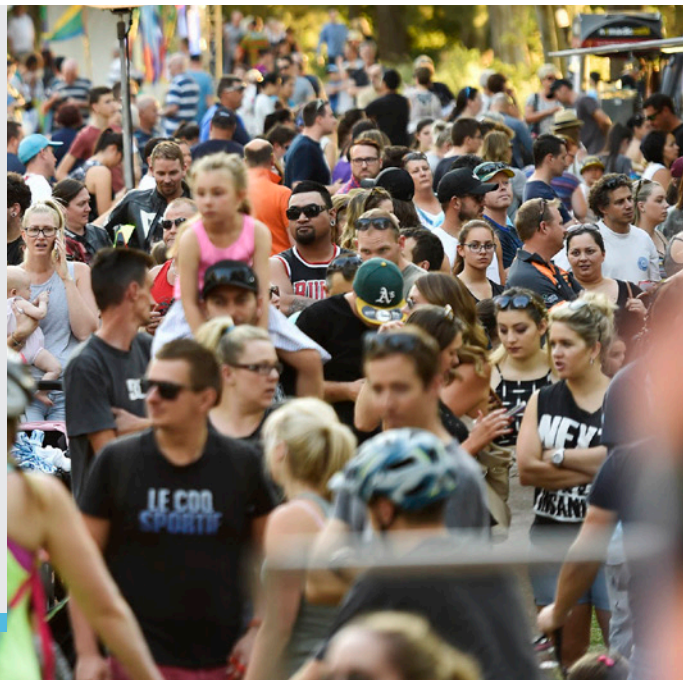
WSROC

ANNUAL REPORT

Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils

2017/18



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

As President of WSROC, it is an honour to represent one of the most exciting regions in Australia.

Western Sydney is blessed with a strong economy, vibrant communities and world-class natural assets.

However, turning these assets into a sustainable, liveable future city is a significant challenge, one that will require all levels of government and the community communicating and working together in an open, transparent way.

My experience working across both state and local governments over the past year, has reinforced the importance of collaboration between governments and their communities.

The NSW Government sets the strategic direction on a range of issues, and it is councils' role to ensure these decisions are benefiting our communities on the ground.

What becomes clear at the grass roots level is that communities don't live by the administrative boundaries of government. They don't care who looks after what. They just want to see results.

It is therefore local government's responsibility to work together to tackle regional issues that affect our residents. That is WSROC's focus, and its strength.

From mitigating on-the-ground heat impacts, to driving down council energy bills, and maintaining sustainable waste services for rate payers, WSROC programs are delivering results that span jurisdictions, sectors and political divides; we are simply getting the job done for Western Sydney.

The success of WSROC's programs is due to the collaboration and support of its member councils, who drive our agenda. I would also like to thank our many partner organisations who ensure that WSROC can continue to advocate for the people of Western Sydney.

- Councillor Stephen Bali

A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

In Western Sydney, where change is happening at break-neck speed, holistic planning has never been more important.

It is no longer a question of whether growth will happen, but what form will it take, and how it will impact on the lives of Western Sydney residents.

To create truly liveable communities, we must do more than simply increase the number of new parks and community halls; we must reimagine the way we plan and deliver new developments.

Liveability issues are complex. They can't be solved by any one organisation alone. Nor can they be addressed with short term grant funding.

To ensure that growth supports healthy, prosperous communities, we need an appropriately scaled, strategic approach to regional liveability. One that allows us to address the more complex, systemic issues impacting quality of life such as urban heat, transport connectivity and funding mechanisms for social infrastructure.

Fortunately, the unprecedented level of growth Western Sydney is experiencing puts governments in a unique position to not only masterplan entire liveable precincts from scratch, but to get more from our development agreements.

However, we can only do this if we work collectively.

Whether you are in the Central City or the Western City, whether you work in social services or transport management, whether you work at the local, state or federal level, you play a role in shaping the future of Greater Western Sydney and we want to work with you.

Western Sydney has a bright future, but without a vision this future will be left to chance.

