



Councillor Information Bulletin

For the Ordinary Council Meeting
held on Thursday 20th June 2024

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SHIRE OF WESTONIA

June/July 24

Date & Time	What	Where	Who
Thursday 20 June	Council Meeting	Chambers	Councillors, Senior Staff
Monday 24 June	Meeting Procedure Training	Yilgarn Chambers	Councillors, Senior Staff
Tuesday 9 July	Draft Budget Meeting	Council Chambers	Councillors, Senior Staff
Thursday 18 July	Council Meeting	Westonia	Councillors, Senior Staff

CEO'S REPORT

- **GENERAL MATTERS**

- Greg & Carol Tapp have accepted the offer of renting Unit 8 Quartz Street retirement units recently vacated by Moe Hodge. The interior and feature wall cladding has been painted and a major tidy up of the garden has been completed.
- Cr Simmonds and I participated in a LEMC Zoom meeting held on Thursday 23 May.
- The contractor commenced earthworks and concrete footings for the new Pool Kiosk Changerooms building on Monday 27 May.
- Several staff members attended the funeral of Mrs. Glenny held in Perth on Monday 27 May.
- I held a meeting with the acting CEO of the Shire of Nungarin on Wednesday 29 May in relation to an offer to carry out construction works on 2 x sections of Nungarin Road as part of their Wheatbelt Freight Network Program.
- The CEO Landcruiser had its panel beating repairs carried out after the kangaroo strike during the month.
- DCEO and I attended a WEROC CEO's meeting held in Merredin on Tuesday 11 June to discuss some resource sharing initiatives including the calling for EOI on new accounting systems on a regional basis.
- Westonia hosted the RDA Board meeting on Wednesday 12 June. Shire President and I conducted a town tour showcasing our major projects including the Museum, Community Hub Project at the Old Primary School and the Bowls Stadium Precinct.
- Shire President and I attended the Great eastern Zone meeting held in Merredin on Thursday 13 June.

- **DELEGATED AUTHORITY ACTIONS**

- Authorised the use of the Westonia Swimming Pool for Department of Education Vacswim Classes being held in December 2024.

- **ROADCREW**

- The construction crew are completing their final gravel sheeting project for the financial year being a 3.5km section of Nth Warrachuppin Road has been completed.
- Finally received some soaking rain so the 2 x graders and rollers commenced winter grading on George, Warrachuppin, Warrachuppin Nth, Strahan, Carr, Capito, Webb, Morrison and Echo Valley Roads. (refer Attached Map)

- **TOWN**

- Continuation of HCS to various clients throughout the townsite.
- Graeme Bright has reduced his town maintenance hours to concentrate on his Bus Driving position so Deb Sandercock, Council cleaner will also carry out some additional gardening town maintenance hours. Mike & Kim Mangu have been appointed temporary Caravan Park caretakers in the absence of Fiona Hird on sick leave.
- Peter Antonio, Centek Constructions has completed the new shed structure between the sea containers at the Depot which will be for the larger plant parking.



- **PLANT HOURS**

The following is a list of plant and vehicle kilometre and hour readings for the period ending 1.6.24.

Item		1.5.24	1.6.24
P1	<i>CAT 140 GRADER</i>	2,491hrs	2,594hrs
P2	<i>CAT 12M GRADER</i>	8,924hrs	8,996hrs
P3	<i>PRIME MOVER (KENWORTH)</i>	14,776kms	18,362kms
P4	<i>ROAD TRAIN (NEW FREIGHTLINER)</i>	116,046kms	116,509kms
P5	<i>JOHN DEERE LOADER</i>	5,082hrs	5,130hrs
P6	<i>CAT ROLLER (SKIP)</i>	1,674hrs	1,731hrs
P7	<i>MINI-EXCAVATOR</i>	1,226hrs	1,231hrs
P8	<i>TELEHANDLER JCB</i>	2,894hrs	2,927hrs
P9	<i>TOYOTA (GRADER UTE)</i>	44,270kms	45,588kms
P10	<i>mitsubishi CANTER</i>	18,071kms	18,527kms
P11	<i>TOYOTA HILUX (GARDENER) WT 35</i>	109,203kms	109,696kms
P12	<i>JOHN DEERE (5100)</i>	2,590hrs	2,595hrs
P14	<i>TOYOTA LANDCRUISER GXL (CEO)</i>	7,312kms	10,444kms
P15	<i>TOYOTA HILUX D/CAB (W/SUPER)</i>	0kms	2,101kms
P16	<i>TOYOTA RAV4 (ADMIN)</i>	100,784kms	103,767kms
P17	<i>TOYOTA HILUX DUAL CAB</i>	39,521kms	41,750kms
P19	<i>FAST ATTACK</i>	17,790kms	17,790kms
P20	<i>FIRE TRUCK</i>	7,049kms	7,049kms
P18	<i>WESSY BUS</i>	147,052kms	147,162kms
P22	<i>KUBOTA RIDE ON MOWER (OVAL)</i>	2,082hrs	2,085hrs
P23	<i>TOYOTA MINI-BUS (WT COM V)</i>	42,245kms	43,112kms
P24	<i>CAT ROLLER (LOLA)</i>	2,089hrs	2,161hrs
P25	<i>MICK's BEAUT UTE</i>	171,056kms	171,906kms
P27	<i>TOYOTA PRADO GXL (DCEO)</i>	43,760kms	50,112kms

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND WELLBEING REPORT

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT REPORT

Grant applications & award nominations submitted:

We waiting FRRR Small network grant worth up to \$20,000.00 to hold a Mascarade Ball (Community Event Fundraiser) 5/10/24 & “Wessy on the Green” 5/4/25. We will find out by the end of the month if we have been successful.

Future grant opportunities & award nominations:

- Department of LG, Sport & Cultural Industries – Active Regional Communities Grants (up to \$5000) categories; Capacity building, Event hosting and Participation. Applications open all year.
- Healthways and Lottery West

WELLBEING REPORT

Age Care

Westonia Home Care Services

We had no suitable candidates for the Community Health & Wellbeing Officer position We are looking to restructure some current positions and will apply for a trainee through DPIRD CRC funding round which opens in July. We currently have Amy Rodgers from SX who is qualified to deliver higher care for our Level 4's and we can utilize her services where possible.

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

Westonia Home Care Services Clients: 16

Staff delivering services: 9

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

Community activities and resources

We have started planning in preparation of coming events

5/10/24 Mascarade Ball (Community Event Fundraiser) Get ready to frock up and dust off your suit and tie's. If the Grant is successful we will be having an enchanted garden theme, tapas, bar and live music from 6 till late.

26/10/24 Wessy Christmas Markets, Stall holders have been asked to save the date.

5/4/25 WOTG – we have started propositioning Bands and sound tech. Please let Lani or Stace know if you have any band suggestions.

