



WESTERN AUSTRALIAN  
LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

**Western Australian Local Government Association  
Submission**

**Conservation of Historic Heritage Places**

**Productivity Commission**

**July 2005**

Western Australian Local Government Association  
15 Altona Street WEST PERTH WA 6005  
PO Box 1544 WEST PERTH WA 6872  
Tel: +61-8-9321 5055  
Fax: +61-8-9322 2611  
[info@walga.asn.au](mailto:info@walga.asn.au)

## **Introduction – The WA Local Government Association**

The West Australian Local Government Association is the united voice of Local Government in Western Australia. The Association is an independent, membership-based group representing and supporting the work and the interests of 144 Local Governments.

The Association provides an essential voice for almost 1,400 elected members and over 12,000 employees of the 142 Local Governments in Western Australia and Christmas Island and Cocos (Keeling) Island Councils. The Association also provides professional advice and offers services that provide financial benefits to the Local Governments and the communities they serve.

The Association has responded to the three central questions of the Inquiry

### **1. What is the rationale for government involvement in historic heritage conservation and what principles should guide that involvement?**

Local Governments are well placed to identify local heritage significance, on the basis of local knowledge and community consultation and to work with communities to create markets for local heritage in order to attract people and investment; stimulate and support cultural tourism; and aid in economic diversification in regional areas.

The ascribing of heritage values is based on the perceived cultural worth of an asset and its community significance along with its aesthetic, spiritual, social, historical and symbolic value. It is grounded in the concept that heritage assets must be conserved and handed down to future generations. The ascribing of heritage values is a collective decision. There is a rationale for Government to facilitate and protect these collective values based on the concepts of a society's ideas, traditions, beliefs and customs.

The attribution of heritage values is beyond the pure economic value of an asset moving it from the purely private domain into the realm of a public and/or mixed good. This creates the potential for everybody to consume the heritage asset, however this consumption will not be equally valued and people will differ whether they view the heritage value as positive or negative. Heritage as a public or mixed good, the existence of externalities and the resultant market failure provides a conceptual foundation for Government to have an ownership, management, financial and/or regulatory role in the provision of heritage.

The ascribing of heritage values and the shift of assets from a purely private good raises the question of who appropriates the benefits from the consumption of heritage and who should pay for its cost. For example, should costs for heritage conservation be borne by individual property owner if the wider community benefits? If there is profit forgone from development or restrictions on alternative use of a property is there a case for compensating variation to the property owner by Government on behalf of the public? However if Government provides incentives to owners of historic places for the public good, what mechanism can determine the return to the tax payer that this Government investment will bring? Classification of a public good is not absolute. It depends on market conditions and technology. How is this taken into consideration by Government? There is a role for Government to determine the level of investment in heritage by the public purse for the public good.

Heritage conservation to be successful must be understood and supported by the wider community. There is a role for Government for community education that promotes heritage values and to facilitate markets for heritage consumption.

## 1.2 Principles that should guide Government involvement

- Recognition that the market cannot deal effectively and efficiently with heritage and that there is a role for Government
- Technical and allocative efficiency
- Co-ordinated approach between the three spheres of Government – a framework to achieve policy outcomes
- Principle of subsidiary: each function of government should be devolved where possible to the lowest level of government where such an action best serves the interests of the community, with appropriate revenue streams
- Regional and local approach
- Leadership
- Partnership
- Outcome based approach
- Accountability: Transparent process for selection and evaluation to determine significance
- Sustainability principles – net economic, net social and net environmental worth

## 2. How does the policy framework for historic heritage conservation currently operate and what are its strengths and weaknesses?

