cat is transferred to a new owner (e.g. from a breeder or rescue organisation) or when an owner moves to a different Local Government district.

The sector strongly supports the establishment of a centralised cat and dog registration system. A centralised registration system would help ensure the identification and history of each cat is provided, including details of the Local Government district(s) in which it has been registered, and the compliance and enforcement history of owners and cats. The Local Government sector is keen to ensure that a centralised system is reliable, usable and has adequate funding and technical support. To ensure this, there needs to be strong Local Government consultation in development and a staged and well managed implementation process. A centralised cat and dog registration and management system, with these characteristics, would support improved control and reduce the enforcement and resource challenges Local Governments currently face.

It is noted that the State Government has not progressed the implementation of a centralised dog and cat registration system, PetsWA, which would replace registers managed by individual Local Governments with a single platform. The PetsWA initiative aimed to make it easier for owners to update their animal registration when moving to another Local Government district and to help identify potential cases of puppy farming across the State in line with the Stop Puppy Farming reforms.

The sector has already contributed substantial time and resources in supporting the State Government's development of the PetsWA initiative and is calling for State Government to implement a centralised registration system.

Resourcing

In its submission on the Proposal for Domestic Cat Control Legislation (2010), WALGA highlighted the need for rangers and authorised persons to be trained in the appropriate handling of cats. The sector has since highlighted there are limited options for practical training for cat handling at TAFE institutions, with the focus being largely on dangerous dogs. WALGA recommends that the State Government funds the development and provision of specific cat handling and housing training opportunities for Local Government officers.

The sector considers that cat registration fees and increased State funding to support the implementation and enforcement of the Cat Act, including financial support of community capacity to implement cat containment outcomes as included in draft legislative amendments to enable Local Governments to make Local Laws on cat containment, are essential.

In New South Wales, the State Government and Environmental Trust recently invested \$6 million to expand the Keeping Cats Safe at Home Project, aimed to encourage and empower cat carers to keep their cats indoors. Using research, education and targeted desexing, the first phase of the project (2021-2024) saw a 25-50% reduction in roaming cats in three Local Government districts and an increase in desexed, microchipped and registered cats across 11 participating Local Governments. Regional WA Local Governments have a lower capacity for resourcing enforcement and generally rely on hiring contract rangers that service multiple Local Government districts. These resourcing constraints would be exacerbated by the enforcement of cat containment, with funding needed to hire additional rangers to undertake the work.

State Government funding for cat management facilities is also critical. Many cat management facilities, including Cat Haven and RSPCA WA, are already at capacity. WALGA is supportive of State funding to upgrade and develop more fit-for-purpose shelter facilities as needed by the sector.

Conclusion

WALGA appreciates the opportunity to provide a submission on the review of the Cat Act on behalf of the Local Government sector. As highlighted in this submission, Local Governments face challenges in implementing the legislation when there are limited resources and low levels of compliance. The sector is supportive of the development of a Model Cat Local Law and for the Cat Act to be amended to lower the age of sterilisation and provide a maximum number of cats permitted.

WALGA looks forward to working with the State Government to provide proactive, positive solutions to the challenges faced by the sector, including cat containment.

Attachment 1: 8 August 2010 State Council resolution

That the Department of Local Government be advised that the introduction of cat control legislation is supported on condition that:

1. The cost to Local Governments to implement and administer the proposed legislation is minimised by:
 - a. the State Government training rangers and authorised officers and providing funding for the acquisition of specialised cat control equipment;
 - b. the State Government fully funding any public education and awareness campaign; and
 - c. registration fees being set at full cost recovery.
2. The Department of Local Government form a working partnership with WALGA during the drafting process of the legislation to ensure:
 - a. the legislation is as simple as possible to administer and enforce;
 - b. sufficient notice is given before the enactment of proposed legislation to allow Local Governments time to budget and prepare for cat control legislation and to update infrastructure, equipment and procedures; and
 - c. consideration is given to:
 - i. National Parks;
 - ii. A Class reserves;
 - iii. unallocated Crown Land; and
 - iv. local planning schemes.

12.4. OTHER STATE COUNCIL AGENDA ITEMS

Zone Delegates are invited to raise for discussion, questions or decision any of the items in the State Council Agenda, including the items for noting, Policy Team and Committee Reports or the Key Activity Reports.

12.4.1. WALGA 2025 LOCAL GOVERNMENT EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SURVEY FINDINGS – STATE COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM 10.1

The 2025 WALGA Local Government Emergency Management Survey, undertaken in partnership with Edith Cowan University (ECU), highlights ongoing resource, workforce and funding pressures across the Local Government sector, including rising emergency management expectations, structural funding challenges, grant access difficulties, and increasing staffing and capacity constraints.

An additional confidential attachment is available for Zone Delegates, available at the link below.

- [Local Government Emergency Management Survey Report](#)

Noted

13. EMERGING ISSUES

Nil.

14. NEXT MEETING

The next Executive Committee meeting will be held on 21 July 2026 commencing at 8:00am, via MSTeams.

The next Great Eastern Country Zone meeting will be held on Thursday, 13 August 2026 commencing at 9:30am. This meeting will be hosted by the Shire of Bruce Rock.

15. CLOSURE

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 12:51pm.