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Debate
Rules
National General Assembly Debating Rules - 2019

1 - Interpretation
1.1 “Assembly” means: The National General Assembly of Local Government as constituted by the delegates present.
1.2 “Member” means: any local government council which is a financial member of and recognised by a state or territory local government association within the Commonwealth of Australia.
1.3 “Delegate” means: any person who has paid the designated administration fee.
1.4 “Voting Delegate” means: any person nominated as the delegate to speak on the behalf of a Member at the Assembly - each Member to be entitled to appoint one voting delegate only for each debate session.
1.5 “President” means: The President for the time being of the Australian Local Government Association who will act as President of the Assembly, or in his or her absence the Vice Presidents of the Association or a person appointed by the President to preside over the Assembly.
1.6 “Debate on Motions” means: Plenary or concurrent debating sessions of the Assembly which are held in accordance with these rules.
1.7 “Meeting” means: Plenary or concurrent debating sessions, forums and symposia of the Assembly which are held in accordance with these rules.

2 - President to Preside
2.1 The President shall preside over the Assembly.
2.2 A delegate wishing to speak shall direct comments to the President.
2.3 A voting delegate moving or seconding a motion or amendment or delegate taking part in a discussion thereon shall address the President.

3 - Resolutions
3.1 Motions will become Resolutions when passed by a majority of voting delegates at the Assembly.
3.2 Resolutions shall be permanently recorded and forwarded to the Australian Local Government Association for consideration and action as deemed to be appropriate.
3.3 Resolutions will be recorded, and will be considered by the ALGA Board and used by the President for any purpose in the interest of local government.

4 - Priority of Speakers
If two or more delegates wish to speak at the same time the President shall decide who is entitled to priority.

5 - President to be Heard
Whenever the President signifies a desire to speak during the Assembly, any delegate speaking or offering to speak is to be silent so that the President may be heard without interruption.

6 - President may call to order
The President shall preserve order and may call any delegate to order when necessary.

7 - Ruling by President
The President shall decide all questions of order or practice and his or her decision shall be final and be accepted by the Assembly without argument or comment unless in any particular case the Assembly resolved that a different ruling shall be substituted for the ruling given by the President. Discussion shall be permitted on any motion of dissent from the President’s ruling.

8 - Point of Order
A delegate who is addressing the President shall not be interrupted except on a point of order, in which event the delegate shall wait until the delegate raising the point of order has been heard and the point of order has been determined after which the delegate so interrupted may, if permitted, continue.

9 - Limitation of Debate
9.1 Except for a mover of a motion who may speak for three (3) minutes, a delegate shall not speak upon any motion or amendment or in reply for a period longer than two (2) minutes without the consent of the President.
9.2 No delegate shall speak more than once on any motion except for the mover who may exercise a right to speak in closing the debate.
9.3 Any delegate of the Assembly who has not already spoken on the motion or amendment under discussion may formally propose: ‘That the question be now put’.
9.4 The President shall not accept the motion ‘That the question be now put’ until at least one delegate has spoken in favour and one delegate has spoken against the motion or amendment.
9.5 If formally seconded, the proposal shall be put without further discussion and, if carried by a simple majority of the voting delegates of the Assembly present, the mover of the question shall have the Right of Reply, after which the motion must be put to the vote.
9.6 The mover of a motion shall be entitled to a Right of Reply. At the conclusion of the reply, the debate shall be deemed to have closed and the President shall put the question to the vote.
9.7 No delegate of the Assembly, other than the mover of a motion when exercising a Right of Reply, may speak more than once to each motion, amendment, or substantive motion unless with the permission of the Assembly and/or the President. A delegate may be invited to speak by the President to explain a matter of a personal nature, or to explain him/herself in regard to some material part of his/her speech which has been misquoted or misunderstood but shall not introduce any new matter or interrupt any delegate in possession of the floor.

10 - Resolutions
Except as otherwise provided in these Rules:
10.1 only voting delegates may move or second a motion or an amendment. (Refer 14: Moving an Amendment)
10.2 motions concerning the affairs of the Assembly shall be passed by a simple majority of those voting delegates present.
10.3 motions on which there is an equal division of votes will be declared lost.

11 - Moving an amendment
11.1 After a motion has been moved and seconded, any voting delegate of the Assembly representing a member may move an amendment. If such amendment is seconded, it shall become the subject of discussion.
11.2 An amendment must be relevant to the motion, and so framed that it forms a sensible alternative proposal. It must not be a direct negation of the original motion.
11.3 No Right of Reply to Amendment
The mover of an amendment shall not have the Right of Reply to the debate on such amendment.
11.4 Substantive Motion
Should the amendment be carried, it then becomes a substantive motion upon which further amendments may be moved, always providing that there shall not be, at one time, more than one amendment before the Assembly.
11.5 Foreshadowed Amendment
Any delegate during his/her speech on an amendment shall have the right to foreshadow a further amendment but such foreshadowed amendment shall not formally come before the Assembly until the motion or amendment before the President has been dealt with. The President may request the substance of the foreshadowed amendment.

12 - Debate
Where there is no debate on a motion that has been moved and seconded the President may put the motion to the Assembly.

13 - Permissible motions during debate
When a motion is under debate, no further motion shall be moved except the following:
• that the motion be amended
• that the speaker no longer be heard
• that the question now be put
• that the Debate on Motions proceed with the next business.

14 - Method of taking votes
14.1 The President shall, in taking a vote on any motion or amendment, put the question first in the affirmative, and then in the negative. Voting will be by use of electronic keypads. In the event of a technical failure of the electronic keypads manual voting cards will be issued to the holders of electronic keypads and a vote will be determined on a show of voting cards.
14.2 At the conclusion of a vote the President must declare the question resolved in the affirmative or the negative.

15 - Division
In the event of the use of voting cards, upon a vote being taken, a voting delegate may call for a division.

16 - Withdrawal of a motion
A motion or amendment may be withdrawn by the mover, with the consent of the Assembly, which shall be determined without debate. No delegate shall speak on a motion after it has been withdrawn.

17 - Quorum
17.1 Determination of a Quorum - A quorum for debate on motion sessions at the 2019 National General Assembly will be set at half the number of voting delegates plus one. The quorum (number) will be declared by the President at the commencement of the debate on motions. This quorum will be determined by the ALGA Secretariat based on the number of councils registered by mid night Saturday immediately prior to the commencement of the NGA. It shall be equal to the number of eligible votes divided by 2 plus 1. For example, if there are X councils registered by mid night Saturday night immediately prior to the commencement of the NGA, the quorum will be set at x/2 plus one. A majority of the quorum will be required to pass a resolution.
17.2 A Quorum Present at Commencement - At the commencement of each debate on motions session the President will determine if the quorum is present. At the commencement of each debating session, the President will invite all voting delegates to record a ‘test’ vote. A total number of ‘test’ votes will be displayed by the system and the
President will determine whether a quorum is present for that session. If the number of ‘test’ votes is equal to or more than x/2 plus one, a quorum will be declared, and voting will proceed.

17.3 Voting to Proceed - If a quorum is not present, a debate on motions will proceed at the discretion of the President. Outcomes of debate on motions when a quorum is not present will be considered as ‘indicative only of the NGA’ rather than a resolution of the NGA when the ALGA Board what determine the action to be taken on Resolutions.

18 - President’s right to vote
For the purposes of these Rules the President, subject to having been nominated as a voting delegate by a Member, shall have one deliberative vote only.

19 - Rescission of Resolution
The Assembly, by two thirds majority, may rescind or alter an adopted resolution.

20 - Special urgent business
At any time during Debate on Motions a voting delegate may, with the approval of a two-thirds majority of voting delegates present, introduce a motion relating to special urgent business which calls for an expression of opinion from the Assembly. In presenting an item of special urgent business a voting delegate shall have sufficient copies of the motion in writing for distribution to all voting delegates present at the Debate on Motions and give prior notice to the President of such intention.

21 - Suspension or amendment of rules
21.1 In case of urgent necessity any of the Rules may be suspended on a motion duly moved and seconded, but that motion shall not be declared carried unless a two-thirds majority of the delegates of the Assembly voting on the motion have voted in favour.

21.2 Any voting delegate moving the suspension of a Rule shall state the object of the motion, but discussion shall not otherwise take place thereon.

22 - Motions

Strategic Motions
For the purpose of efficient and effective debate, motions that have been submitted for debate by councils that are similar in subject matter have been compiled into composite motions. The strategic motions have either been drafted by ALGA or are based on a motion submitted by a council which best summarises the subject matter. Debate will focus on the strategic motions numbered X. Motions numbered X.1, X.2 and so forth (that is, 1.1, 1.2 etc.) are associated motions and will be debated by exception only. If the motion is carried, associated motions are considered to be redundant unless they have been highlighted in advance of the debate and debated by exception.

23 - Resolutions
Motions that are carried at the National General Assembly become resolutions and will be referred to the ALGA Board to inform future policy initiatives and for consideration in the development of future work programs.

24 - Business Paper Notes
ALGA comments have been attached to some motions to indicate that the substantive matter dealt with in the motion is consistent with ALGA current policy. Motions that have been grouped in Section A, at the back of the business paper, are consistent with ALGA policy. It is intended that these motions will be voted upon en bloc to save time to focus debate on motions that re-affirm core ALGA policy or deal with new matters.
Voting Procedure

Electronic keypads will be issued from a separate desk at the registration stand at the Assembly at the following times:

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For Debate on Motions in debate sessions council must select one voting delegate, as only one keypad will be issued per council.

To facilitate issuing of keypads, councils should decide in advance who their voting delegate will be and appoint a representative to collect the keypad on behalf of the council.

Electronic keypads that are lost will incur a $100 charge.

Please note that only councils that are financial members of, and recognised by their State or Territory Association are entitled to nominate voting delegates.
2019

Motions
1
Toowoomba Regional Council, QLD

That the National General Assembly request the Commonwealth Government to initiate a Referendum at the earliest opportunity seeking agreement for recognition of Local Government in the Australian Constitution.

Objective:
Applies across the nation

Key Arguments:
Local Government presently depends on the continued will of the various State legislatures to empower local governments to exist and perform various functions. It seems preferable that the Commonwealth entrench the right for Councils to exist and perform certain roles.

2
Boulia Shire Council QLD, Somerset Regional Council QLD, South Burnett Regional Council QLD, Glen Innes Severn Council NSW

That the National General Assembly calls on the Federal Government to restore Financial Assistance Grants (FAGs) funding to at least one percent of total Commonwealth taxation revenue.

Objective:
Every council in Australia is affected by the ongoing nature of the grant not keeping pace with the actual costs of delivery of services/infrastructure.