- Charles Casuscelli

ADVOCATING FOR WESTERN SYDNEY

Established in 1973, the Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (WSROC) represents eight local councils in the Greater Western Sydney Region including Blacktown, Blue Mountains, Cumberland, Fairfield, Hawkesbury, Liverpool, Parramatta and Penrith.

With a reputation for considered policy analysis and bipartisan advocacy, WSROC brings a collective voice to those issues which are crucial for Western Sydney's growing population.

In addition to advocacy, WSROC facilitates stronger partnerships and opportunities for regional collaboration between Western Sydney councils and regional stakeholders.

Population
2,287,043

0.8 Jobs
Per Local
Resident

Economy
$107.7 Billion

Over 200
Languages Spoken

Geographic Area
8,948 Km^2

The above figures are based on the Greater Western Sydney region which includes: Blacktown, Blue Mountains, Camden, Campbelltown, Cumberland, Fairfield, Liverpool, Hawkesbury, The Hills, Liverpool, Parramatta, Penrith, Wollondilly and the former Bankstown LGA.

2017-18 HIGHLIGHTS

291 media appearances on issues important to Western Sydney.

Worked with over 50 organisations to develop a multi-sector response to urban heat in Western Sydney.

NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian attended the WSROC Annual General Meeting.

Secured an additional four years of funding to help councils maintain safe, affordable and sustainable waste services in a changing market.

Delivered 47 forums promoting regional collaboration and professional development including:

- Western Sydney tourism
- Asbestos management
- Public lighting
- Social media training

WSROC's Light Years Ahead program awarded the Green Globe Award for Resource Efficiency.

REGIONAL WASTE STRATEGY

Waste is a critical service for any city, one that is managed almost solely by local government.

2017/2018 presented a number of challenges for local councils including implementation of the Container Deposit Scheme, changes to international recycling markets, and balancing the demands of population growth in the context of a changing waste market.

In such an environment, a collaborative, strategic approach to waste management provides councils with support to deliver safe, cost-effective and sustainable services to residents.

Following four years of successful collaboration, Western Sydney councils were awarded an additional four years of funding for their regional waste program.

What we achieved:

- ✓ Contributed to policy making on the Container Deposit Scheme.
- ✓ Increased attention given to waste in the Greater Sydney Commission District Plans (44 mentions).
- ✓ Delivered a regional litter program targeting key shopping strips.
- ✓ Produced easy-reference fact sheets for councils on litter bins and residential flat building waste infrastructure.
- ✓ Delivered training for officers seeking better waste planning outcomes.
- ✓ Facilitated four professional forums on key waste policy topics.
- ✓ Developed a suite of community education resources for councils including a photography library, multi-lingual waste brochures, and video content.

Running to 2021, the Western Sydney Regional Waste Strategy will focus on the following key themes:

Avoid and reduce waste

Manage problem wastes

Divert waste from landfill

Reduce litter and illegal dumping

Increase recycling

Improve regional governance

Participating councils: Blacktown, Blue Mountains, Cumberland, Fairfield, Hawkesbury, The Hills, Liverpool, Parramatta and Penrith.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

This is an important initiative that delivers real benefits in terms of cost savings and reduced energy emissions.

– City of Parramatta Lord Mayor Cr Andrew Wilson.

Left to right: Dr Geoff Lee, Member for Parramatta; Lord Mayor Andrew Wilson, City of Parramatta; Peter Wilson, Endeavour Energy; and WSROC President Cr Stephen Bali at site of LED light installation in City of Parramatta.

Light Years Ahead II

Light Years Ahead (LYA) is a multi-award-winning energy efficiency and renewable initiative that provides councils with opportunities to reduce costs, cut greenhouse gas emissions, and work collaboratively to deliver positive policy change.

Between 2015 – 2016, the first LYA (I) program replaced almost 15,000 high emitting street lights with efficient, LED technologies.

In 2017, WSROC launched a second round of the program (LYA II) that has been expanded to include a range of energy saving technologies including: HVAC systems, solar panels and building upgrades.