### 2.1 Current State/Local Government Policy Framework in Western Australia

- The heritage management framework in WA is a ‘two-tier’ system, involving both Local and State Government.
- There is devolution of the responsibilities from the State to Local Government without adequate resourcing

#### 2.1.1 State Government Legislation

- A number of Acts provide for heritage protection in Western Australia including:
  - The Heritage of Western Australia Act 1990 provides for the protection of places and precincts of cultural heritage significance for the State in the State Register.
  - The Town Planning and Development Act: Heritage conservation is listed in the First Schedule to the Town Planning and Development Act as one of the matters which may be dealt with by general provisions in town planning schemes
  - The Aboriginal Heritage Act provides for the preservation on behalf of the community of places and objects customarily used by or traditional to the original inhabitants of Australia or their descendants

#### 2.1.2 Local Government

- Places of significance to the local community are expected to be protected under local town planning schemes. Heritage conservation is listed in the First Schedule to the Town Planning and Development Act as one of the matters which may be dealt with by general provisions in town planning schemes. Accordingly, many local planning schemes have contained heritage provisions since the 1970s or 80s, and today most schemes address this subject in accordance with the Model Scheme Text.
- Since 1991 under the Heritage Act there is a requirement for Local Governments to establish and review Local Government Heritage Inventories (MHIs).

## **2.2 Weakness with the State's heritage management system**

- Neither the Heritage Act or the Town Planning and Development Act and Model Scheme Text formalize a conclusive heritage system for the State. There is no detailed guidance within a state planning policy framework for Local Governments involvement in heritage

### **2.2.1 Outdated Heritage Act**

- The State Heritage Act is fifteen years old
- Lack of progress since on a new Heritage Bill since 1999 due to a change of Government and change of Ministers. In summary:
  - Heritage Bill 2000 – not enacted (public consultation 1999-2000)
  - Heritage Bill 2003 – no progress

### **2.2.2 Shortcomings of current Heritage Act**

The Shortcomings of the current Act for Local Government are;

- Lack of clarification around Municipal Heritage Inventories and their purpose
- Inconsistent compliance provisions and common standards across Local Government
- Limited State Government concessional support: State Government reevaluation provisions in the Heritage Act do no extent to locally listed places unlike the situation in most other States

### **2.2.3 Lack of a State Policy Framework**

- There is no statement of planning policy which sets out the principles of for the protection of the State's cultural heritage is considered essential as the State has been almost silent on policy guidance to Local Government on its expectations of local level heritage management.
- At present there is complete separation of Aboriginal heritage issues and no need for integration of Aboriginal sites into MHIs– these is a need to facilitate consideration of Aboriginal heritage into mainstream heritage systems

### **2.2.4 Inconsistent Heritage Provisions in Local Government Schemes**

- Some Councils have a scheme based heritage list that has no regard to the MHI; some Councils have heritage provisions in their Schemes but have not adopted a Heritage List; and In some cases local schemes contain no heritage provisions
- Different approaches taken by Councils to development controls within certain areas creating some uncertainty to how heritage significance can be clearly distinguished from the broader concept of urban characters
- The nature and extent of development control policies within heritage areas
- Balance between local autonomy and consistent application of statewide planning objectives

### **2.2.5 Public concern over the implication of MHI Listing**

- A lack of provision in the Heritage Act for consistent criteria stating the purpose and own-consultation procedures in relation to MHIs
- No appeal by property owner regarding a listing on MHI
- There is a need for more effective and consistent heritage protection outcome through improved planning practice and planning guidance with assistance of the State Government.
- Lack of understanding by the insurance industry on the limitations of MI listing
- MHIs do not have to incorporate Aboriginal heritage

### 2.2.6 Uncertainty as to the weight afforded to heritage significance in planning decisions

- Different Local Governments have different capacities to address heritage issues
- No specific heritage training for elected members
- Wide variations across Local Government in the extent to which Councils give with to heritage significance in making planning decisions. Creates uncertainty for the community
- No evaluation for Local Government of instrument choices –how effective the instruments are, interaction amongst them and how they should be managed to maximum advantage
- No market techniques for Local Government to estimate the costs and benefits of policy decisions -

### 2.6.7 Public Perception

- No statewide comprehensive community education regarding the value of heritage
- Perceived injurious affect of having a person's property place on a heritage list in terms of an adverse affect on property value
- An assumption that property owners should be entitled to compensation on the basis that the benefit of heritage conservation is for the wider community
- Perceived limitations being unreasonably imposed on a person's property rights by denying development, demolition opportunities and constraining modifications/modernizing of dwellings
- Limited understanding of the scope of decisions making processes of the existing town planning (development control) regime by the general public
- Lack of clear, publicly understood and unambiguous criteria for determining what constitutes heritage
- Competence and qualifications of heritage assessors
- Perceptions that heritage assessments are cursory
- Lack of capacity of all Local Government to employ specialist heritage advisors