Key Arguments:
Financial Assistance Grant (FAGs) program funding is provided under the Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995 (Cth) (the Act). The objectives of the Act (Section 3(2)) state that FAGs are provided for the purposes of improving: a) the financial capacity of local governing bodies; and b) the capacity of local governing bodies to provide their residents with an equitable level of services; and c) the certainty of funding for local governing bodies; and d) the efficiency and effectiveness of local governing bodies; and e) the provision by local governing bodies of services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. FAGs are a critical source of funding for councils, but in relative terms, FAGs has declined by around 43 percent over the past 20 years and now amounts to only 0.55% (2018) of Commonwealth taxation revenue. Recognising this situation is unsustainable, the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) is launching a comprehensive national campaign to restore FAGs funding in the lead up to the next Federal Election. Rather than focus on issues associated with the FAGs methodology, the campaign will focus a suite of resources on the need to restore FAGs funding to at least one percent of total Commonwealth taxation revenue, whilst preserving existing direct funding through partner programs such as Roads to Recovery.

3
Moree Plains Shire Council, NSW

That the National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to request that the Productivity Commission formally enquire into the current allocation mechanism and total quantum of Federal Financial Assistance Grants. The suggested terms of reference of the enquiry are to include, but not limited to:
- The categories of Councils and whether these adequately reflect the variations across Councils,
• The degree to which the current grant formulae correctly represents the differing capacities of Councils to deliver services
• Whether the overall quantum of the grants is sufficient to ensure the long term financial sustainability of local government.

Objective:
Strengthened Local Government Financial Sustainability, in particular Strategy 1.1;

Key Arguments:
Local Government, particularly in regional areas, continues to be chronically underfunded in conducting its core functions. This has not changed in recent times but has been exacerbated by the impacts of rate capping and cost shifting. Lobbying around increased resources from the State governments (and indeed from the Federal government) has proved ineffective. Accordingly, significant benefit is seen in the conduct of a fully independent enquiry by the Productivity Commission who have a broad remit in terms of advising on the most economically efficient and effective approaches to various public policy issues. The responsibilities of local government touch every citizen and resident within the country and are therefore of high public policy importance.

3.1
Bega Valley Shire Council, NSW

That the National General Assembly call on the Federal Government to implement a full review, along with each State and Territory, of the Financial Assistance Grants criteria with a view to allowing regional and rural councils additional funding.

Objective:
Australia should aim to deliver equitable services right across the country regardless of populations size.

Key Arguments:
Regional and Rural Councils are often the only government service in an area and as such are required to carry out of range of functions. Rural councils are often large areas, required to have multiple infrastructure assets to cover its sparse communities and generally has the largest road network of councils. These communities are also unable to generate income like metropolitan councils due to the small rateable land and low socioeconomic background of its community.

4
Cumberland Council, NSW

That this National General Assembly calls on the Federal Government to urgently review the current methodology in calculating the allocation of Federal Assistance Grants, to ensure that no amalgamated Councils are disadvantaged as a result of boundary alterations.

Objective:
To ensure that the allocation of Federal Assistance grants to Local Government are distributed in fair and equitable fashion.

Key Arguments:
As a result of Council mergers in recent years, a number of amalgamated Councils were proclaimed with altered boundaries. This led to altered calculations of Federal Assistance Grants for these newly formed Councils. Cumberland Council is calling on the Federal Government to review the calculation undertaken in allocating the Federal Assistance Grants, as these calculations appear to be flawed or incorrect. This has resulted in significant levels of underfunding for some Councils when compared to other similar Councils and their allocation of Federal Assistance Grant funding.
5

Murrindindi Shire Council, VIC

That the National General Assembly calls on the Federal Government to commit to the funding of Councils through the Financial Assistance Grants (FAGS) Program on set dates each year in order to avoid smaller Councils, particularly small rural Councils, being forced to incorrectly report deficit budgets to their communities.

Objective:
The timing of Financial Assistance Grants can have significant impacts on smaller Councils who are reliant on the grant. For example, in the case of Murrindindi Shire Council, the Grant is equivalent to approximately 13% of our annual income. Early or late receipt of these funds has a material impact on our budgets. This impact can and has resulted in Council reporting unanticipated accounting deficits to its community, leading to a loss in confidence in local government.

Key Arguments:
Councils welcome the Federal Government’s assistance to Councils by way of Financial Assistance Grants. In smaller Councils where the contribution has a significant and material impact, receiving the funds a day earlier than planned, e.g. the last day of a Financial Year, may assist Federal Departments with their financial reconciliations, but can place smaller Councils in a significant deficit position. This can result in misinterpretations and lead to loss of trust in local government by their communities.

6

Wyndham City, VIC

That the National General Assembly calls on the Federal, State, and Territory Governments to engage with ALGA to explore more flexible and sustainable arrangements for debt models and vehicles to fund Local Infrastructure in light of growing community expectations for Councils to increasingly provide more services for less.

Objective:
This motion addresses Key Question 1 in the Future Focused Discussion Paper guide to 2019 NGA Motions.

Key Arguments:
Local governments across Australia have been far more reluctant to consider the use of debt to finance local infrastructure, unlike our State and Federal counterparts.

Added to this reluctance are constitutional and political barriers inherent in Australia’s governance system. Rate capping has also more recently added complexity to the ability of many Local Governments to raise adequate income to renew and build new local infrastructure.

The well-documented gaps in infrastructure across Australia are exacerbated by the above contextual factors. Therefore a policy dialogue led by ALGA on debt funding models and vehicles could start a far more professional and unified understanding of the pros and cons of debt financing. Solving Australia’s infrastructure problems will, after all, rely in part on some form of intergovernmental agreement on debt financing in the future.

7

South Burnett Regional Council, QLD

That this National General Assembly calls on the Federal Government to support an economic stimulus for rural and outer regional Councils by developing a split competitive and allocative model of funding for projects such as the Building Better Regions Fund.
Objective:
National Infrastructure Development National Economic Stimulus

Key Arguments:
The Building Better Regions Fund (BBRF) provides funding for infrastructure projects and community investments to create jobs, drive economic growth and build stronger regional communities into the future. The aim of the BBRF programme is to invest outside of the major capital cities with applications assessed in three categories dependant on the size of the project. The intent of this assessment process is so small projects are not competing with large projects for funding.

Council welcomes this funding but believes that the allocation of this funding could be improved. Larger urban centres have now subsumed the concept of Regional. While it is acknowledged that these centres are worthy of support, Council believes that a more targeted approach might better balance how the funds are distributed. Greater future certainly for infrastructure projects can be achieved by the introduction of a combined competitive and allocative funding model. For example, Councils have all benefited from the allocative model for Roads 2 Recovery. A BBRF programme with competitive and allocative elements would make the programme stronger and deliver better outcomes for all communities.

That the National General Assembly calls on the Federal Government to provide a financial contribution to local government in recognition of its role in the administration of the Australian citizenship program.

Objective:
The Federal Government has accorded local government, as the arm of government closest to the community, a significant role in the Australian citizenship program, through the conferral of Australian citizenship at citizenship ceremonies.

Key Arguments:
Local governments throughout Australia voluntarily conduct several hundred citizenship ceremonies each year, welcoming new citizens as formal members of the Australian community, and in particular members of their own local community. These citizenship ceremonies have significant personal and legal implications, conferring on each person a number of reciprocal rights, privileges and responsibilities as an Australian citizen. All three levels of government are required to be represented at each ceremony via their elected representatives, with the objective of introducing new citizens to Australia’s three-tiered democratic system of government.

The Department of Immigration, Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs administer citizenship ceremonies, whilst local governments that conduct ceremonies are responsible for ensuring that the citizenship ceremonies are conducted as prescribed by the Australia Citizenship Act 2007, Australian Citizenship Regulations 2007 and the Australian Citizenship Ceremony Code.

The Department of Home Affairs states that it has a cost recovery arrangement in place for processing citizenship applications (80,562 conferrals in 2017/18). The 2017/18 Annual Report states that it received $61,986 million for fees associated with citizenship applications with expenses totalling $58,757 million.

There are significant administrative requirements, protocols, rules and responsibilities to be met to ensure legislative compliance when organising and conducting a citizenship ceremony. The administrative resources required are continuing to increase, due to a growth in the number of candidates each year. This requires a significant resource commitment for a local government, with this expenditure as well as the actual ceremony expense incurred directly by each local government.

Given the above, it is considered fair and reasonable that the Federal Government provide a financial contribution to local government in recognition of its role in the administration of the Australian citizenship program.
Forbes Shire Council, NSW

That the National General Assembly calls for the traffic control and insurance costs currently paid by RSL clubs/sub branches to conduct Anzac Day events to be resourced by the Federal Government.

Objective:
Anzac Day is one of the nation’s most significant commemorative days, acknowledging and celebrating the sacrifice Australians have made in war. The tradition of an Anzac Day March dates back to the very first Anzac Day in 1916 which featured a march through the streets of London. Local RSL Branches currently cover the costs of Anzac Day celebrations including community Anzac Day Marches. These costs include insurance and the required traffic control measures. These costs can easily exceed $1,500 and be in tens of thousands of dollars for larger events in capital cities. These costs put immense pressure on RSL branches and puts the tradition of Anzac Day Marches and other Anzac Day celebrations at risk. This financial pressure is being felt by RSL Branches Australia Wide and limits their ability to offer other services to members and the community both on Anzac day and year round.

Key Arguments:
- There are reports of Anzac Day marches restricted to a footpath opposed to a street to reduce the costs of running the event. This for example was a decision made by Cardwell RSL Branch as holding the march on the street would have cost the branch $1500.
- There are reports of RSL Branches opting out of a Sausage sizzle on Anzac Day or a meal to reduce costs. These decisions created a lot of community upset and was considered a sign of disrespect towards the significance of the day as these events were seen as tradition and community centered.
- For RSL Branches in smaller communities especially regional and rural areas there is far less revenue and a much tighter budget for Anzac Day events
- Anzac Day marches are seen as less formal and tend to attract higher levels of community participation including the participation of school students and attracts younger people and families
- The importance of Anzac Day commemoration remains today and there is a need to continue to engage with youth to educate them on the importance of the day and what it represents. It is feared by RSL Branches that if communities cannot hold Anzac Day events the important tradition and significance of the day may be lost in the future.
- Anzac Day celebrations are seen as a community day and a way to show the community’s respect for those who served in war. The structure of the day is steeped in tradition. It is a strong show of respect to veterans and current defense force personnel

Penrith City Council, NSW

That the National General Assembly call on the Federal Government to direct Infrastructure Australia and the Infrastructure and Project Financing Agency to work with state infrastructure providers to identify risks and barriers to sustainable growth of cities.

Objective:
We need better decision making on infrastructure delivery with an emphasis on a longer-term view of benefits. Governments must look at ways to quantify those longer-term benefits by acknowledging the vision for our cities and regions that are experiencing transformative change. There is no doubt that transformational investment is recouped both economically and culturally over many decades – such as the Snowy Mountains Scheme and Sydney Opera House.