2024 Activities/ Events:

1/5/24 Use it or Loose it 7pax

2/5/24 Bingo 11pax

6/5/24 Sewing 3pax

7/5/24 Scrabble 4pax

8/5/24 Use it or Loose it 7pax

9/5/24 Hydro Pool 1pax

10/5/24 Mothers Day - Morning Tea 5pax

14/5/24 Scrabble 4pax

15/05/2024 Hearing Chat with Clare Collins 10pax

16/05/2024 Bingo 7pax

20/05/2024 Sewing With Kay 3pax

21/05/2024 Scrabble 4px
 22/05/2024 Use it or Lose it 3pax
 23/05/2024 Bingo 7pax
 24/5/2024 Hydro Pool
 27/5/24 Sewing with Kay cancelled
 28/5/24 Scrabble 2pax
 29/05/24 Use it or Lose it
 30/5/24 Bingo 7pax
 31/5/24 Hydro Pool 3pax

WESTONIA TOURIST PARK

The park was booked out over the June long weekend which was great. Fiona our caretaker is on leave. We have temporary caretakers to cover this period we would like to welcome Mike and Kim Mangu on board and hope they enjoy their time in Westonia.

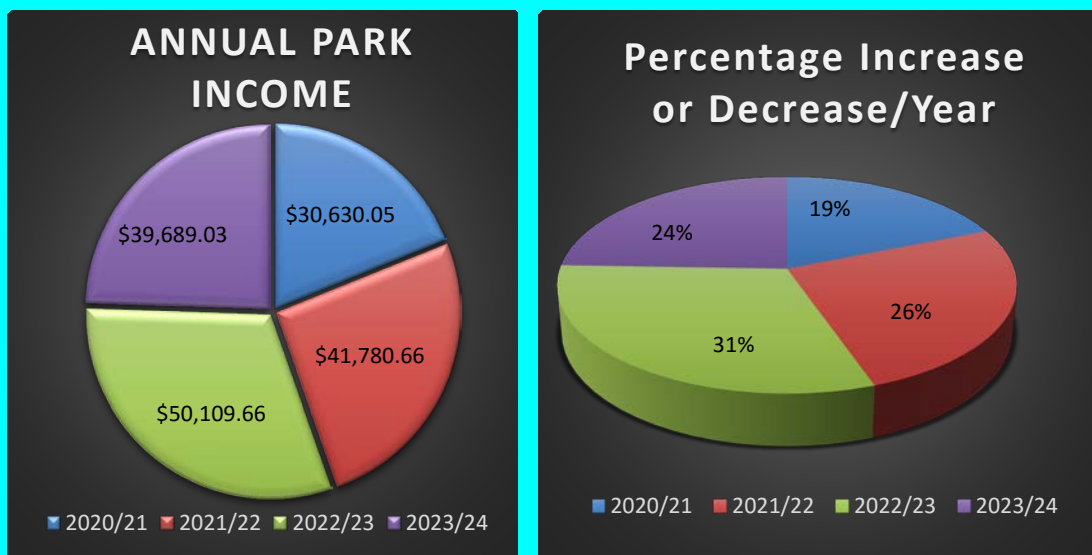
REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE

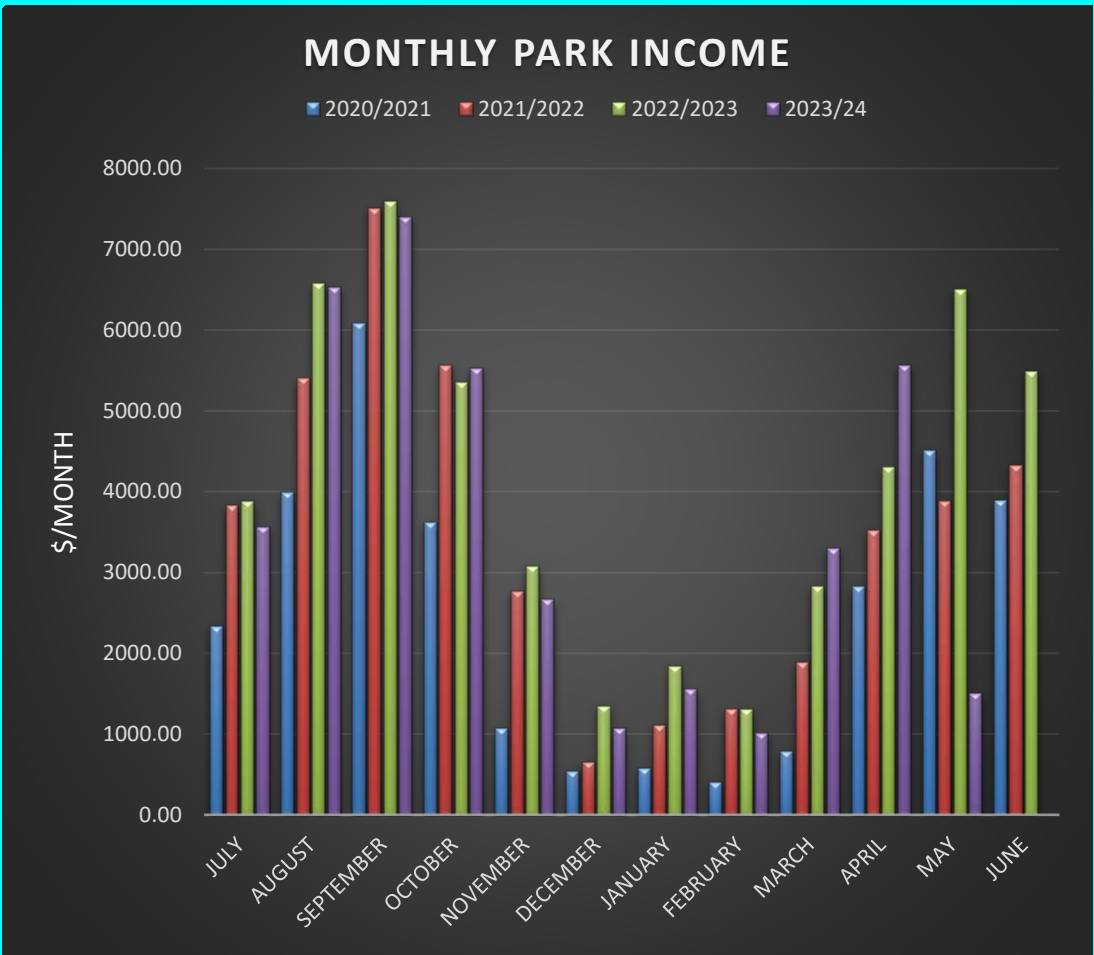
- Various minor repairs and maintenance ongoing. Focal area being bathroom maintenance (fixtures and disabled bathroom upgrade)
- Disabled toilet drainage will need some major work as tree roots have made their way into the pipes.