### 2.6.8 Expertise support to Local Government

- No strategic, regionalized, statewide network of advisory support to Local Government
- The deployment of State Government resources is conditional on Local Government's capacity to part fund positions
- State Government reevaluation provisions in the Heritage Act do no extent to locally listed places unlike the situation in most other States

## 2.3 Proposed Policy Solutions

A State Local Government Heritage Working Party was established in 2002 to address a number of Local Government's concerns focusing on a number of issues within two stages:

#### Stage One

1. The relationship between Municipal Inventories and scheme-based Heritage Lists/Heritage Areas;
2. Appropriate level of State Government responsibility through statute and policy;
3. Any changes to the Heritage Act in relation to the above

#### Stage Two

4. Common assessment standards for local heritage inventories including assessment criteria
5. Accreditation of heritage consultants
6. Education
7. Insurance
8. State government leadership – further consideration including a State Planning Policy for Heritage and changes to he Model Scheme Text
9. Incentives

### **2.3.1 Heritage Working Party Recommendations**

The Heritage Working Party has developed a number of documents. These are with the Minister for consideration prior to distribution to Local Government for consideration and comment.

- Criteria for the assessment of Local Heritage Places and Areas
- Statement of Planning Policy for Cultural Heritage Conservation
- Template Local Planning Policy for Heritage – a tool for Local Government for implementing the Local town planning scheme and local planning strategy
- Basic Principles for MHIs
- Changes to the heritage related provision in the model scheme text

The Working Party recommendations are with the State Minister's for Heritage and Planning for endorsement subject to release to Councils for comment.

## **2.4 What Local Government in Western Australia is doing to support heritage conservation**

Local Government is both an owner of heritage assets and provides a leadership role in heritage conservation utilizing a number of tools to address heritage issues including community based identification of values, community education, fiscal incentives, financial assistance and planning.

### **2.4.1 Incentives**

- Planning incentives with financial consequences – i.e. plot ration bonuses, relaxation of car parking requirements or use of subdivision concessions
- Direct Funding: i.e. grants, loans,
- Indirect funding: i.e. rate concessions
- Encouraging adaptive use of buildings
- Community education i.e. heritage festivals, heritage advisory services

### **2.4.2 WA Heritage Loan Scheme – Commenced 2003**

- State wide scheme administered by the WA Local Government Association in conjunction with the Heritage Council of WA.
- Governing Board: Heritage Council CEO, State West Credit Rep, LG Rep on National Trust, WALGA President, LG rep on Heritage Council
- The Scheme provides loans for heritage conservation works, currently set at a rate of three per cent lower than State West standard rates.
- Eligible applicants included any owner, lessees or occupiers of Heritage Properties identified on the Municipal Inventory, State Government Register of Heritage Places, Commonwealth's register of National Estate or National Trust's list of Classified Places within participating local Government areas.
- Council voluntary contributions based on 0.5% of their rate based or \$25,000 – whichever is lesser amount
- Loans are proportional to Council financial support
- Heritage Council –\$200,000 one off contribution - \$35,000 per annum for officer support
- To date Councils \$233,990
- Over half a million dollars has been invested by State and Local Government

## 2.5 Local Government Funding

### 2.5.1 Weaknesses of current financial model

- Increasing pressures on Local Government resources limits the amount of resources that Councils have available for heritage conservation
- Councils have different financial capacities to address market failures at the local level to conserve heritage – this includes the capacity to work in partnership with the private sector
- Not all Councils have the capacity to offer advisory services to residents
- Lack of consistency regarding why funds should be allocated to one project over another
- No clear, accessible model for Local Government of costs and benefits of heritage values and how benefits in heritage values across time are considered
- Councils face different transaction costs for heritage based on their size and scale
- An assumption that heritage significance is stratified and that national heritage should be nationally funded, state heritage state funded and local heritage locally funded
- At a national level there is a need to acknowledge the wider social benefits of heritage and the disparate cost borne by Local Government