Key Arguments:
The Department of Infrastructure, Regional Development and Cities is responsible for the design and implementation of Australian Government’s investment in infrastructure. Whether through City Deals or other mechanisms, it is critical that the Australian government, along with Infrastructure Australia and the Infrastructure and Project Financing Agency works closely with state and territory governments to improve planning approaches, strengthen investment decision-making and evaluation and reform the way we fund and invest in transport infrastructure so we can make the most of our shared investments and improve liveability.
For example, projects to deliver time savings and reduce congestion, must be considered in a long term fashion. Travel time savings provide more efficient movement of people and freight, supporting economic growth.

Candidate projects, such as the Castlereagh Connection in Western Sydney, have the potential to reap significant benefits far beyond their immediate catchment due to their connecting ability to regions, such as Central NSW and in line with the future inland rail plans and new freight precinct at Western Sydney Airport.

11
Maroondah City Council, VIC

That this National General Assembly calls upon the Federal Government to provide a funding stream that can be accessed by Metropolitan Councils for major infrastructure projects.

Objective:
The objective of the motion is to ensure that Metropolitan Councils across Australia are in a far better position to assist with delivering major infrastructure projects, which fits within the theme for the National General Assembly of Local Government Finance.

Key Arguments:
Cost shifting is a constant funding pressure faced by Councils and, in conjunction with the introduction of rate capping, has resulted in Councils making decisions that do not align with community expectations to cover shortfalls in funding to meet increasing service demands and standards.
Maroondah strongly supports the case for the Federal Government to provide a funding stream that can be accessed by Metropolitan Councils for major infrastructure projects.

Background Information:
Prior to the 2016 Federal election Metropolitan Councils could access funding for infrastructure projects through the National Stronger Regions Fund. However, during the 2016 Federal election, the Australian Government announced a new Building Better Regions Fund (BBRF) to support infrastructure and community initiatives in areas outside of major cities (which superseded the National Stronger Regions Fund).

At the present time, Metropolitan Councils across Australia are ineligible under current policy parameters to access this funding stream, which provides grants of between $20,000 to $10 million to support projects which involve the construction of new infrastructure, or the upgrade or extension of existing infrastructure that provide economic and social benefits to regional and remote areas.

The BBRF invests in projects located in, or benefiting eligible areas outside the major capital cities of Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth, Adelaide, and Canberra; with grants being made available through two funding streams:

- The Infrastructure Projects Stream - which supports projects that involve construction of new infrastructure, or the upgrade or extension of existing infrastructure
- The Community Investments Stream - which funds community development activities including, but not limited to, new or expanded local events, strategic regional plans, leadership and capability building activities

12
Toowoomba Regional Council, QLD

That the National General Assembly request the Commonwealth Government to enhance zonal taxation rebates to foster decentralisation of industry and commerce.

Objective:
Applies across the nation
Key Arguments:
Tax measures may incentivise decentralisation of industry and commerce so such choose to locate in places other than the major capital cities.

13
Gladstone Regional Council, QLD

That the National General Assembly supports the Roads of Strategic Importance (ROSI) policy of the Australian Government and the associated future budget commitments.

Objective:
Growth and productivity can be supported on a national level through investment in our key freight roads. However, the significance of the required outlay means investment can only proceed if supported by the highest level of government as a continuing, engaged stakeholder.

While there exists an initial commitment to fund corridors, it is imperative that capital injections continue to be made on an ongoing basis beyond these original works.

Key Arguments:
The Australian Government has pledged to invest $3.5 billion via the Roads of Strategic Importance (ROSI) initiative over a 10-year period. It will be the role of the Department of Infrastructure, Regional Development and Cities to engage with the relevant stakeholders to fully develop specific packages of work. The vision is for improvements in productivity and efficiency on key freight roads via a more reliable, and safe, road network. The improved connectivity will better connect regional communities and facilitate tourism opportunities.

The objectives of the ROSI initiative are to:
- Deliver via a corridor approach
- Fund corridors which primarily deliver improvements to freight movements
- Target corridors which support regional economic growth
- Support partnerships between Commonwealth and state governments with local government and industry
- Where appropriate, support targeted freight road reforms, and
- Support wider national reforms.
- Improved access to regional corridors could also potentially reduce accessibility issues in times of natural disaster.

13.1
Manningham City Council, VIC

That the National General Assembly call on the Australian Government to increase grant funding for local roads that feed into, or are impacted by roads of state or national significance.

Objective:
- As roads of state or national significance are increasingly utilised, local roads are relied on to feed and channel congestion, often is great numbers. As Local Government’s ability to fund road infrastructure is constrained by its general revenue raising capacity, targeted grants are needed to ensure the access and safety of the road network from a national, state and local perspective.
- As major roads are funded as a state or national priority, the projects often impact local roads and targeted grants are needed to achieve the desired outcome for local and commuter traffic across the road network.
- An ALGA study released in 2010 into local road funding estimated that to simply maintain, rather than improve Australia’s local roads up to 2025, an additional $1.2 billion annually is required. Under investment in local roads causes safety risks, impedes development and productivity across the region.

Key Arguments:
- Local government owns and maintains 650,000+ kilometres of local road, spending more than $3.3 billion to maintain a well-managed road system accessible for all communities.
In line with the ALGA Strategic Plan 2017-2020, funding is sought for local roads that feed into, or are impacted by roads of state or national significance. The National Transport Commission estimates 36% of all kilometres travelled in Australia are on local roads. The economic importance of local roads is proven by 30% of medium vehicle kilometres and 16% of heavy vehicle kilometres being driven on these roads. An ALGA study released in 2010 into local road funding estimated that to simply maintain, rather than improve Australia’s local roads up to 2025, an additional $1.2 billion annually is required. The importance of local roads is compounded when local roads that feed into, or are impacted by roads of state or national significance. Under investment in local roads causes safety risks, impedes development and productivity across the region.

13.2
Forbes Shire Council, NSW

That the National General Assembly calls for the Federal Government to include the Newell Highway, which runs through three states, as a Road of Strategic Importance (ROSI) as it is an important freight corridor contributing to Australia’s economic wealth domestically and internationally and commit to a works program including additional rest stops, overtaking lanes, and flood proofing projects.

Objective:
To provide a safe and efficient freight network that is important for Australia now and into the future for the powerhouse of rich agricultural, industry, commercial, and mining sectors along the Newell Highway. The Newell Highway links eastern and central Australia including the Tasmania, Victoria, South Australia, New South Wales, and Queensland, and also provides links to international markets.

The freight task is set to double over the next 30 years and the importance of the Newell Highway is only going to increase, even with the inland rail at full capacity, with the need to move more freight than ever for a growing population. If Australia is going to remain competitive on the international stage then the whole transport solution to which the Newell Highway will be central needs to be considered. The Newell Highway is not only a major freight corridor it is also a premier inland tourist route which forms part of a $20 billion economy for Australia.

The Newell Highway is uniquely positioned to population, markets, and also has the capability to cater for over size and over mass (OSOM) trucks and equipment that is needed to support agricultural, industry, commercial, and mining sectors. Federal assistance can help position Australia into the future through supporting the Newell Highway as a Road of Strategic Importance contributing to Australia’s wealth.

Key Arguments:
- The Newell Highway is a 1,062 kilometer road being the third largest freight corridor in Australia linking north, south, west, and east.
- The Newell Highway is Australia’s premier inland touring route.
- Provides an alternative north south route to the Hume and Pacific Highways.
- The freight task over the next 30 years is going to double and access and capacity of freight routes as the Newell Highway is going to be more important tomorrow than it is today. A recent simple example of this was that during the 2016 Floods there was a conservative loss of $153 million and a loss of two million hours of work over a six week period which is not insignificant; considering that this type of disruption has occurred 10 times over the last 70 years.
- Further that the Newell Highway is continually upgraded to provide a safe and efficient transport link that will take Australia into the next century not only domestically but also internationally.
14
Hobart Council, TAS

That this National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to establish an infrastructure fund for the construction of active transport initiatives including pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

Objective:
An infrastructure fund for the construction of active transport initiatives including pedestrian and bicycle facilities will lead to increased physical activities, decreased congestion and decreased emissions.

Key Arguments:
Cities are increasingly focusing on the need for active travel with the infrastructure required to support the implementation of these policies is expensive and usually prohibits cities from investing in these transport options.

A National Active Transport Fund is needed to provide matched funding to cities for active travel infrastructure projects. A new Active Transport Strategy should be established alongside this fund to outline the strategic objectives of the fund and provide a national plan for prioritisation of projects.

15
Brisbane City Council, QLD

That the National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to develop a national Mobility as a Service (MaaS) framework and establish a fund to support and incentivise cooperation across state and local governments, the private sector and community organisations to deliver better, integrated mobility options for the community.

Objective:
To foster MaaS as a socially inclusive and effective mobility platform. This requires a standardised approach across jurisdictions and service providers to incentivise integration of public, private and community transport options.

Key Arguments:
The emergence of new technologies and transport solutions combined with a shift in attitudes to ownership has seen increasing use of shared transport options. Community members are seeking seamless, end-to-end travel options and there is a need for governments at all levels to support the move towards MaaS.

MaaS is an outcome-based mobility system which can be tailored to meet a person's specific travel needs. This can foster greater use of sustainable transport options such as public transport. To maximise uptake, MaaS requires a single, integrated platform for information and payment across all service elements. This includes conventional public and active transport options along with personalised and on-demand transport options such as ride share.

There will inevitably be different approaches across state and territory jurisdictions as to how successful MaaS is achieved. However, for MaaS to be fully realised, a consistent and harmonised approach across jurisdictions would be beneficial. There are also significant challenges in achieving MaaS that can be addressed at a national level: incentivising the cooperation between public and private transport providers, data interoperability and funding arrangements.

It is therefore suggested that the Australian Government develops a MaaS framework to assist all levels of government in ensuring that future transport networks deliver the best outcome for people living in cities and regions across Australia and provides viable and sustainable options for mobility.
That this National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to develop a policy on the traffic speeds in urban Australia to meet the needs of current and future Australians based on national and international evidence regarding safety, amenity, illness prevention and sustainability. That the policy statement be used to progress speed reform in urban Australia at a Federal and State level.

Objective:

There were an estimated 1143 deaths due to road trauma in 2018. That is 1143 too many. Speed has a direct impact on the risk and severity of road trauma. This a national objective because road trauma impacts every town and city.

It is a national objective because creating an environment where most people can feel safe to walk and ride a bike will have a major impact on the diabetes and obesity epidemic that is facing Australia. It is an national objective because it will assist Australia to meet its emissions targets. Lowered emissions will further improve the health of Australians living in urban environments.