FUTURE PROJECTS

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

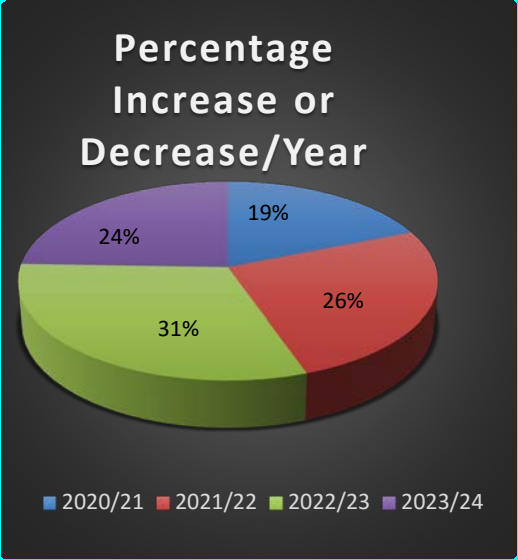
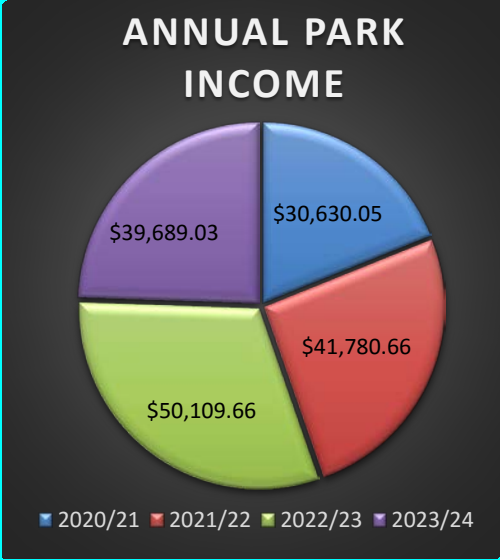
STATISTICS

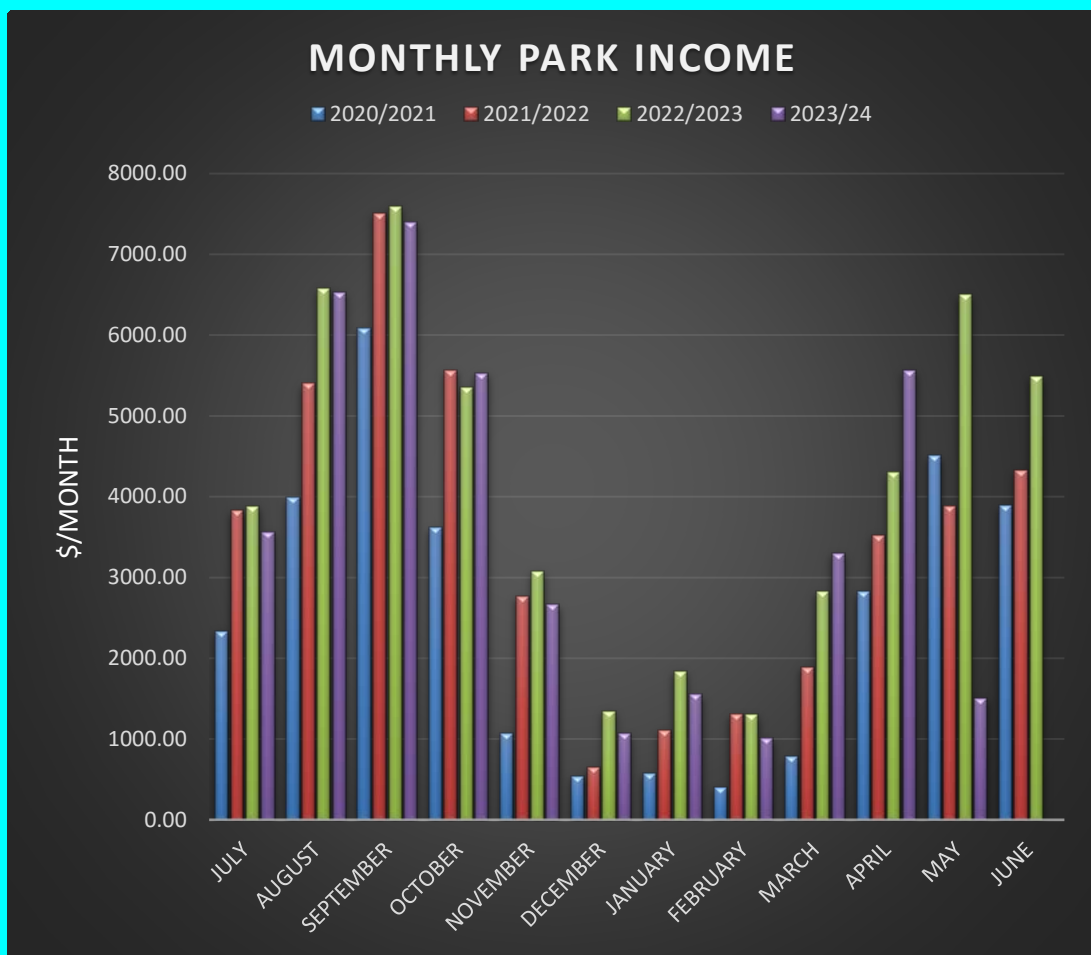




HOOD-PENN MUSEUM

The Council will be undertaking some pretty exciting works with the museum addition/upgrade watch this space!





REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE

- Various minor repairs and maintenance ongoing

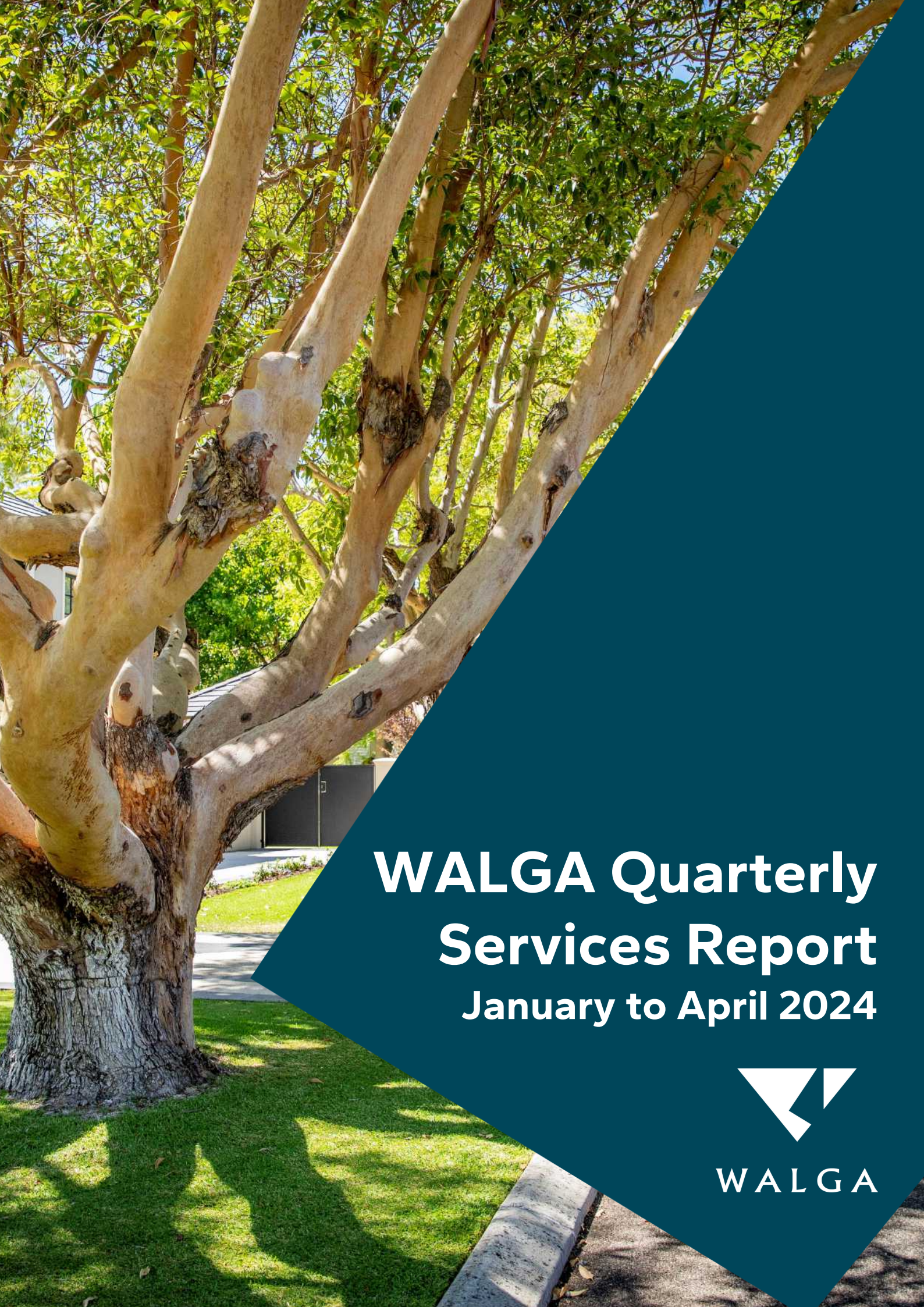
RECENT PROJECTS

- Old Truck modification for farming scene and Back drop in-place.

FUTURE PROJECTS

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

STATISTICS



WALGA Quarterly Services Report January to April 2024



WALGA

Expertise.

Quarterly Update

National Inquiries

In addition to preparing a sector-wide submission to the Legislative Council Standing Committee Inquiry into Regional Telecommunications, WALGA is currently preparing a submission for the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport Inquiry into Local Government Sustainability. WALGA's request to extend the deadline for the latter Inquiry to 31st May 2024 has been granted. WALGA encourages all Local Governments to make a submission.

Economic Briefing and Development Framework Templates released

Committed to supporting our Members, WALGA offers practical assistance to Local Governments as they serve their communities. The release of WALGA's most recent Economic Briefing assists Local Governments in budgeting for the 24/25 financial year. The [Economic Development Framework](#) has also been updated and templates have been developed for [Business Cases](#) and [Economic Development Strategies](#) that can be customised. Both the Framework and templates can be found on the WALGA website.

WALGA guidance document for Council Members considering State or Federal candidacy

With the Western Australian State Election to be held in March 2025 and a Federal Election to take place within the next year, WALGA has developed a guidance document tailored for Council Members contemplating involvement in State or Federal politics. The [Guidance Document](#) can be found on the WALGA website.

WALGA's 2024 Local Government Directory

With the cooperation of the 139 Member Councils WALGA compiled, published and distributed the 2024 Local Government Directory in early April. [The Directory](#) is the ultimate one-stop resource that provides details on all Councils, including Elected Members, key statistics, contacts and resources. Hard copies are available at WALGA, and the online resource is on the WALGA website.

Upcoming WALGA Training



- Recovery Coordinators for Local Government
- Health and Safety Representatives Training Course (5 Days)
- Health and Safety Representatives Refresher Training (1 Day)
- Procurement Planning and Risk Management
- Introduction to Waste Management



Influence.

Advocacy

State Budget Hand Down & State Budget Submission

Ahead of the 2024-25 State Budget, WALGA prepared a submission to the State Government in November 2023, outlining the sector's priorities for the upcoming budget.

Priority areas included:

- Making our roads safer
- Community infrastructure for a changing population
- Climate Action
- Accelerating the transition to a circular economy
- Disaster resilient communities
- Improved services
- Better governance and oversight

As the State Budget is handed down on May 9, WALGA will release a news update on advocacy areas that have been successful and those that WALGA will continue to campaign on.

State Election Campaign

In addition to the 2024-25 State Budget Submission, WALGA has commenced the development of its 2024-25 advocacy platform and campaign. In addition to multiple media interviews, WALGA has engaged in discussions and meetings with key stakeholders, Ministers, State Government agencies, and industry associations.

Advocating for positive change

In March, WALGA hosted our annual Aboriginal Engagement Forum and assisted in launching the WA Tree Festival. Both initiatives highlight our commitment to working with our Members, stakeholders and the wider community to provide the support Local Governments need to best serve their local communities.

WALGA Wins

Long Service Leave Regulations

WALGA's collective voice assisted in the request to review the State's Long Service Leave (LSL) Regulations, which have recently been updated by the Department of Local Government, Sport, and Cultural Industries to have long service leave entitlement based on the average number of hours an employee has worked during the accrual period.

Previously, the entitlement was based on the employee's status when leave was taken. Entitlement to LSL is also now "portable" within the Local Government sector. WALGA is pleased that the State Government has carried out a review of the sector's Long Service Leave Regulations, having sought clarity since 2013.

ARENA funding

WALGA has been working with Local Governments for nearly two years to develop the ARENA (Australian Renewable Energy Agency) Project which was announced in March 2024 by the Minister for Climate Change and Energy the Hon. Chris Bowen. This project is the first of its kind, bringing together the buying power of Local Government to reduce costs associated with transition to EVs and ensure knowledge sharing across the sector. Twenty two Local Governments across the State have committed to spending \$7.68m to roll out 129 Battery Electric Vehicles to replace existing petrol and diesel vehicles.