### 2.5.2 Financial Assistance Grants to Local Government

- Australia's federal system has led to vertical fiscal imbalance due to the legal and constitutional context so that Local Government does not have the revenue resources to fund its expenditure responsibilities. In this context intergovernmental grants between the Commonwealth and the State are an important element of Local Government funding.
- Financial Assistance Grants do not provide all Local Governments with an appropriate source of revenue that meets existing demand, nor does it reflect historical growth in demand for Local Government services. The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Economics, Finance and Public Administration Report, *Rates and Taxes: A Fair Share for Responsible Local Government* (Hawker Report) found that escalating costs and constrained funding along with a growing community expectations/funding gap threatens the future of efficient and responsive Local Government.<sup>1</sup> Local Government's functions have increased due to:
  - (i) *Devolution* – where another sphere of government gives local government responsibility for new functions
  - (ii) *Raising the bar* – where another sphere of government through legislative or other changes, increases the complexity of or standard at which a local government service must be provided and hence increases its cost;
  - (iii) *Cost Shifting* – where there were two types of behaviour. The first is where local government agrees to provide a service on behalf of another sphere of government but funding is subsequently reduced or stopped, and local government is unable to withdraw because of community demand for the service. The second is where, for whatever reason, another sphere of government ceases to provide a service and local government steps in;
  - (iv) *Increased community expectations* – where the community demands improvements in existing local government services; and
  - (v) *Policy choice* – where individual Local Governments choose to expand their service provision

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<sup>1</sup> Australia. House of Representatives Standing Committee on Economics, Finance and Public Administration Report 2003 Rates and Taxes: A Fair Share for Responsible Local Government, p 11

- The Hawker Report found that the level of States' grants to Local Government has failed to keep pace with changing responsibilities and cost increases.<sup>2</sup> Growth in Financial Assistance Grants (FAGs) and other forms of federal funding has been accompanied a decline in State support. Although the amount has increased in relative terms its rate of increase is about one-tenth of the rate of increase of local government own-source revenue.
- Financial Assistance Grants are intended to equalise the capacity to provide services. The quantum of funds is below what is needed to apply full horizontalism equalisation principles. Local Government has limited options to increase their own revenue. The Report highlighted is the need for certainty of funding, the need for a growth base for FAGs, the need to leave FAGs untied, the direct payment of FAGs to local government and the need for a new approach to funding local government. The Committee recognized the need for discretionary funding in order for Local Governments to maintain the capacity and flexibility to be able to plan for and deal with local needs as they arise.
- Over the past 30 years, local government has maintained its revenue-raising effort and has worked to expand own-source revenue. During the 1970s, fees and user charges comprised 13% of total revenue. This revenue source now represents 32% of the total. Local Government has also continued to increase municipal rates. However, compared to growth in Commonwealth taxation revenue (39% over the period 1998-99 to 2002-03), rates are a slow-growth tax (25% over the same period).
- At present, the Australian Government annually adjusts the quantum of FAGs using an escalation factor based on inflation and population growth. Over the past 20 years, the application of this escalation factor has resulted in a decline of FAGs as a percentage of total Commonwealth taxation revenue. The 2004-05 Federal Budget papers indicate that this trend is set to continue. The value of FAGs, as a proportion of total Commonwealth taxation revenue, will have fallen from 1.18% in 1993-94 to 0.97% in 1996-97 and to just 0.77% by 2007-08.<sup>3</sup>

#### Implication for heritage funding

- The Hawker Report makes it clear that under existing financial arrangements Local Government is struggling to meet increasing demands for its services. Consequently, local government faces the choice of either increasing revenue or cutting services. Cutting local government services is not usually a viable option and is counter to the objective of delivering equitable local services across Australia. If local government is to continue to satisfy legitimate community expectations about heritage, while coping with legislated responsibility transfers from other spheres of government, it is essential that the financial relationship between the Australian Government and local government be significantly reformed.

#### Proposed Solution

- Local Government seeks to resolve this problem by linking the quantum of financial assistance for Local Government to an agreed proportion of total Commonwealth taxation revenue (excluding GST). In advocating this reform, ALGA proposes a graduated two-step approach. Initially, by amending the escalation factor to more closely align growth in FAGs with that of the Australian economy; and subsequently, setting the quantum of FAGs at an amount equivalent to 1% of total Commonwealth taxation revenue (excluding GST).