Key Arguments:

Lowering speed on residential streets is the future of our cities. It saves lives in the short term. 90% of people hit by a car at 50km/hr die or are severely injured, 75% of people hit by a car at 30km/hr survive. (Austroads research report AP-R498-15) It saves lives in the long term. Lower speeds on our streets get students on bikes to school and uni. It gets Mums and Dads walking to public transport and biking to work. Every street becomes a street for people as well as cars. Obesity prevented. Mental health improved. Diabetes and cancer lessened. There is a wealth of international and some local evidence demonstrating these benefits.

The current ALGA position in relation to travel speeds on local roads misses the opportunity to address the benefits of widespread speed reform. It states that the ALGA is seeking locally targeted action for “safer pedestrians and cyclists, through speed management and provision of appropriate safety measures such as grade separated paths, pedestrian crossings, clear sight lines” Recommendation 8 from the 2018 Inquiry into the National Road Safety Strategy is to “Accelerate the adoption of speed management initiatives that support harm elimination” The most effective way to accelerate speed management initiatives is through speed reform.

The development of this policy by the Australian Local Government Association is an important step in beginning a coordinated strategic approach to speed reform at a federal and state level. Change occurring road by road, council by council will not achieve the system wide improvements needed to turn around our looming health crisis. What benefits do we get from speed reform? Our amenity improves along with health and safety. Noise lessens. We meet our neighbours. Travel times by car remain comparable. Emissions lessen. It’s affordable, it’s within our reach. It aligns with the objectives of the National Road Safety Strategy. Doing this is an important and necessary step to be “Future Focused” – if we want our children’s future to be a brighter one.

That the National General Assembly call on the COAG Transport and Infrastructure Council to conduct a public review of Trackless Tram technologies from Europe and China as an autonomous, more timely and affordable option to fixed or light rail.

Objective:

This motion addresses Key Question 2 in the Future Focused Discussion Paper guide to 2019 NGA Motions.
Key Arguments:
Trackless trams are being used across Europe and China, and as yet their efficacy has not been assessed in Australia. Advocates point out that the trackless tram costs around $6-$8 million per kilometre. And it can be put into a road system over a weekend.

If overseas experience is replicated in Australia, trackless trams may therefore be a far cheaper and far more timely solution to entrenched congestion problems that are crippling Australia's cities, and increasingly its regional cities.

While larger road, fixed rail and other public transport projects are assessed, prioritised by governments and infrastructure bodies for the next 30 or so years, no assessment of Trackless Trams has been undertaken at the Federal level.

This motion calls for such an assessment to take place so the efficacy of Trackless Trams can be properly considered in future road and public transport planning of all levels of government.

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**18**

Darebin City Council, VIC

That the National General Assembly call on the Australian Government to:

- Fund a $800 million Grey-spot program that provides pedestrian infrastructure in locations where there are older Australian (+65) to address high proportion of pedestrian deaths experience by older Australians.
- Better manage pedestrian injury and risk, through a deeper understanding of the causes of death, injury and the operation of high risk locations.
- Use the Principle Pedestrian Network Tool to map future and potential pedestrian demand across our cities.
- Introduce policies to support the rapid up-take of electric vehicles;
- Introduce a road user based pricing system to stem the reduction in revenue from the fuel excise through the growing adoption of electric vehicles and to facilitate demand management;
- Re-align the proportion of transport federal funding so that the three levels of Government in Australia have a more efficient and equitable match between their public responsibilities and their finances;
- Support funding for other infrastructure to ensure safe walking routes for older pedestrians such as:
  - Rest areas and seats
  - Mobile battery charge stations
  - Crossing refuges
  - Water fountains

**Objective:**

Why is this a national issue and why should this be debated at the NGA?
The Australian Government provides approximately $750 million (2013 – 2022) in Black Spot Funding. This funding targets those road locations where crashes are occurring. The funding provided by the Australian Government does not sufficiently address the need across our cities to provide a greater amount of pedestrian infrastructure. While the national road toll fell last year, the number of pedestrians killed increased, making up 15 per cent of road accidents.

Walking comprises the largest transport mode because almost everyone is a pedestrian at some stage in their journey. However, pedestrians have little or no protection in the event of a collision. Certain groups of pedestrians are particularly vulnerable, such as the elderly. In the last 10 years, more than 400 pedestrians lost their lives on Victorian roads, with one third of pedestrians who lost their lives aged 70 years or over. Most (74%) lost their lives in Metropolitan Melbourne, and most (67%) were male. This trend is repeated nationwide.
Pedestrian fatalities and serious injuries are most common in major cities and towns (including on local roads, and higher volume roads with mixed traffic use). There is a large increase in deaths for collision speeds above around 30 km/h, while the critical speed of impact for serious injury and for particularly vulnerable road users is likely to be less than this.

**Key Arguments:**
The solutions include lower speed environments; separation of pedestrians from other road users; and provision of appropriate crossing facilities.
The fuel excise is a Federal tax. The Australian Government provides significant road infrastructure funding derived from the fuel excise.
Along with vehicle registration fees, the federal government’s largest source of transport-related revenue is the fuel excise. It collects 41 cents in tax on every litre of petrol and diesel sold at the pump in Australia, contributing about $12.6 billion annually.
Most of that money supports for road and transport infrastructure and it is the main way the government recoups the cost of roads from those who use them the most. But the growing adoption of electric vehicles (EVs) means the revenue derived from the fuel excise is reducing.
The Federal Government could introduce a tax based on an odometer reading at the end of each month or quarter. The technology now exist to do this.
Transport emissions have the highest rate of growth of any sector since 1990. With no action, transport emissions are projected to continue growing to 2030 (expected to reach 111 MtCO₂ by 2030). The major source of the problem is cars, responsible for roughly half of Australia’s greenhouse gas pollution from transport. EV’s, provided they are powered by renewable energy, can eliminate these emissions.
The Electric Vehicle Council predicts that under supportive policies EVs could make up 60 per cent of vehicles by the end of the next decade.
Road pricing (also road user charges) are direct charges levied for the use of roads, including road tolls, distance or time based fees, congestion charges and charges designed to discourage use of certain classes of vehicle, fuel sources or more polluting vehicles. These charges may be used as a transportation demand management tool to reduce the social and environmental negative externalities associated with road travel such as air pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, visual intrusion, noise and road accidents.

19
Gladstone Regional Council, QLD

**That the National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to consider appropriate support to regional airports in order to provide affordable travel.**

**Objective:**
Australia’s regional airports are fundamentally a community asset, generally owned and operated by the local government authority in the region.

Regional airports are economically significant in the context of their own region, forming a vital part of the social and economic life of their community and in some cases being the only practical means of access to emergency services. Funding a regional airport can be challenging for a regional airport with deficits is not an uncommon financial result. New industry can be a benefit to a regional town but a preference to engage fly-in-fly-out (FIFO) workers and the resultant increase in the demand for flights can lead to travel price increases that are difficult for long-term residents to tolerate.
Support to regional airports would ensure that communities retain connectivity with other areas.

**Key Arguments:**
Approximately 400 regional airports in Australia are servicing a large area of the country. Of these, in the vicinity of 40% experience budget deficits which must be borne by their local government owners via the ratepayer base.

The regulatory requirements involved in maintaining and operating airports can pose significant financial impacts on the operator and can therefore be considerable when viewed in the context of a local government budget, particularly those with a small revenue base.

Airports upgrades in order to meet future needs can also be challenging as economic conditions can have such a strong influence on predicted needs. Long lead-in times also mean that expansion investments must be made well in advance of the forecasted increases.
Airlines are also reticent about committing to particular activity levels, due to their own competitive pressures and may withdraw from a route rather than persist until new infrastructure is complete.

Local governments, as owners of these assets, are cognizant of the benefits afforded through ownership but must balance this with the ongoing requirement to fund.

Lake Macquarie City Council, NSW

That this National General Assembly call on the Federal Government to move from high-level vision to delivery for connecting major metropolitan centres through high speed rail. This infrastructure would transform Australia, enabling better connectivity between cities, regional centres and international gateways and improving the lives of most Australians.

Objective:
Australia’s regional areas have room to grow and draw in more investment, generate job opportunities and attract workers. Conversely, east coast capital cities are increasingly congested and are facing significant challenges to accommodate growth. Regional centres offer diverse and affordable housing, access to employment and education, and lifestyle opportunities. The strategic planning and delivery of faster rail connections will increase the number of commuters, connect people more easily, and alleviate pressures in Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane.

Faster rail links between our cities and regions can deliver comprehensive economic and social benefits. People living in regional centres can enjoy better access to jobs, education and cultural experiences. Capital city dwellers gain the chance to consider a wider range of housing and lifestyle opportunities. Businesses can choose from a broader range of locations, unlocking land cost savings and enabling new supply chains.

Corridor preservation is now becoming a critical issue for Governments. Further delay will increase the cost of this badly needed infrastructure. Agreements with various state agencies, local governments and landowners need to proceed without delay. Local Government, as the level of government closest to the people, has a vital role to play in the design and delivery of faster rail.

Key Arguments:
Long-distance fast and high-speed rail studies have been undertaken in Australia over many years. Some proposals involve incremental improvement to existing rail networks, such as improvements to bridges, tunnels and gradients, which today reduce speed. Others involve building brand new track suitable for very high-speed rail (i.e. exceeding 250 km/h).

According to the Australian Government’s Faster Rail Prospectus released in September 2017, there are two opportunities to consider.

1. Construct a new or an extended rail line between a major city, and surrounding regional centres, particularly as a means of opening up new locations for housing and employment.
2. Identify opportunities to improve existing regional rail connections, so that existing lines will support faster or higher frequency connections, again with a particular focus on supporting areas of affordable housing and job-rich centres that have good rail connectivity to the city.

The 2017 Budget included a commitment by the Australian Government to investigate improvements to the rail connections between cities and surrounding regional areas through $20 million in funding to support the development of up to three faster rail business cases. This measure supports the continued economic success of cities and their surrounding regions by investigating options for faster travel times through rail upgrades and/or new rail infrastructure. It should be noted that financial support for the development of a business case does not indicate Australian Government support for delivery of a project.

The global infrastructure community has made great strides towards providing passengers with quality rail transport. To date, more than 20 countries, including Spain, Japan and France acknowledge that high-speed trains are an essential technological advancement in passenger travel. These countries have dedicated billions of dollars to developing and operating railway systems, substantially altering infrastructure legislation and policy as well as transport development, planning and design. These countries have experienced the positive, wide rippling effects of high-speed transportation, not
only in technology progression and development, but also effects such as economic growth, increase in employment and efficient access to domestic and international cities.

21

Lockyer Valley Regional Council, QLD

That the National General Assembly call on the Australian Government to establish a fund specifically targeted at those local government areas that are bearing the brunt of significant impacts of the Inland Rail project to partly compensate for their loss, hardship and the long term amenity impacts.

Objective:
The Australian Government has committed $9.3B to ARTC for the delivery of Inland Rail. This railway will operate from Melbourne-Brisbane and will access greenfield corridors for one third of the 1700 kilometre link. Trains, 1.8 km in length, with double stacked containers will travel at speeds of up to 115 km/h.