Taking the lead to protect mature trees on private land

In March, WALGA released a new Model Local Planning Policy (LPP) to support Local Governments to stem the loss of tree canopy cover in urban areas across Western Australia. Councils can adopt the Model Local Planning Policy Tree Retention, which will clarify whether tree removal (or other tree damaging activity) is work that requires development approval. The LPP aims to provide a consistent approach to preserve trees at all stages of the planning and development process, including strategic planning proposals and subdivision applications, as well as development applications.

Support.

Key Statistics: Shire of Westonia



0

Employee
Relations queries



3

Procurement advice transactions



\$ 36,290

estimated PSP quarterly
spend



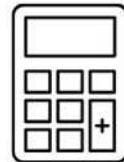
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Training Courses Attended



2

Governance advice transactions



Tax Advisory Service

supporting Local
Government tax compliance

WALGA Contacts



Nick Sloan

Chief Executive Officer
9213 2000



Tony Brown

Executive Director Member Services
9213 2051



Nicole Matthews

Executive Manager Policy
9213 2039



Rachel Horton

Executive Manager Advocacy
9213 2038



Ian Duncan

Executive Manager Infrastructure
9213 2031

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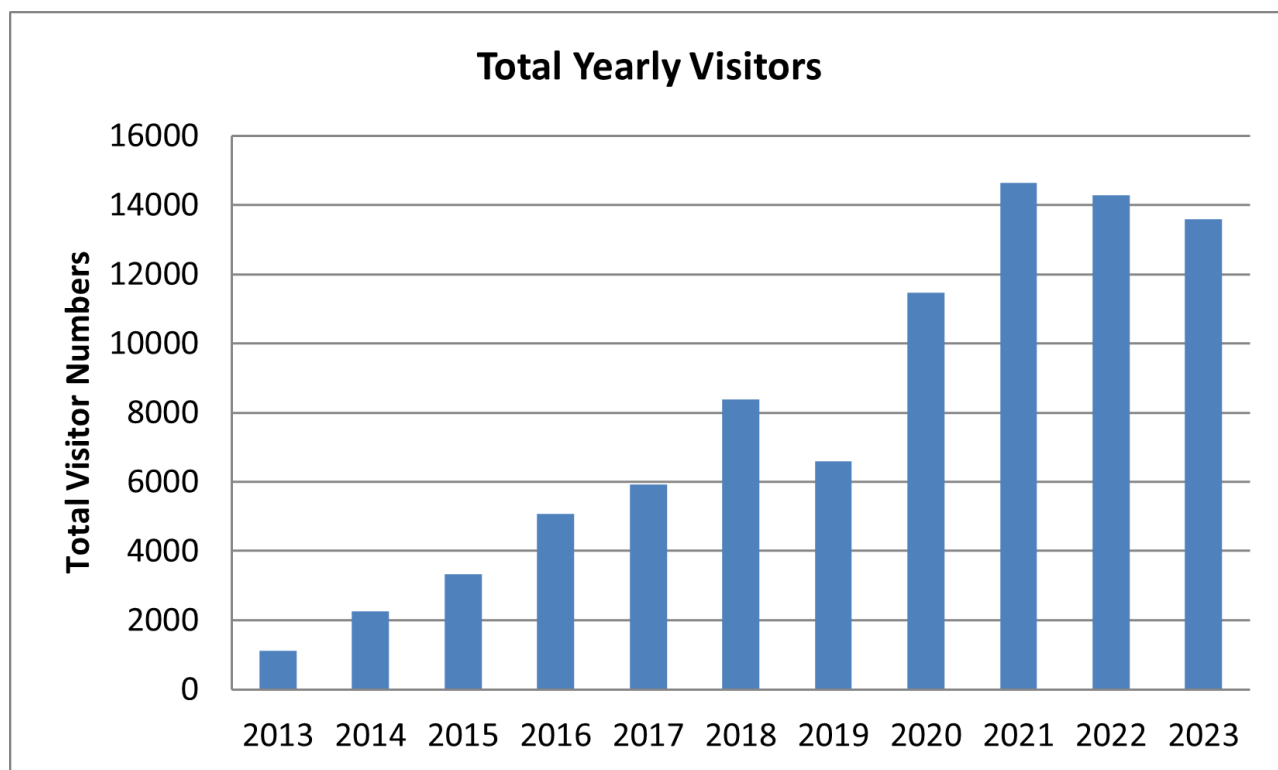
Influence. Support. Expertise.



May 2024 Newsletter

All things tourism in the Shires of Dowerin, Koorda, Mt Marshall, Mukinbudin, Nungarin, Trayning, Westonia and Wyalkatchem.

1000% Growth in Visitors to the Wheatbelt Way over 10 years!



Ten years of collecting Visitor Data in the Wheatbelt Way.

Wheatbelt Way Visitor Data

At the end of 2023, we reached a significant milestone: ten years of collecting visitor data in the Wheatbelt Way. Our journey began in 2013, with local government caravan parks in the Wheatbelt Way hosting 1,122 visitors. By 2023, this number had grown to 13,591. The February 2024 Visitor Snapshot report is featured further in this E-news. We welcome any accommodation provider to participate in this.

2024 Wheatbelt Futures Forum

Recently, I had the nerve-racking yet wonderful opportunity to speak at the 2024 Wheatbelt Futures Forum in Northam. My presentation highlighted the value of tourism in the Wheatbelt, drawing from the Wheatbelt Way experience, and explored potential opportunities for agritourism in the region. This experience has led to excellent networking and collaboration opportunities—so stay tuned. The Q&A panel session also featured insightful questions and comments. You can view the presentation [here](#). I'm more than happy to visit your organization to discuss tourism further or provide a presentation—just get in touch.

Successful DLGSC Community Trails Planning Grant

NEWTRAVEL was announced as a successful recipient of the 2024 DLGSC Trails Planning Grant, securing \$25,000 to develop a Bushwalking Masterplan for the Wheatbelt Way. We will begin implementing this 12-month project in July, with Rebecca Watson of Arhjay Consultancy engaged to assist in delivering the project plan. The process will start with a series of local government consultations from July 1 to July 10, 2024. The aim is to elevate the bushwalking offerings and experiences across the Wheatbelt Way.

Wildflowers - What are you thinking?

How are you feeling about the upcoming wildflower season? Is it too early to make predictions - it has been dry for such a long period? I'd love to hear your thoughts on how we should market the Wheatbelt Way over the next few months. What should we be telling our visitors to expect? Are you planning to pivot to provide visitors with exciting and engaging activities while they're in the Wheatbelt Way?

July to October is our main visitor period. Now is the time to finalize your plans to encourage visitors to stop, stay, and spend in your community. This is also a reminder to complete any last-minute maintenance at your tourist sites to ensure they meet standards and expectations (toilets functioning, signs in place, roads and tracks safe, etc.).

If I can assist with any of this, please feel free to reach out. I'd be happy to help.