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<sup>2</sup> Op cit p 36

<sup>3</sup> Information sourced from the Australian Local Government Association



### 2.5.3 WA Local Government Grants Commission – Heritage Allowance

- General purpose grants to Local Government are not re-allocated by the WA Grants Commission amongst Western Australian Councils on a per capita basis. They are equalized based on the difference between the assessed expenditure need and the assessed revenue raising capacity of each Local Government. Calculation for assessing Councils rate revenue is based on standardized mathematical formula which involves assessing the revenue raising capacity of each Local Government in five categories: urban properties, agricultural properties, pastoral properties and mining property and the Commission assesses capacity by different methods for each.<sup>4</sup> Assessed expenditure need involves assessing each Local Government's operating expenditures in the provision of core services and facilities.<sup>5</sup> A policy neutral approach is taken.
- Whilst the Grants Commission assesses the equalization and road funding needs of each Local Government Councils do not received the amount calculated. This is because the amount allocated to the State is much less than the requirement calculated by the Commission. The difference between the amount required and the amount available means that the grants for each local Government must be factored back to equal the amount allocation by the Commonwealth.<sup>6</sup>
- Local Governments with responsibility for maintaining heritage of State or national significance are considered to have a disability relative to other Local Governments. This Heritage allowance was introduced in 1995/96 to recognize the costs incurred by Local Government of administering and maintaining heritage sites. The allowance consists of \$10,000 per registered site in the care and control of Local Government and \$2000 for each additional building located on the same site, up to a maximum of \$50,000 for five or more sites (according to the WA Register of Heritage Places compiled by the Heritage Councils of WA in 2004/05). This is irrespective of the nature of the asset.
- In the 2004/05 grant determinations 76 Councils received an allowance totaling \$2.1 Million of which 19 received the maximum allowance available. 13 of these Councils had more than five sites. It is clear with equalization not meeting the needs of Councils that the Heritage Allowance received by Local Government is not adequate for Councils who have the care and control of maintaining heritage of State and National significance.

### 2.5.4 Grant Funding

- Local Government can apply to or sponsor applications to Lotterywest for funding for conservation and interpretation of cultural heritage
- Current grants are over subscribed
- Compliance cost is an issue for smaller Councils

### 2.5.4 New Funding Model required to support Local Government's Heritage Conservation

- As highlighted in the Hawker Report, there is increasing pressure on Local Government budgets. Local Governments have different capacities to support and protect heritage. In order to achieve nationally consistent heritage policy outcomes there is a need for financial support to Local Government. The protection of heritage assets should not be subject to Local Government's ability to access limited grant applications. In particular consideration should be given to:
  - New method of calculating financial assistance grants

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<sup>4</sup> Op cit, p 134

<sup>5</sup> Op cit, p 134

<sup>6</sup> Western Australia Local Government Grants Commission, Principles and Methods , p vii

- The financing of heritage through an additional special purpose payment
  - Additional funding to Local Government outside the Financial Assistance Grants model
- The nature of economic development policies in Australia is changing and increasingly they have a regional scale and focus. The driving changes are two key issues: globalisation and sustainable development.<sup>7</sup> While Australia does not have formalised structures of government at a regional scale, it has become clear that many tasks need to occur at this level. Local Government is increasingly having a pivotal role in the delivery of national strategies such as National Resource Management, Road Infrastructure at a regional level.<sup>8</sup>
  - A national survey on the role of Local Government in economic development found that In order for Local Government to move beyond its traditional range of (primarily local) economic development functions to more aggressive activities like targeted investment attraction or to regionally focused projects a greater resource allocation is necessary. This provides scope for the State and Commonwealth to revisit the means by which they allocate programme funding to the regions and to explore ways that funding allocations could be more responsible to local requirements. Such an action would require a flexible financial resource pool.<sup>9</sup>
  - The principle of subsidiary is that each function of government should be devolved (where possible) to the lowest level of government where such an action best serves the interests of the community. Local Government is representative of its communities, a major provider of infrastructure and services and well placed to understand local economic needs and solutions. Increasing the quantum of funding made available to local government would be the first step to solving many of the problems confronting regions.<sup>10</sup>

## **2.6 Current Commonwealth Models to support local level initiatives**

There are models of Commonwealth contributory funding through assistance programmes to Local Government which are rigorous and ensure that no perverse incentives are in place. They ensure a balance between local autonomy and consistent application of national objectives. These programmes include:

1. Roads to Recovery
2. Natural Resource Management
3. Emergency Management

### **2.6.1 Roads to Recovery<sup>11</sup>**

- The distribution of the Roads to Recovery funds between States and Territories is based on historical precedents, length of local roads and population. Allocations between Councils within each State are in accordance with formulae adopted by State Grants Commissions for the distribution of Financial Assistance Grants identified for roads. The allocations to councils are fixed for the life of the programme.