This project is described on the Australian Government’s building our future website as “…a strategic investment in Australia’s freight future to serve the freight market for the next century and beyond.” Clearly this is a “one-off” national project with identified national benefits for industry, freight forwarders and producers. Just as clearly there will be enormous impacts on communities along the alignment. These communities are currently suffering impacts relating to the uncertainties of the rail alignment and how it will impact their homes and businesses. In the mid-term there will enormous impacts during construction. In the long term communities on the alignment will suffer impacts to amenity, connectivity and safety “for the next century and beyond.”

There is currently no funding mechanism to compensate such communities. A national fund is required that can utilise benefits achieved by Inland Rail to compensate the communities that have significant net dis-benefits.

Key Arguments:
The Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) has been tasked with the delivery of Inland Rail. This Inland Rail Program has been divided into 13 projects across eastern Australia. Two of these component projects, Gowrie to Helidon and Helidon to Calvert, directly involve the Lockyer Valley Region.

While recognising that national benefits can be achieved, the Lockyer Valley Regional Council and the communities that make up the region, have serious concerns over the identifiable project impacts.

The alignment will travel 1700 km from Melbourne to Brisbane via regional Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland. Key design specifications are listed below to help understand the impacts:

- Corridor minimum width 40 metres
- Dual Gauge with axle loads to provide for coal/bulk products
- Clearance to provide for double stacked containers (min 7.1 m above rail)
- Train max speed of 115km/h
- Trains 1.8 km long (potentially 3.6km)
- 24/7 operations

Clearly a 40m wide freight line (suitable for coal trains and 1.8km long, double-stacked, container trains) will have enormous severance impacts. It will divide communities and introduce serious flood threats.

Safety concerns around level and occupational crossings are self-evident when considering a train of those dimensions travelling at 115 km/h.

Given 24/7 rail operations, community concern is palpable around noise, light, dust, smell, vibration and visual amenity. This also raises broad social, community health and wellbeing concerns.

Regional economic impacts identified include: loss of productive land (including good quality agricultural land) direct costs associated with severance such as increased transportation costs, reduction in property values, direct business impacts and loss of Gross Regional Product.
Most infrastructure projects such as roads or passenger rail do have community impacts—but the projects are generally welcomed by communities as they bring community benefits such as improved access or enhanced economic activity. For Inland Rail there will be negligible benefits and significant costs to regions such as ours. While the Inland Rail business case identifies national benefits, some individual communities will suffer the costs without any meaningful benefit.

The project is predicated on a business case that identified national benefits. Like any significant infrastructure the economics are based on net benefits—i.e., that the benefits will outweigh the costs. In economic terms (theoretically) the winners from the project would be able to compensate the losers. There is a net benefit to society. Though it should be noted that this is economic theory rather than practice—losers are not actually compensated and communities such as ours suffer real loss.

The Inland Rail project is a freight transport project on a scale not previously witnessed in Australia. This project is a one-off that will have enormous short and long term impacts. On that basis it is distinguished from normal infrastructure projects. It is considered that special funding needs to be identified for communities on the alignment that will have significant and identifiable net economic losses.

This will enable a component of the national benefits forthcoming from the project to be distributed to those affected communities.

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**Shoalhaven City Council, NSW**

That the National General Assembly calls for:

1. The Australian Government to recognise that the escarpment crossings of the Great Dividing Range connecting the coastal plain highways to the inland highway networks are roads that are of vital importance to the economic development of Australia and the regions.

2. The escarpment crossings that support, or can induce, a significant freight task should be earmarked to be upgraded to ensure compliance for HML freight vehicles and that these key freight links be included in the National Freight and Supply Chain Strategy and National Action Plan.

**Objective:**
To address the inefficiencies in the national freight network specifically:

- by ensuring that the efficient movement of freight from areas of production and processing to areas of further processing or consumption is optimised and
- by making existing and new escarpment crossings HML compliant.

**Key Arguments:**
The Great Dividing Range is Australia’s most substantial mountain range and the third longest land-based range in the world. It comprises a series of plateaus and low mountain ranges roughly paralleling the coasts of Queensland, New South Wales, and Victoria for 3,700 km. Generally, the Great Dividing Range represents a vertical barrier of an average of 800m–1000m. Escarpment crossings are necessary for the movement of freight between the coastal plains and the highway networks of the interior.

The lack of HML compliant escarpment crossings creates inefficiencies by adding significant additional distances and transportation costs to freight tasks. In addition, the lack of escarpment crossings means that transport movement is vulnerable to incidents on the limited number of available routes.

Australia’s freight system is the foundation of its economy and success. It connects Australia to the world and allows domestic freight to be moved between regions and within cities. The movement of freight is a key economic driver for Australia. The domestic freight task increased 50% in the 10 years to 2016 and is tipped to grow another 52% by 2036 (Inquiry into National Freight and Supply Chain Priorities—REPORT).

Freight movement is a key economic driver for the Nation and HML compliant escarpment crossings are integral to the efficient movement of freight in Eastern Australia.
23
Moree Plains Shire Council, NSW

That the National General Assembly call on the Federal Government to provide sustainable funding that will allow Councils to strategically plan for the maintenance, to an all-weather standard local roads, that form essential “first and last mile” links in modern logistics chains for agriculture and other time-sensitive goods. Further, that such funding be based on the productivity benefits of improved logistics together with an assessment of the benefits of a shift to rail, in particular to the Inland Rail project.

Objective:
Infrastructure that meets the needs of local communities, in particular Strategy 3.5

Key Arguments:
Increasing attention is being given to “just-in-time” logistics chains from farm gate to port. The on land component of transportation from farm to port represents the largest single component of production for many agricultural products. Improved international competitiveness requires a substantial reduction in the costs in the logistics chain which can only be achieved through “just-in-time” methodologies supported by parallel digital paths. Current funding models for roads are generally based on travel time savings around private motor vehicles and to date there has been little or no attention given to road funding based on agricultural productivity and strengthening this key export sector. This also touches on the issue of equitable approaches to funding, under Strategy 3.4. While that strategy is South Australia specific, there is considerable merit in supplementary Commonwealth funding being allocated to rural and regional areas where there is a demonstrable benefit to sustaining agricultural productivity and facilitating increased reinvestment in agricultural development.

24
Bega Valley Shire Council, NSW

That the National General Assembly call on the Federal Government to commit to a review of the nation’s freight hubs and analyse where the creation of new/upgraded ports, rail corridors, highway duplications and airports will best service the country, in line with a commitment to decentralisation.

Objective:
To strengthen the ability for regional Australia to grow in line with community needs and expectations. To give action to the often talked about role of regional Australia and decentralisation and the role that needs to be played to move people out of the cities.

Key Arguments:
Regional Australia is often the space for new and innovative businesses and many times these businesses are pulled out of the regions and into metropolitan Australia for better freight logistics.

On top of this, we hear governments talking about the necessity for decentralisation for government departments, for populations and for the better planning and infrastructure spend across Australia but we want policy action on this.

It is timely to review the logistical needs for a growing Australia and look at freight possibilities beyond what we currently know as freight hubs and look towards “what could be” which we hope will better service regional Australia and allow for populations and economic growth in some of our regional areas.
25
Tweed Shire Council, NSW

That National General Assembly calls on COAG to develop a National strategy for the rollout of fast charging stations to facilitate the growth of the electric vehicle market and to encourage their broader uptake by the Australian community.

Objective:
Fast charging stations

Key Arguments:
NA

25.1
Shoalhaven City Council, NSW

That the National General Assembly calls on the Federal Government to support an increase in Electric Vehicles by:

- Mandating an electric vehicle plug type;
- Providing and/or promoting charging infrastructure; and
- Providing a subsidy for Councils who use these vehicles.

Objective:
All Australians should be able to employ and benefit from latest vehicle technology.

Key Arguments:
In January 2019, the Senate Select Committee on Electric Vehicles released its report on the inquiry into the use and manufacture of electric vehicles (EV) in Australia. The ALGA should support all the recommendations of the report to increase the uptake of EVs in Australia. Of utmost importance is that the Australian Government develop a National EV Strategy with targets to boost EV ownership across the country. This includes introducing standards and regulations for battery charging infrastructure, to ensure a national standardised charging network is established across Australia from the outset.

An increase in usage of EVs by Local Government authorities will assist the Federal Government’s published aims of uptake of these technologies and could provide cleaner air, better health, smarter cities, lower transport costs and lower greenhouse emissions, and advocate the use of these technologies across the nation. In 2018, the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) effectively doubled its forecast uptake for EVs in Australia, suggesting that within two decades they could account for more than half of Australia’s car fleet.

As part of the National Electric Vehicle Strategy, the Federal Government needs to acknowledge the role that Local Government could play in advocating for the uptake of the technologies on a local level. Council, being the tier of government closest to the communities they represent, are in an excellent leadership position to demonstrate the utility of such vehicles and then enable confidence in their adoption into mainstream transportation.

A network of compatible charging stations is required, and consumer confidence in the product needs to be improved.

Widening of the plug-in network similarly provides for the adoption of this technology. The easier the usage of EVs, the better and quicker the acceptance will be.

A subsidy for the purchase of EVs by Local Government would offset the current increased costs of EVs and make them comparable in cost for Councils to employ as an alternative to traditionally fuelled vehicles. Councils could help the Federal Government to identify placement of charging infrastructure and in the use of EVs, both test the infrastructure and demonstrate the benefits of EVs by savings to communities at a local level. Council fleets are diverse in nature, distance, usage and function.
25.2
Maribyrnong City, VIC

That the National General Assembly call on the Australian Government to work in partnership with state governments and local governments to improve legislation and provide incentives to government, industry and community to enable autonomous vehicles to be more accessible to the public sector, Australian businesses and all Australians.

Objective:
The introduction of autonomous vehicle transport will have wide ranging impacts across the country, e.g. in relation to road infrastructure and economic development. Local Government will be at the forefront of this change.

Key Arguments:
With the impact of climate change and the need to look for alternate forms of low emission transport, autonomous vehicles and modes of transport, represents the next generation of energy efficient transport. The current barriers to accessing these forms of transport needs to be resolved which includes addressing the current legislative, privacy/data protection issues, infrastructure requirements, consumer protections and financial barriers. Whilst it is acknowledged that steps have been taken at Federal and State government level, successful implementation requires cooperation at all levels, including with local government and businesses.

26
District Council of Streaky Bay, SA

That the National General Assembly calls on the Federal Government to establish a regional focus through the provision of funding models for waste management systems with an aim to develop a more entrepreneurial framework.