NEXT MEETING - NEW DATE

The next NEWTRAVEL meeting is on **TUESDAY 23rd JULY 2024, at 10 am in NUNGARIN** (moved to avoid a clash with the State CRC Annual Conference) and all members and stakeholders are welcome. If you would like any assistance or further information on anything Wheatbelt Tourism please also feel free to reach out to me.

Linda Vernon

Tourism Officer, Wheatbelt Way

E: linda@wheatbeltway.com.au

31 May 2024

Via email: ceo@westonia.wa.gov.au

Mr Bill Price
Chief Executive Officer
Shire of Westonia

Dear Mr Price

WALGA MEMBERSHIP AND SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2024-25

WALGA exists to represent and support Local Governments in Western Australia and leverage the sector's collective strength and influence to benefit our members and their communities. The Association's ability to do this is enhanced by having all 139 Councils as members, and I thank you for your ongoing support.

To assist you in planning for the new financial year, I have provided your preliminary forecast subscription/s overleaf of the renewal price of services to which you currently subscribe and the quoted price for optional subscription activities to which you may wish to consider subscribing. Please note that all amounts are excluding GST. Also enclosed is a brief outline of the subscription services available to WALGA members.

As in previous years, the basis for calculating membership subscriptions is an assessment model with a fixed component (40%) and two variable components (30% each). The two variable components are each Local Government's share of total sector revenue and each Local Government's share of the State population.

WALGA has applied a 4.0% increase in membership and service subscriptions except for Council Connect, which varies depending on your subscription tier, and Employee Relations (ER) Services, which increased by 10%. The ER Subscriptions are to be increased by an additional 6% due to the high level of activities in the WA Industrial Relations Commission due to the transfer to the State system from the Federal system, together with the legal expenditure required for the WALGA to intervene in the Union demarcation dispute as requested by members. Any enquiries on this can be made to Tony Brown at tbrown@walga.asn.au. WALGA values your membership and will continue to strive to provide you with the highest service and value for money from your subscription/s.

Please provide a purchase order number for your membership subscription and all the current subscriptions you wish to renew or commence.

Shire of Westonia SAT Banding 4	Currently Subscribed (Y/N)	Amount if subscribed Excl GST	Purchase Order Number
Association Membership	Y	\$8,204.57	
Procurement Services	N	\$2,786.00	
Tax Services	Y	\$1,670.00	
Council Connect	Y	\$12,880.00	
Employee Relations	Y	\$5,489.00	
Local Laws Service	Y	\$707.00	
Governance Service	Y	\$380.00	

All amounts shown above are exclusive of GST. Invoice amount will include GST

Please email purchase order numbers to ar@walga.asn.au or mark the above table and return it via email. If you have any queries about your subscriptions, please get in touch with the Accounts Receivable Officer at 9213 2022 or by email at ar@walga.asn.au.

I look forward to working closely with you in the coming year.

Yours sincerely



Nick Sloan
Chief Executive Officer

Submission to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Agriculture Inquiry into Export Control Amendment (Ending Live Sheep Exports by Sea) Bill 2024

Mr Lachlan Hunter – The Nationals WA Candidate for Central Wheatbelt

Benefits of Live Exports

Economic Profitability

- **Higher Profit Margins:** Live exports offer greater profitability compared to domestic sales, particularly in markets with high demand and limited local supply.
- **Significant Financial Returns:** According to the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences (ABARES), live cattle exports averaged \$1,224 per head, compared to \$846 per head for domestic sales. Similarly, live sheep exports averaged \$97 per head, versus \$88 domestically.

Market Expansion

- **Diverse Market Opportunities:** Live exports open new markets for livestock, reducing reliance on domestic buyers and protecting the industry from local economic fluctuations.
- **Economic Contributions:** New Zealand's live sheep trade with the Middle East, valued at around NZD \$200 million annually, supports thousands of agricultural jobs and significantly contributes to the economy. This is thanks to a National Party government that supports the trade.

Animal Welfare and Sustainable Practices

- **Optimal Herd Management:** Live exports help maintain optimal herd sizes and reduce overstocking, leading to better animal welfare and more sustainable farming practices.
- **Improved Welfare Outcomes:** Exporting animals unsuitable for breeding prevents early culling, allowing them to thrive in new environments and enhancing overall welfare outcomes.
- **Insufficient Compensation:** The proposed \$107 million compensation package is inadequate, failing to account for the extensive investments by farmers and the broader economic impact. This amount is insufficient compared to the industry's potential annual losses.

Lack of Proper Consultation

- **Disregard for Stakeholders:** The government has not adequately consulted with WA stakeholders, showing a disregard for the local situation where emergency measures are being implemented to assist struggling producers.

Encouragement of Extreme Activism

- **Dangerous Precedent:** The Labor government's decision validates extreme animal activism, setting a dangerous precedent and jeopardising Australia's agricultural export reputation.

Continued Advocacy

- **Ongoing Opposition:** The fight against the live export ban continues. Australian agriculture is vital for global food security, and fringe activism should not undermine this contribution.

Supporting Statistics

Value of Trade

- **Significant Trade Value:** From 2017 to 2022, nearly a million sheep were exported annually, with an average annual value of \$143 million.

Economic Contribution

- **Job Support:** Nationally, live sheep exports have contributed \$52 million in value-added annually, supporting 88 full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs.

Price Impacts

- **Market Prices:** In 2022, WA lamb prices were, on average, \$5.50 lower per head when live export buyers were not procuring lambs.

Flock Changes

- **Impact on Wool Production:** A 15% reduction in the WA Merino flock could decrease wool production by approximately 55,000 bales annually, resulting in significant income loss.

Regional Economic Impact

- **Local Economic Support:** The North Eastern Wheatbelt's sheep flock supports 180 local businesses and contributes over \$18.7 million to the local economy.

The proposed transition package for the live sheep export industry is fundamentally flawed and inadequate. It fails to consider the extensive economic and social impacts on farmers, the supply chain, and the broader WA economy.

I urge the Labor government to reconsider this decision and provide a more substantial and fair package that truly addresses the needs and investments of those affected. The live sheep export industry plays a critical role in supporting the agriculture sector and the economy in WA and across the nation, and its contributions should not be underestimated.

The live sheep trade out of WA is vital for the economic stability of the agriculture sector, the livelihoods of farmers, and the overall welfare of the livestock. Ending this trade without adequate measures and proper compensation will have far-reaching negative impacts on the industry and the economy. Therefore, I strongly support the continuation of live sheep exports and urge the committee to consider the significant benefits and address the concerns with a balanced and informed approach.

The Global Impact of Australian Standards

If Australia exits the live export market, trade will continue from countries without the same animal welfare standards. This loss would mean the end of Australia's positive influence on global practices, as other exporting countries do not provide the same on-the-ground support.

Food Security and Agricultural Decisions

Food security is a vital issue. As a net exporter, Australia must carefully consider its agricultural production systems and the implications of trade restrictions. The live export industry is crucial for maintaining global food security and supporting agricultural livelihoods.