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<sup>7</sup> Bellamy, J., Meppem, T., Goddard, R., Dawson, S., 'The Changing Face of Regional Governance for Economic Development: Implications for Local Government', in *Sustaining Regions* Vol 2, No 3, Winter 2003, Flinders Press, Adelaide, p 7

<sup>8</sup> Bellamy et al (2003)

<sup>9</sup> Lennon, S., O'Neil, W., Spiller, M., 2003 'The Role of Local Government in Economic Development: Findings of a National Survey of Australian Local Government Authorities', in *Sustaining Regions* Vol 2, No 3, Flinders Press, Adelaide, p 42

<sup>10</sup> Beer, A, Maude A, Pritchard, B 2003, *Developing Australia's Regions: Theory and Practice*, UNSW, Sydney, p 263

<sup>11</sup> Information from DOTARS Web Site, [http://www.auslink.gov.au/policy/programmes/r2r/roads\\_to\\_recovery.aspx](http://www.auslink.gov.au/policy/programmes/r2r/roads_to_recovery.aspx).

- The Commonwealth, to ensure this injection of funding is not dissipated, has insisted that State and Local Governments must maintain their own roads spending.
- The programme has recently been reviewed, and the main finding was that the funds provided to councils under Roads to Recovery have been well spent.
- In January 2004, the Australian Government announced a further \$1.2 billion will be provided over a further four years from 2005.
- Funding through this programme assists State Local Government Associations to employ staff to support Local Government in their transport and road activities.

### 2.6.2 Natural Resource Management<sup>12</sup>

The Commonwealth has a National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality (NAP) and a Natural Heritage Trust (NHT) programmes at the regional level. The NAP and the NHT are cooperatively implemented by the Australian, State and Territory Governments in partnership with Local Government.

The NAP and NHT programs are driven by a single regional plan, developed by local communities and supported by Government and the best available science to improve natural resources on a regional scale. Fifty-six regions have been identified covering all of Australia, and a natural resource management plan will be developed for each. In addition, support will be provided to high priority national and statewide activities.

The important role of Local Government is identified in both the National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality (NAP) and the Natural Heritage Trust (NHT) through bilateral agreements between individual States and the Commonwealth. Local Government support is a key component in the delivery of the outcomes of both programs: As community leaders, people in local government are well positioned to promote the integration of natural resource management. Existing Local Government infrastructure and administration can be used to provide local expertise, feedback and support as well as facilitate the delivery of on-ground actions, infrastructure support, regulation and incentive-based systems. Local Government planning laws are integral to sustainable natural resource management. Local governments are often significant land managers.

At its April 2002 meeting, the Council of Australian Governments agreed to support arrangements that include adequate: Local Government representation on regional bodies; Local Government involvement in the development of integrated natural resource management regional plans; and Awareness of regional objectives in local planning.

#### Programme Co-ordination

Working at the whole of State/Territory level are Natural Resource Management Facilitators fully funded and employed by the Australian Government. Regional Natural Resource Management Facilitators are jointly funded by the Australian Government and the States/Territories and employed by NRM regional bodies working in NRM regions. Indigenous Land Management Facilitators Funded by the Commonwealth.

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<sup>12</sup> Information from NRM Web Site, <http://www.nrm.gov.au>.

## Local Government

There are eight Local Government NRM Facilitators, one based in each state and territory. State facilitators are based in the Local Government Association of each State. They are jointly funded by the Australian Government and the Local Government Association in each State and Territory and employed by the Local Government Associations.

These facilitators working at state-wide scale with their primary purpose to:

- engage local government in NRM at the regional scale; and
- promote and disseminate information about Australian Government policies and programs while assisting local government with activities such as natural resource management policy development.