Objective:
The management of waste and issues surrounding recycling are high priorities for most Local Councils. With the issues highlighted by the China Sword policy, waste management issues seem likely to be unsolved for the foreseeable future without Local Council’s being able to start working towards managing their own waste and recycling within a sustainable business model and on a regional basis. Most rural and regional Councils are too financially pressured to manage the issue of waste and recycling on their own, though they are highly motivated and would prefer to do so. Recycling plants have been installed in some larger Council areas but smaller Councils would have issues both funding the initial investment and providing enough waste product to produce a viable industry for their local communities.

Key Arguments:
The cost of transport of local wastes to recycling facilities often far outweigh the return on recycling product. Whilst most regional and rural Councils would not be able to implement a singular recycling facility, they may be able to afford smaller plant specific to one type of recycling product. Were Councils able to work on a regional basis it is believed each Council within a designated region might be able to install specific plant that is unique to its needs. As a business enterprise, neighbouring Councils may then be able to “trade” waste to allow each Council to produce its specific product and compliment the products of other Councils in their regions.
That the National General Assembly calls on Federal Members of Parliament in support of actions listed in the MAV “Rescue Our Recycling” action plan being:

**Action 1 - Mandate Product Stewardship**
Introduce mandatory product stewardship for all products that generate waste. Put clear and binding targets within the Product Stewardship Act to drive action by industry. This approach would align with the polluter-pays principle, incentivising designers and producers to take responsibility for the environmental impacts of their products.

**Action 2 - Tackle Consumer Packaging**
In partnership with state and territory ministers, review the National Environment Protection (Used Packaging Materials) Measure 2011 to impose mandatory participation and binding obligations across the consumer packaging chain. As an interim measure, clarify obligations on industry so that it is easier to hold them to account.

**Action 3 - Strengthen the National Waste Policy**
In partnership with state and territory ministers, adopt an action plan for the national Waste Policy that includes firm and ambitious targets and timelines to fast-track our transition to a circular economy.

**Action 4 – Regulate/ Ban Production and Importation of Hard to Recycle Materials.**

**Action 5 – Standardise Package Labelling and Certify Use of Recycled Content**
Mandate adoption of the Australasian Recycling Label for all consumer packaging sold in Australia and adopt a certification system for recycled content in line with the US or European models.

**Objective:**
The Council resolution is both consistent and supportive of the Municipal Association of Victoria’s (MAV) “Rescue Our Recycling” action plan

**Key Arguments:**
In January 2018 Victoria experienced a major disruption to the recycling system resulting principally from a decision by China to no longer receive recyclable material from Australia. The loss of the Chinese market resulted in a significant increase in cost to Councils for processing recycling material.

In February 2019, the Victorian Environment Protection Authority directed SKM, one of Victoria’s largest recycling processors, to cease receiving recyclable materials until the fire risk associated with stockpiled materials is addressed. This has resulted in many Victorian Councils, Moyne Shire included, redirecting recyclable materials to landfill. Environmentally and socially, this is unacceptable and cannot continue beyond the short-term.

These two critical failures of the recycling processing system in Victoria are the result of systemic flaws associated with a catastrophic market failure. Due to the market failure, there is a clear role for governments at all levels to actively respond and establish systems to address this issue.
27.1
Mitchell Shire Council, VIC

That National General Assembly call on the Federal Government to:

1. Transition Australia to a robust circular economy where waste avoidance and enhanced resource recovery is prioritised;
2. Strengthen the current National Waste Policy to ensure the implementation of responsible resource recovery system exist in each state of Australia.

Objective:
The National Waste Policy details that Australia generates 67 million tonnes of waste per annum and that Australia only recovers 58% of all waste generated. Stronger national leadership relating to enhanced policy, development of local reprocessing markets and systems to increase resource recovery and diminish the environmental impacts of consumerism and population growth is critical.

Waste generation is directly linked to growth in the size of population. Waste generation and the lack of systems available to manage waste effectively to protect human health and the environment is one of the greatest environmental impacts of population growth. With Australia’s growth increasing in the last decade by 17.9% and Victorian rate of growth exceeding all other states and territories it is imperative to implement national policy change and investment to better manage and recover and process items within the waste stream that can be recovered.

Equally as important is to drive policy change which reduces the generation of future waste products in the first instance through robust national product stewardship schemes which place the responsibility of sustainable packaging and reducing it from entering future waste streams back on to manufacturers and retailers to reduce the generation of unnecessary and often single use packaging products.

Key Arguments:
Recent events affecting recycling systems, including China’s implementation of its National Sword Policy and growing media interest in waste management practices, have highlighted the growing challenges involved in dealing with the many million tonnes of waste generated in Australia each year. Our current system is neither efficient nor sustainable. National leadership, cooperation and investment in waste and resource recovery solutions is critical to achieve systemic, lasting change.

Local government supports the National Waste Policy to include targets for waste reduction, improved resource recovery, use of recycled content, phasing out of problematic plastics, reduced organic waste to landfill and enhanced data.

Improved consultation with key stakeholders, including local government and the resource recovery sector, especially recycling reprocessors, will need to occur to further develop policy and the associated implementation plan for the various strategies to improve national resource recovery systems and markets.

27.2
Town of Bassendean, WA

That the National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to prioritise, as a matter of urgency, the implementation and achievement of the National Waste Policy 2018 and the Australian Packaging Covenant Strategic Plan 2017 – 2020 by introducing more ambitious targets, and bringing forward existing targets, particularly in relation to household waste avoidance.

Objective:
To achieve the nationally agreed 2025 target for 100 percent of Australian packaging to be recyclable, compostable or reusable requires a strategic, national approach. It is the national interest to set more ambitious targets, particularly those that focus action on household waste avoidance. Capitalising on existing initiatives, including recyclable and compostable packaging directives, to avoid waste through minimal packaging, reuse or recycle strategies would advance the progression of achievements under the the National Waste Policy 2018 and the Australian Packaging Covenant Strategic Plan 2017 – 2020. Local Governments are best positioned to lead waste avoidance initiatives at the local level in order to mobilise, strengthen and deliver immediate, medium and longer term achievements at a national level. This motion aligns with the Australian Local Government Association under the Strategic Plan 2017-2020, including to strengthen the financial
sustainability of local government and promote the role of local government in facilitating innovation and economic development (4.1).

**Key Arguments:**
China’s National Sword Policy restrictions on the importation of waste and recycled materials has significantly impacted Australia’s capacity to rely on this export market for processing and manufacturing of recycled material. Household food packaging and containers represent a significant burden in recycle processing and manufacture, are over-represented in landfill and contribute significantly to the litter discarded along roadways, beaches and other areas of the environment.

The cost impost of waste management is disproportionately carried by Local Governments. At the same time, local government are reliable and robust and understand the community. Local government is able to act strategically to tailor effective approaches that raise awareness, educate and influence individual behaviours; leading to community behaviours that support household waste avoidance. Located at the coalface of our communities, local governments understand community and can identify and mitigate risks and barriers to achieving effective policy implementation. In this way local government is able to work collaboratively and in partnership with industry, business, state and commonwealth governments and the community to deliver waste avoidance achievements.

Providing leadership to work with, carefully position and locate state and commonwealth governments in the local context, local governments are able to create mechanisms for achieving implementation of effective and sustainable policy implementation and waste avoidance achievements across the nation’s households. Local governments are strategically positioned to harness the power and knowledge of communities, to raise awareness and educate households in waste avoidance behaviours by engaging in the language, environment and relationships of community. This makes them leaders in driving change and in working with state and commonwealth governments to effectively tailor policy approaches which will better respond to, meet local needs and garner support from communities. By resourcing local government and working collaboratively and cooperatively together, state and commonwealth governments can achieve more ambitious and earlier targets with respect to household waste. Therefore meeting key objectives under the National Waste Policy 2018 and the Australian Packaging Covenant Strategic Plan 2017 – 2020.

27.3
Port Phillip City, VIC

That the National General Assembly (NGA) calls on the Commonwealth Government to fast track the development and delivery of the National Waste Policy 2018 implementation plan, and for this plan to be fully funded.

**Objective:**
Local government has a long history and expertise in the delivery of waste management services. These services have come under extreme pressure, especially in relation to the recycling of co-mingled materials. This has occurred during a time where public awareness and interest in waste issues is at an all-time high, and Australian communities expect that the products separated for recycling are processed and remanufactured into new products.

A national approach is required to re-balance the waste industry and to transition Australia towards a circular economy for waste, where maximum value is realised for all materials.

As stated in the newly reviewed ‘National Waste Policy 2018’, “Challenges and opportunities in waste management, waste material export, recycling, and plastic pollution in our oceans has led differences in policy and regulation of waste management and resource recovery across Australia are hindering effective action”. Only a national approach can provide the effective action that the Australian population needs urgently to create stability and jobs in the waste sector.

Fast tracking the implementation of this national approach, by finalising the implementation plan and ensuring it is fully funded will help to create certainly in the industry.

**Key Arguments:**
Significant change is required in how we manage waste in Australia. This change must be a coordinated national approach to create a shift toward a more sustainable means of managing waste. We have a new National Waste Policy 2018, that is yet to have an implementation plan designed.

The review of National Waste Policy in November 2018 was welcomed by Local Government; however, action is required now. The newly revised Policy has actions aimed at:
• Setting a national framework for action by governments, business, the waste and resource recovery industries, and communities to achieve sustainable waste management.
• Moving Australia closer to a more circular economy that eliminates waste and improves economic, social and environmental outcomes.
• Helping increase the capacity of resource recycling systems and restore confidence in Australian resource management.

Given the current state of the recycling industry, we urge the Federal Government to fast-track the development of the implementation plan, currently due by mid-2019, to realise the National Waste Policy 2018. This implementation plan needs to be fully costed and funded by the Federal Government to ensure its effective delivery.

27.4
Logan City Council, QLD

That the National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to urgently develop a roadmap, targets and policies (including incentives and legislation) backed by funding, to support and strengthen the growth of an Australian-based circular economy, and create demand for resource recovery.

Objective:
The National Waste Policy 2018 embodies the principles of a circular economy as articulated in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Australia continues to lag behind globally in terms of developing a robust waste management circular economy, with around 40% of waste still being sent to landfill. There is an increasingly urgent need to not only increase the rate of resource recovery in Australia but also create markets within our own shores to support a local circular economy. For Australia to truly impact its low levels of local resource recovery and high volume of waste to landfill, a shift in thinking and legislation is required. This includes providing incentives for resource recovery operators, and mandating that procurement of products by government - at all levels - requires a percentage of recycled/recovered materials (e.g. in road aggregate). The Sydney Morning Herald recently revealed the Australian Government was setting a target of 80 per cent of all waste being recycled or recovered by 2030. This requires strong leadership from all levels of government, backed by funding for incentives and mandated procurement practices.