City of Parramatta launched the LYA II program in November 2017, commencing the replacement of 6,000 end-of-life street lights with the latest smart-enabled LEDs. Hawkesbury City Council will soon follow with an impressive 700kw solar program.

WSROC is working closely with councils from across Greater Western Sydney to get further energy-saving projects up and running.

Results

$9.5 million
in cost savings for Western Sydney councils to date *(and counting).*

11 business cases
developed for energy efficiency and renewable projects.

126,000 tonnes
of estimated reduction in emissions *over 20 years*.*

Improved collaboration
through regular energy forums between councils, Endeavour Energy and other stakeholders.

4 regional submissions
on critical issues relating to the NSW Public Lighting Code and pricing determinations.

Representations
to the Minister for Energy, Australian Department of Energy and the Australian Energy Regulator.

**Life of the asset.*

55%

The average portion of council energy bills spent on street lighting.

TURN DOWN THE HEAT

Heat Impacts

PEOPLE
Heatwaves kill more Australians than any other natural disaster

13% increase in mortality during heat wave

100% higher energy consumption for cooling in West vs East Sydney

INFRASTRUCTURE
Of all extreme weather events, heatwaves place the greatest pressure on our city's assets

ECONOMY
The economic burden of heatwaves is thought to be significant, however, the exact cost remains unknown and challenging to quantify

Heat stress costs the Australian economy **$6.9b** annually due to lost productivity

In hot weather public spaces and other facilities become unusable

ENVIRONMENT
Extreme heat causes a dramatic reduction in the amenity of an environment from the neighbourhood to the city level

Western Sydney is becoming hotter, and it is having significant impacts on our health, infrastructure, economy and the environment.

Over the last 40 years Western Sydney has seen a rise in annual temperatures above and beyond coastal parts of Sydney.

Responding to the challenge of urban heat spans the roles and responsibilities of many different organisations and public-sector agencies.

WSROC's Turn Down the Heat Strategy seeks to accelerate coordinated, practical action to address urban heat in the short term by complementing existing policies and strategies.

Over 180 stakeholders from 50 organisations contributed to the development of the Turn Down the Heat Strategy, which identifies the key areas for action in tackling urban heat across Western Sydney.

Five key areas for action:

- Take action together
- Design and plan to cool the built environment
- Cool with greenspace and water
- Build a community that is healthy and prepared
- Innovative and responsive infrastructure

Turn Down the Heat will:

- ✓ Develop new approaches to save lives and reduce the burden on our health system.
- ✓ Quantify the true costs of heat to our economy.
- ✓ Better manage the impacts of heat on the systems of our cities.
- ✓ Seek reform to planning and building standards.
- ✓ Reduce the impact of heat on our environment and animals.

Cool Suburbs

Cool Suburbs is a proposed project under Turn Down the Heat's built environment stream.

Cool Suburbs will be a research-backed rating system that will make it easier to plan cooler, more liveable buildings and public spaces, and assist the community to make informed decisions when purchasing a property.

REGIONAL COLLABORATION

WSROC is a forum that facilitates stronger partnerships, professional development, and opportunities for regional collaboration between Western Sydney councils and their stakeholders.

WSROC's professional networks offer council officers the opportunity to work collaboratively, share knowledge and access professional development.

Professional networks are the catalysts and drivers for many of WSROC's most successful programs.

Coordinated advocacy relating to refugee settlement in Western Sydney

Responsible for development and delivery of the Western Sydney Regional Waste Strategy

Driving the Western Sydney Turn Down the Heat Strategy

Together WSROC councils can achieve greater economies of scale in the procurement of goods and services such as labour hire, office supplies and hazardous waste disposal

WSROC

Work with us

WSROC welcomes the opportunity to collaborate with any group or individual working towards the betterment of Western Sydney. To learn more about the work we do please do not hesitate to get in touch.

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Blacktown City Council

blue mountains City Council

CUMBERLAND COUNCIL

FairfieldCity Celebrating diversity

Hawkesbury City Council

LIVERPOOL CITY COUNCIL

CITY OF PARRAMATTA

PENRITH CITY COUNCIL