## Funding

While regional bodies and plans are being established, and where a bilateral agreement is in place, Governments are working with communities to provide the support that enables them to tackle natural resource management problems.

This funding is provided in one of two ways:

- Foundation funding: Regional organisations develop proposals to access funds to assist in developing regional plans.
- Priority funding: Regional organisations and state agencies develop proposals to undertake high priority regional activities that need to start urgently.

## Regional, National/State Investments

The Australian and State and Territory Governments direct the majority of funds from the NAP and the NHT to regions for the implementation of Accredited Natural Resource Management Plans. These regional plans guide the development of actions to address regional issues and prioritise the most important issues for action and funding. The Australian and State and Territory Governments assess each plan and accredit it. Once a plan is in place, the regional community develops an investment strategy to help put parts of the plan into action, with funds from the Australian and State Government and other sources such as local government and industry. Community organisations play an important role in developing the plans and investment strategies and carrying them out.

National/State investments cover activities that have a national or state focus, as well as activities that cross over state and regional boundaries and are best dealt with at a broader scale.

## Monitoring and standards

The arrangements for monitoring and evaluation will be outlined in the NHT and NAP Bilateral Agreements developed between the Australian Government and each State/Territory, and will require each State/Territory to develop a Monitoring and Evaluation Implementation Plan. Effective monitoring and evaluation arrangements will also need to be in place at the regional level, as this is a requirement for the accreditation of regional NRM plans. National level documents to assist with setting targets, monitoring, evaluation and reporting on natural resource management.

### **2.6.3 Emergency Management**

The Commonwealth, in recognition of the need for a whole of government approach to emergency management provides national training and funding to support Local Government in their emergency management endeavors.

Some Local Government activities are 100% funded by the Commonwealth. Other activities required a funding partnership between the Commonwealth, State and Local Governed. Within these programmes Councils with low financial capacity can receive exemptions for a funding contribution and their activities are funded by the State and Commonwealth.

### **3. What are the current pressures and emerging trends influencing the conservation of historic heritage places and, in light of these, how can the policy framework be improved?**

#### **3.1 Current Pressures**

- Increasing demand on Local Government to move away from core activities (roads, rates and rubbish)
- Cost shifting by Commonwealth and State Government onto Local Government
- Limitations on government expenditure
- Greater expectation on Local Government to facilitate local markets in order to:
  - Attract people and investment
  - Stimulate tourism
  - Facilitate economic diversification in regional areas

#### **3.2 Emerging Trends**

- Continuing reliance on market based solutions by the Federal Government
- Privatization
- Deregulation
- Regional approach
- Local Government delivering Commonwealth and State policy outcomes on a regional basis
- Joined up Government
- User pays philosophy
- National recognition of the significance of heritage tourism
- Public-private partnerships

### **4. Recommendations for an improved Policy Framework**

In order to strengthen the policy framework and incentives for the conservation of Australia's historic built heritage places that;

- A Commonwealth and State framework is developed for the provision of community information, promotion and awareness for heritage
- Commonwealth and State funding is allocated for provision of an effective network of regionally based specialist heritage advisory services across Australia
- A Framework is developed that ensures Aboriginal heritage places are incorporated into mainstream heritage consideration
- Commonwealth and State funding is allocated to the National State based Local Government Associations for a heritage officers to co-ordinate Local Government State and Commonwealth initiatives
- The Commonwealth develops a national funding model for Local Government that will balance local autonomy and consistent application of national objectives
- The Western Australian State Government addresses the recommendations of the State Local Government Heritage Working Party in relation to:
  - Criteria for the assessment of Local Heritage Places and Areas
  - Statement of Planning Policy for Cultural Heritage Conservation

- Template Local Planning Policy for Heritage – a tool for Local Government for implementing the Local town planning scheme and local planning strategy
  - Basic Principles for MHIs
  - Changes to the heritage related provision in the model scheme text
- The Western Australia State Government develop a new Heritage Bill
- Increased financial assistance is provided to Local Government to facilitate markets for heritage tourism enterprises in order to;
  - Attracts people and investment
  - Stimulate tourism
  - Aid in economic diversification in regional areas