Key Arguments:
While much talk and strategy development continues, little is changing on the ground in terms of moving away from landfill and developing a robust and sustainable circular economy within our own shores. Recent reliance on overseas resource recovery and recycling markets has shown the challenges in relying on international solutions. Germany, Switzerland, Sweden, the Netherlands, Austria, Belgium, Denmark and Norway send less than three per cent of waste to landfill. These countries achieved this by maximising recycling, separating and processing food and other organic wastes through technologies such as anaerobic digestion, and using other energy-from-waste technologies for the remainder of their waste streams. Australia’s National Waste Policy states that Australia recycles 37 million tonnes of material a year and recovers energy from 2 million tonnes, recovering 58% of all waste generated. However, much of this recovery remains reliant on overseas markets. The policy states: Australia is moving towards a circular economy, with businesses and governments recognising the opportunities waste materials provide and the economic value they retain... By working together to improve waste management, we can create opportunities for jobs, protect the environment and better manage valuable and finite resources.

However, Australia's current domestic recycling and resource recovery sector does not have the capacity to re-process recyclables on a mass scale, nor is there currently the incentives for the private sector to invest in infrastructure to enable that to happen.

Local governments Australia-wide are looking for new ways to recover resources from municipal waste. In South East Queensland, Logan City Council is one of five councils to join together to explore solutions for future waste disposal and resource recovery. (The others are Ipswich City, Redland City, Lockyer Valley Regional and Somerset Regional Councils.) Through an EOI process, the councils hope to identify a range of local and regional solutions, including those that will help drive a circular economy through resource recovery. For councils across Australia to have greater opportunity to redirect municipal waste to resource recovery processes, there needs to be a strong market of providers. National drivers are required in terms of incentives and mandates to influence the markets needed to create and sustain Australian-based resource recovery operations.
(Note: The Queensland Government’s Draft Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy also supports setting minimum recycled-content standards for products, as well as supporting research into new uses and markets for recycled materials.)

27.5
Willoughby City Council, NSW

That the National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:

1. Implement a single use plastic bag ban across Australia.
2. Set mandatory targets for packaging reduction by Industry and implement an Industry education, auditing and reporting program.
3. Support research into reducing synthetic microfibres from entering the environment such as new, low-fibre-loss fabrics or washing machine filters.

Objective:
Government leadership, strategy and action to reduce plastics impacting on marine and coastal environments.

Key Arguments:
Typically, 50 – 80% of the waste that accumulates on beaches, the ocean surface and the seabed is plastic. Plastic debris including plastic bags, are not only an aesthetic concern for our marine environment but also threatens marine fauna through entanglement and ingestion.

Microplastics absorb and concentrate persistent organic pollutants, providing a pathway for entry into the food web and onto the dinner table. Alarming quantities of microplastics have been detected in marine habitats around the world, including our own iconic Sydney Harbour. Synthetic fibres from clothing also make up a significant proportion of microfibers in the marine environment and in the stomach contents and tissues of fish. These fibres are too small to be filtered out by sewage treatment plants, but a filter on washing machines could be a solution.

Councils are already undertaking multiple initiatives to reduce the volume of plastic debris entering our estuaries and ocean, and state governments have introduced education programs to reduce litter this is tackling the issue ‘at the end of pipe’ rather than at the source.

The Australian Packaging Covenant is a great national initiative for industry to reduce the volume of plastic packaging waste produced. However, as a voluntary program, this falls short of achieving the packaging reduction targets required to significantly reduce the quantity of plastics that have the potential to end up in our landfills and waterways. Embarrassingly, the NSW State Government is the only Australian state/territory without a single use plastic bag ban in place.

The Australian Government needs to take strong proactive action to reduce plastics at the source rather than end of pipe to minimise impacts on the marine and coastal environments.

27.6
Manningham City Council, VIC

That the National General Assembly call on the Australian Government to provide greater leadership, funding and regulation on ‘upstream’ waste generation.

Objective:
• Greater leadership, funding and regulation on ‘upstream’ waste generation by the Australian Government is needed to minimise waste and maximise use of recycled material by product designers and producers.
• Although every individual, business and sector has a role to play in waste management, the Australian Government is best placed to provide the vision and framework for a long term sustainable outcome.
• Arguably one of the easiest variables to control is the amount of waste produced ‘upstream’. The Australian Government need to introduce a suite of regulatory measures including national packaging covenants to limit excess packaging of products (reducing waste generation) and incentivise the creation of more local markets for recovered waste (including recycled paper and plastic) to induce a competitive market, for environmental benefits and economic returns.
Key Arguments:

• A year ago China introduced the ‘National Sword’ policy, significantly restricting the tolerance for importing contaminated recyclable materials to a 0.5% threshold.
• Although the National Waste Report 2018, and the Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation advocate for upstream improvements, there is too little regulation to systemically influence behaviour quickly enough. The popularity and reliance of convenience products (and packaging) have intensified the urgency of the situation.
• Local Governments across the country are faced with an impending waste crisis in the face of greatly changing demographics, technology and density. Embracing technology ‘Smart City’ to improve systems, education and technological advancements support waste efficient organisations and municipalities can only achieve so much. Greater leadership, funding and regulation is needed by the Australian Government on ‘upstream’ waste generation to slow the tide on waste.

27.7
Nillumbik Shire, VIC

That this National General Assembly call on the Australian Government to take a lead in supporting and potentially establishing a domestic recycling industry to address the current market failure.

Objective:
The Australian Government to take action to develop and support the stability of the domestic recycling industry so that an uninterrupted service is provided.

Key Arguments:
The message from material recycling facilities following the impact of China’s National Sword Policy is that they are no longer profitable at new commodity prices and existing gate fees. Councils will need to pay more to recycle and will pass these costs onto residents in the community who will feel the impact. Local governments, particularly those that are resource constrained, require significant levels of external funding to address the market failure.

There are a number of ways that Federal government support can help address the current market failure:
• By providing information on the supply and demand profile of waste material over its lifecycle. This will help to identify opportunities and provide an information based to make investment decisions.
• Catalyzing the development of domestic material reprocessing capacity and/or advanced waste and resource recovery technologies.
• Develop and support policy, which increase domestic demand for recyclables, especially glass and plastic. For example minimum recycled content legislation and/or standards.

27.8
East Gippsland Shire, VIC

That the National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government and each state and territory government to ensure that all local governments are supported in transitioning waste and resource recovery management to a circular economy through establishing:
• A national guideline for the collection and reporting of waste and resource recovery data to ensure cross jurisdictional comparison and the monitoring of national targets;
• An investment pipeline for the development of an integrated waste and resource recovery infrastructure systems capable of collecting, aggregating, consolidating and supplying materials to specifications that meet domestic and international market requirements (e.g. compost, aggregate replacement, plastics and paper cleaning and processing);
• A consistent and clear national program of education, behaviour change and enforcement in relation to all aspects of waste and resource recovery management; and
• Regulation to compel manufacturers and wholesalers to work in partnership with all levels of government to establish ‘cradle to cradle’ stewardship systems that enable equitable services throughout Australia.
**Objective:**
In 2018, the Commonwealth Government released the draft ‘National Waste Policy: Less Waste, More Resources’. This Policy highlights the importance of establishing a circular economy through adoption of the following principles:

1. avoiding waste,
2. improving resource recovery,
3. increasing the use of recycle material and build the demand and markets for recycled products,
4. better managing the material flows to benefit human health, the environment and the economy, improve information to support innovation, and
5. guiding investment and enabling informed consumer decisions.

Local government undertakes management of waste and recovered resources on behalf of communities across Australia and will play its role in working with communities and business to transition to a circular economy. Initiatives to support and increase the capacity and capability of local government in working with their respective communities are critical.

**Key Arguments:**
Local Government play a critical role in the provision of affordable waste and resource recovery services to householders, and in some cases to the commercial and industrial sectors as well. This positions these organisation at the ‘end of pipe’ resulting in reactive, rather than proactive stance in meeting the expectations of community, regulation and state and federal policy.

For example, local councils in Victoria are preparing for a ban on e-waste being accepted at landfill, however local councils are not able influence factors such as the design, durability and have limited influence on the end of life value or in most instances cost of these products. Furthermore, rural and regional ratepayers are likely to be impacted disproportionately based on service accessibility and larger overhead costs such as transport.

All local governments aim to provide the best value to ratepayers through their services. A fit for purpose approach is mandatory to achieve the global ‘buy in’ from the communities we serve. Local Government is well placed to be an agent of change in relation to waste and resource recovery and has a significant role in transitioning to a circular economy. However, provision of the required infrastructure that is accessible, enables greater segregation, pre-processing and efficient transportation and supports future product stewardship programs and initiatives requires investment. Knowledge sharing, education and behaviour change to support the proper use of the infrastructure and engaging effectively with community requires resourcing. As does the capture, analysis and reporting of data and information, notwithstanding the lack of consistency and granularity of existing systems requiring significant investment, resourcing and training.

The pace of change within international markets, growing regulatory requirements and the often low levels of influence local government has over these externalities, impacts the efforts towards achieving circular economy. Increasing the capacity and capability to respond to the ‘call for action’ articulated in the National Waste Policy is a high priority and should be a first step in supporting our communities down this path.

27.9
Darebin City Council, VIC

That the National General Assembly calls on State and Territory local government associations to:

1) Meet with the relevant Federal, State and Territory Environment Ministers to:
   i) call for creation of an intergovernmental Recycling Taskforce and $1 Billion Fund to support this essential service which is in crisis, in recognition that the crisis requires a multi-level government response and that as it continues it is putting cost of living pressure on communities and increasing carbon emissions.;
   ii) Establish an Australian-wide accreditation and quality assurance capability for recycling and waste management suppliers to make sure these services meet the environmental and social standards the Australian community expects.
   iii) Turn off the tap of wasted materials every year used in Australia including by putting a price on new materials used in products and packaging and by using those funds to subsidise recycled materials and products so that the economy transforms to value reuse and recycling.

2) Coordinate a National Day of Action to call on the Australian government to turn off the tap of wasted materials packaging that is created every year and used in Australia.
**Objective:**
The ALGA has requested action from the Federal Government on the recycling crisis in 2018. Little change was seen. The ALGA again will debate requesting the Federal Government to take action on the recycling crisis in 2019. If there is continued inaction from the Federal Government to make any significant change to ensure the development of a sustainable and resilient recycling industry, there may be a need for further, ongoing action. This motion enables this action to continue in a united way throughout the year.

**Key Arguments:**
See above for recycling. Australia’s recycling crisis must have immediate attention. State and Territory member bodies have worked separately on this issue during 2018. Co-ordinated national action, moves beyond ‘letter writing’ responses.

27.10
Macedon Ranges Shire, VIC

That the National General Assembly calls for:

- Australian Government commitment to a tripartite approach to the management of the emerging waste crisis with the full engagement of both State and local tiers of Government;
- An urgent round table meeting with appropriate Australian, State and local government representation to discuss the establishment of a joint taskforce to explore innovative mid-term and long-term solutions to Australia’s current and emerging waste crisis; and
- A commitment of Roundtable participants to an equitable financial commitment to the management of current waste crisis issues and research and development of mid to long term solutions.