The live export industry is not just about the logistics of shipping animals; it is about improving human welfare through education, sharing knowledge, and building relationships that ultimately benefit animal welfare. Ending this trade would have significant negative consequences for both the industry and global food security.

Economic and Community Effects of Shutting Down the Live Sheep Export Industry in Western Australia

The closure of the live sheep export industry in WA would have profound economic and community effects. This report outlines the key impacts across various dimensions, including economic profitability, market dynamics, employment, and community well-being.

1. Economic Profitability

Reduced Revenue

- **Direct Financial Losses:** The live sheep export industry contributes significantly to WA's economy. From 2017 to 2022, nearly a million sheep were exported annually, with an average annual value of \$143 million. This revenue stream would be lost, directly affecting farmers and the broader agricultural economy.
- **Price Differential:** The Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences (ABARES) reported that live sheep exports averaged \$97 per head, compared to \$88 domestically. This price differential highlights the higher profitability of live exports. Farmers would face lower margins if they had to rely solely on the domestic market.

Compensation Shortfall

- **Inadequate Compensation:** The proposed \$107 million compensation package is insufficient to cover the extensive investments by farmers and the broader economic impact. The package does not match the potential annual losses, which far exceed this amount.

2. Market Dynamics

Loss of Market Diversification

- **Market Concentration:** Live exports provide market diversification, reducing reliance on domestic buyers and insulating the industry from local economic fluctuations. The closure would concentrate market risks domestically, making the industry more vulnerable to local market dynamics.
- **Middle Eastern Market:** The Middle Eastern market, which heavily relies on live sheep imports from Australia, would be lost. New Zealand's live sheep trade with the Middle East is valued at around NZD \$200 million annually, illustrating the economic potential of these markets.

Supply Chain Disruption

- **Downstream Effects:** The closure of the live export market would disrupt the entire supply chain, affecting transport, logistics, feed suppliers, and port operations. This disruption would have cascading effects on related industries and services.

3. Employment

Job Losses

- **Direct Employment:** Nationally, live sheep exports have contributed \$52 million in value-added annually, supporting 88 full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs. These jobs would be at risk, leading to increased unemployment and associated social issues.
- **Local Businesses:** The North Eastern Wheatbelt's sheep flock supports 180 local businesses and contributes over \$18.7 million to the local economy. The loss of live exports would jeopardize these businesses and their employees.

Regional Economic Impact

- **Community Viability:** Many rural and regional communities are economically dependent on the live sheep trade. The loss of this industry could lead to population decline as people move away in search of employment, further eroding community viability and local services.

4. Agricultural Sustainability

Herd Management

- **Overstocking Issues:** Live exports help maintain optimal herd sizes and reduce overstocking, which can lead to better animal welfare and sustainable farming practices. Without this outlet, farmers might struggle with overstocked farms, leading to potential welfare issues and increased costs.
- **Wool Production Impact:** A 15% reduction in the WA Merino flock could decrease wool production by approximately 55,000 bales annually, resulting in significant income loss for farmers.

Financial Strain

- **Increased Costs:** Farmers might face increased costs associated with maintaining larger herds without the ability to export live sheep. These costs include feed, healthcare, and infrastructure maintenance.

5. Community and Social Impact

Mental Health and Well-being

- **Farmer Stress:** The financial strain and uncertainty associated with the loss of live export revenue could lead to increased stress and mental health issues among farmers.
- **Community Support Systems:** Reduced economic activity could weaken community support systems, including schools, healthcare, and social services, further affecting community well-being.

Social Fabric

- **Depopulation:** As economic opportunities decline, there could be a migration of younger generations to urban areas, leading to an aging population and a decline in community vitality.
- **Loss of Cultural Practices:** The sheep farming and live export industry are integral to the cultural identity of many rural communities. The closure of this industry could lead to the erosion of these cultural practices and traditions.

Conclusion

The shutdown of the live sheep export industry in Western Australia would have far-reaching economic and community effects. The loss of significant revenue, job opportunities, and market diversification would place considerable strain on the agricultural sector and related industries. Additionally, the broader social impacts, including mental health issues and community depopulation, underscore the critical need for a balanced approach that considers both economic and social dimensions. Adequate compensation and alternative support mechanisms must be provided to mitigate these impacts and ensure the sustainability and well-being of WA's rural communities.

7 June 2024

Committee Secretary
House of Representatives Standing Committee on Agriculture
PO Box 6021
Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600



Dear Committee Members,

Re: Inquiry into Export Control Amendment (Ending Live Sheep Exports by Sea) Bill 2024

The Wheatbelt East Regional Organisation of Councils Inc. (WEROC) is an incorporated not-for-profit organisation whose members include representatives from the Shires of Bruce Rock, Kellerberrin, Merredin, Tammin, Westonia and Yilgarn. WEROC exists to support the growth and development of the Eastern Wheatbelt region of Western Australia, and we believe that it is imperative to the economic and social wellbeing of our communities, that the live sheep export industry be maintained.

The export of live sheep is a key element on which the Western Australian sheep industry is based. For the producer, live export is a necessary process to control livestock numbers, use pastures in a sustainable manner, and provide resilience in difficult seasons particularly in times of drought. The industry also supports a range of large and small contributors including livestock agents, transport operators, shearers, feed suppliers and manufacturers, rural merchandise stores, consultants, and veterinarians.

The sheep industry is an important economic contributor to the WEROC region. In Western Australia the agri-food and fibre production sector was worth \$14 billion in 2021-22 of which the sheep industry (sheep and wool) contributed \$1,347. million¹. In the same period the agricultural output from the WEROC region was \$379million² with the sheep industry contributing \$53million³ (4% of the total value of the sheep industry in the state).

In 2021-22 there were 579,135 sheep and lambs in the WEROC area and 243 sheep and lamb producers⁴. With a total of 840 businesses in the region, sheep production businesses account for approximately 30% of all businesses. As stated previously, there are a range of large and small businesses that exist to support the sheep industry so the number of local businesses that stand to be impacted by the decision to phase out live sheep export by sea, will be considerably higher than the 243 directly involved in sheep/lamb production.

Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA) commissioned a report on the impact of the self-imposed live sheep trade moratorium in 2019. The report⁵ examined how the 3-to-4-month halt in exports affected people and businesses involved in the trade and provides an invaluable

¹ ABS (2023), Agricultural Commodities

² REMPLAN, Wheatbelt Economy Profile

³ Value of Agricultural Commodities Produced by Local Government Areas 2020-21, Australian Bureau of Statistics, July 2022

⁴ Agricultural Commodities by Local Government Areas 2020-21, Australian Bureau of Statistics, July 2022

⁵ Mercado 2020. Impact of the live sheep export trades self-imposed moratorium and regulatory changes.

insight into what can be expected when live sheep export is discontinued permanently. The report found that:

- The live export market provides a stable price floor in the sheep market. Because there are fewer buyers in WA sheep markets compared to eastern markets, competition is heavily reliant on the live export trade to improve competitiveness and prices. During the shipping suspension, the normal price discount in WA compared to eastern markets, widened further due to lack of competition.
- Sheep producers have some ability to adjust their management and sell into domestic markets. However, many support industries and services are highly reliant on livestock exports and experienced negative mental health as well as financial impacts as a result of the moratorium.
- While many industries undoubtedly evolve in response to changed conditions, the isolation of the WA sheep industry and its reliance on live export makes it unique. Without a sustainable live export industry, the WA sheep flock is under threat.

In addition to this research, two recent reports, one by ACIL Allen⁶ and the other by Mercado⁷ highlight the potential negative impacts for Western Australian sheep producers if live export is no longer a disposal option, because excess lamb supplies and persistent processing constraints/limited slaughter capacity in the State are already driving domestic prices down. In the face of reduced markets and lower prices, livestock producers will likely adapt their farming operations by destocking and increasing cropping. As the state's sheep flock declines, so too will the revenue that is generated by the industry throughout the supply chain and for the ancillary support and service industries that have no viable alternative avenues of revenue, the impact will be catastrophic. For our region, this translates to job losses and further population decline in regional communities that are already suffering greatly from outmigration and the flow on impact this has to maintaining vital services and amenities.

WEROC strongly opposes the Australian Government's policy to phase out live sheep exports and the Bill that seeks to legislate the policy. It is our view that Government has a responsibility to ensure that its policies do not result in any Australian being worse off, however if this bill is passed that is exactly what will occur for thousands of Western Australians across the sheep producing regions.

Yours Sincerely



Rebekah Burges

Executive Officer, Wheatbelt East Regional Organisation of Councils Inc.

⁶ ACIL Allen, Performance and value of the live sheep export trade, June 2023.

⁷ The Mercado Market Insight Report for Q1 2023

Ramelius in bid to sink Westgold's Karora deal

**SIMONE GROGAN
& DANIEL NEWELL**

Gold miner Ramelius Resources is preparing to rain on Westgold Resources' \$2.2 billion proposed merger with Canada's Karora Resources after revealing the two WA mid-tiers were at one stage in deal talks themselves.

The news was contained in a long statement from the Takeovers Panel that said Ramelius was seeking final orders against Westgold, in what sets the scene for a complicated three-way stoush.

The tiff stems from the tangle of an agreement made between the two WA miners in November, and Westgold's arrangement with target Karora that could theoretically make life harder for Ramelius to launch its own — and as yet unconfirmed — takeover offer for Westgold.

The statement revealed the two acquisitive WA mid-tiers had been exploring options for a potential tie-up of their own and had agreed to a 12-month "mutual standstill" in November, essentially stopping each other from launching a hostile bid. Six months on with no deal to speak of, it emerged Ramelius had been conducting due diligence on Karora.

But an acquisition of the \$900m-plus gold miner was not to be, and Mark Zeptner-led Ramelius in March called time on talks that could have seen it pay upwards of \$1 billion to reel in the Toronto-listed company, which owns the Lakewood and Higginsville mills fed by ore from its Beta Hunt and Higginsville mines.

A deal would have given Ramelius a third production hub right near two of the miner's most promising exploration projects.

Karora had also seemingly been in the sights of Westgold, and the pair revealed weeks after they would merge to form a new 400,000-ounce gold producer with \$490 million in "potential synergies", with Westgold to have a 50.1 per cent of the new entity.

Under the deal, Westgold would have to pay merger partner Karora a fee of about \$45 million if it walked away for a higher offer from someone else.

Ramelius has argued to the Takeovers Panel that break fee "exceeds panel guidance" and is seeking final orders to have the fee "amended".



Our Ref: D10499; 24/132895

Bill Price
Chief Executive Officer
Shire of Westonia
WOLFRAM ST WESTONIA WA 6423
AUSTRALIA

Dear Bill Price

THE AUSTRALIAN WARNING SYSTEM (AWS) IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

I am writing to advise you that Western Australia will soon adopt nationally consistent warnings through the Australian Warning System (AWS). The AWS is a three-level warning framework consisting of standardised warning level names and colours, along with a clear call to action.

The AWS has been developed based on national research and community consultation. Its implementation was a recommendation of the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements that examined the extreme bushfire season of 2019/2020 which resulted in devastating loss of life and property across the country.

Western Australia has taken a phased approach to the implementation, with AWS icons and colours applied to bushfire warnings in 2021, followed by AWS-compliant heatwave warnings implemented in 2022.

To achieve full implementation, cyclone, flood and storm warnings will also adopt the new system on 15 July 2024. This means warnings for these hazards will align with bushfire and heatwave warnings and be referred to as *Advice*, *Watch and Act*, and *Emergency Warning* and feature the corresponding warning colours of yellow, orange and red.

AWS warnings will also feature an action statement to give affected communities clear advice about what action to take to stay safe. These action statements can be found on the DFES website at dfes.wa.gov.au/aws.

The AWS will bring Western Australia in line with all other Australian States and Territories, ensuring travellers and those in cross-border areas receive consistent emergency information.

An awareness campaign will be rolled out to help the community better understand the new AWS warnings. The campaign will run across television, radio, print, online, outdoor

and social media. Resources will be available on the DFES website once the campaign is underway. This will be supported by community engagement in the lead-up to the 2024/2025 southern bushfire and northern cyclone seasons.

Importantly, I encourage your Local Government staff, personnel and relevant stakeholders to complete *AWS Awareness*, a self-paced e-learning module that provides an overview of the AWS and how it applies in Western Australia. The training is available by contacting the DFES Public Information Branch.

For decision-makers, additional online training will be available in coming weeks with further details to be provided on the DFES Intranet and Volunteer Hub.

Finally, some exciting new developments are planned for the State's official emergency information website, [Emergency WA \(www.emergency.wa.gov.au\)](http://www.emergency.wa.gov.au). These include the launch of a new Emergency WA mobile application that will enable users to receive emergency information tailored to them. Translated warnings, integration with in-home and wearable smart devices and new accessibility features are also being developed. I look forward to bringing you more details regarding the rollout of these exciting new features later in the year.

For more information about the rollout of the AWS, the *AWS Awareness* course, or the Next Gen Emergency WA project please contact the DFES Public Information Branch at statepublicinfo@dfes.wa.gov.au.

The Public Information Branch can also assist with providing resources to help communicate the changes with your local communities.

Yours sincerely



MELISSA PEXTON
ACTING COMMISSIONER

21 May 2024

APPENDIX

Australian Warning System Icons

Bushfire



Cyclone



Flood



Storm



Structure of an AWS warning