**Objective:**
The current debate, and actions, concerning waste management have been largely reactionary to market pressures and a changing environment. The Australian Government, State Governments and the local government sector have an opportunity to join together to tackle this issue at a national level thereby maximising outcomes for the Australian community. To effectively meet the needs of the Australian community over the coming years all levels of government need to pool their resources, knowledge and experience to achieve sustainable outcomes. All tiers of government must think and work innovatively and collaboratively.

**Key Arguments:**
- China’s recent ban on foreign waste, and the resulting shortage of recycling options, has been felt across Australia.
- The management of waste is not a new issue but the current circumstances present an opportunity for a new approach to the issue
- There is currently a lack of “joined up” approach by the three tiers of government which results in slower research into and development of effective solutions.
- Through a tripartite approach all aspects, options and solutions can be considered.
- To move to a circular economy, one where materials, energy and other resources are used productively for as long as possible to retain value, maximise productivity, minimise greenhouse gas emissions, and reduce waste and pollution we need to think nationally and globally, not locally.
  - Projects that reduce waste to landfill, improve recycling, sorting and end market value of waste materials
  - Projects that provide material specific resource recovery, reuse and/or reprocessing of waste. i.e. plastics, glass, aggregate, textiles, tyres and municipal residual waste.
  - Development of a waste management system that is more practical and effective than services currently provided.
  - Improvement of an existing waste management system that provides an increased amount of waste diverted from landfill.
  - Development or improvement of a system that assists more waste materials to be used and/or recycled/reprocessed.
  - Implementation and/or reinforcement of positive behavioural waste management practices that help set improvement examples to the community.
  - Practical projects that promote the avoidance of generating waste.
To obtain optimum outcomes for the people of Australia we need to go beyond local government and State borders and explore innovative mid-term and long-term solutions. In doing so each level of Government must bring its financial capability, professional expertise and local knowledge to the table.

27.11
Manningham City Council, VIC

That the National General Assembly call on the Australian Government to provide seed and ongoing funding for local waste initiatives including composting.

Objective:
- To reduce waste levels it is imperative that seed and ongoing funding is allocated to local compostable waste initiatives to incentivise, guide and embed solutions that turn the tide on waste.
- The Federal Government has the mandate and the resources to create a financial and regulatory framework that delivers a sustainable waste management solution for the nation. It is important that the Government guides every Australian, business and sector on their waste usage and provide funding streams for local research and development of future solutions including Alternative Waste Treatments (AWT), waste to energy and composting.
- For example, about half of what the average Australian household throws out is compostable organic material. In 2017-18, only 42% of Australian households had an organics bin service (garden organics only or includes food organics). Further challenges from increased density and apartment living affect adequate participation in the traditional solutions.
- Local government is well placed to trial innovative initiatives as part of the solution to address this crisis. To build ownership at the local level, it is imperative that seed and ongoing funding is allocated to these initiatives to guide, incentivise and embed local waste initiatives to turn the tide on waste. Solutions need to be affordable and sustainable.

Key Arguments:
- Global waste challenges include the rising volume and costs of collection, processing and disposal of waste are again reaching crisis levels. To best service community needs and expectations at a whole of government and coordinated response to waste management is well overdue.
- Innovation, leadership and funding is needed to support individual ownership and commitment to a national solution.
- However, processing and handling of organic waste material is resource intensive and funding is needed to resource, educate and embed good waste management practices.
- About 22% of Australian local governments offer a kerbside garden organics bin service and a further 16% provide some form of kerbside collection service for food organics as well. With the current participation rates in some areas less than 4% of the population, Federal Government is called up on to capitalise as it is cheaper to compost food waste than send it to landfill.

27.12
Darebin City Council, VIC

That the National General Assembly call on the Australian Government to:

a. Declare a climate emergency and commit to quickly transforming the waste and recycling sectors to low carbon to address the emergency and protect vulnerable communities in Australia and around the world.

b. Create an intergovernmental Recycling Taskforce and $1 Billion Fund to support this essential service which is in crisis, in recognition that the crisis requires a multi-level government response and that as it continues it is putting cost of living pressure on communities and increasing carbon emissions.

c. Turn off the tap of wasted materials every year used in Australia including by putting a price on new materials used in products and packaging and by using those funds to subsidise recycled materials and products so that the economy transforms to value reuse and recycling.
d. Establish an Australian-wide accreditation and quality assurance capability for recycling and waste management suppliers to make sure these services meet the environmental and social standards the Australian community expects.

e. Establish Australian Standards for products and materials with recycled content.

Objective:
Waste and recycling services industries, provide an essential service for our community. The recycling industry is facing crisis globally and this is impacting in Australia at all levels of government. It has been more than a year since Australia began to feel the impacts of China’s National Sword Policy, which banned contaminated recycling materials. More than twelve months on, Australia is still facing a recycling industry crisis – recently evidenced by 50% of Victoria’s recycling being unable to be accepted by the recycling processor. The 2018 National Waste Policy and respective State Government’s strategic plans and policy approaches to addressing this issue in the past year, have resulted in little action. The Federal Government is the best placed to act on this issue, however real leadership is required. This issue should be debated at the National General Assembly to request further and decisive action from the Federal Government.

Key Arguments:
We are facing a climate emergency and all waste and recycling emissions must be considered with the climate imperative forefront. The recycling industry is an essential service industry and is not currently being treated as one. One year after the ban on contaminated material to China, the Australian recycling industry is still in crisis. No real action has been seen in the past year from State or Federal Government. Decisive action is needed to create a stable, self-sustaining, robust and resilient Australian recycling industry. Only the Federal government can transform the economic settings needed to stem the tide of packaging and waste that is creating this challenge. State and federal government both need to use their legislative and market development power to achieve lasting, effective and efficient market and natural resource management outcomes. In the short term, stabilising the industry is critical.

The National General Assembly (NGA) call on the Australian Government to develop a national approach to recycling textiles and clothing waste to minimise waste being sent to landfills.

Objective:
Textile and clothing waste is growing problem for local governments nationally. The ABC’s War on Waste: Fast Fashion reported that 6 tonnes of clothing is dumped every 10 minutes in Australia, accounting for more than 500 000 tonnes of textiles and leather products ending up in landfill.


Without clear pathways to recycling clothing, many charities are bearing the costs of sending the unusable clothing to landfill. It was reported by the National Association of Charitable Recycling Organisations in an ABC news story in October 2018 (https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-10-04/charities-spending-millions-cleaning-up-fast-fashion-graveyard/10328758) that charities are spending $13 million per year in landfill charges to dispose of unusable donations. The breakdown of natural textiles and fibres in landfill can contribute to greenhouse gas emissions but the breakdown of nylon and polyester fabrics cause the release of toxins and micro fibres into the environment.

Key Arguments:
Local Government can work proactively with Small and Medium Enterprises, as well as the non-profit sector to devise a coordinated textile and clothing waste management and reduction approach.

Clothing and fashion waste is a global issue that impacts on local governments across Australia. A national approach to reduce the amount of textiles and clothing ending up in landfill is required. The Commonwealth Government can take a lead in supporting and developing a national approach to reducing the global impacts of the fashion industry on our local landfills and our environment.
Taking a lead on this issue in Australia will create opportunities for other nations to get involved. A circular economy for the fashion and textiles industry in Australia will be a win for the environment and the Australian community.

29

Darebin City Council VIC, Yarra City VIC, Blue Mountains City Council NSW, Moreland City Council VIC

That the National General Assembly call on the Australian Government to:

- Declare a Climate Emergency
- Establish a $10 billion dollar national fund for councils to build the resilience of climate change vulnerable communities.
- Commit to providing maximum protection for all people, economies, species, ecosystems, and civilisations, and to fully restoring a safe climate
- Mobilise the required resources and take effective action at the necessary scale and speed across Australia,
- Transform the economy to zero emissions and make a fair contribution to drawing down the excess carbon dioxide in the air, and
- Encourage all other governments around the world to take these same actions.

Objective:
Given that climate impacts are already causing serious loss of life and destroying vital ecosystems, and that global average temperature, atmospheric greenhouse gases, and ocean acidity are already at dangerous levels, action at the federal level to support local government in its climate emergency response is needed.

Only the state and federal governments can support the scale and speed of action that is required to transform legislation, markets and economies sit with these levels of governments.

Key Arguments:
See above.

30

Shoalhaven City Council, NSW

That the National General Assembly call on the Australian Government to establish a consistent framework and provide guidance on measures (including planning controls and asset protection) to be taken by all levels of Government including Local Government with respect to climate-change.

Objective:
This impacts upon all Councils in Australia

Key Arguments:
Local Government authorities across the nation are requiring policy direction from the Federal Government in response to climate-change.
Climate change poses risks to the services, infrastructure and operations of Local Government and Councils have a role in supporting our communities to mitigate and adapt to change to ensure sustainable development, infrastructure and services within our communities.

The Global Risks Report 2019 (14th Edition) published by the World Economic Forum lists the top 3 risks in order of importance as extreme weather events; failure of climate-change mitigation and adaption; and, natural disasters. Failure of climate-change mitigation and action is the second highest risk in terms of impact.
These issues need a nationwide approach. Without such an approach there will be inconsistency and lost opportunities in the management of this key risk to communities across the nation.
30.1
Penrith City Council, NSW

That National General Assembly call on the Federal and state governments to mandate policy transformations that work with and support local government to deliver urban planning outcomes that respond to our changing climate and create resilient cities and towns suited to their local climates.

Objective:
There is a need to improve the quality of our urban development to create resilient towns and cities that are suited to their local climates. All three tiers of government need to collectively work together to improve planning approaches to create an environment that creates place responsive urban design.

Key Arguments:
Modelling from the CSIRO and Bureau of Meteorology shows that every part of Australia will be subjected to increases in average temperatures and a higher frequency of hot days (National General Assembly of Local Government discussion paper, 2019). The effect of this extreme heat is significant – since 1890 major heatwaves have killed more people than bushfires, cyclones, earthquakes, floods and severe storms combined (The Silent Killer: Climate Change and the Health Impacts of Extreme Heat – Climate Council, 2016).

In our towns and city centres these changes will be amplified by the urban heat island effect, where the built environment traps and absorbs this heat. The challenge of heat is identified as one of the single biggest threats to the health and resilience of Sydney, our nation’s largest city. (Resilient Sydney: A Strategy for City Resilience, 2018 and The Greater Sydney Region Plan, A Metropolis of Three Cities – Greater Sydney Commission, 2018). With forecast increases to temperatures across the nation, temperatures will impact on all of our towns and cities.

Likewise, much of Australia will see changes to rainfall patterns, with lower rainfall overall but an increase in intense heavy rainfall (State of the Climate – BoM 2018). This will create an increased challenge for our stormwater infrastructure to deal with flash flooding, and make it harder to establish and maintain green infrastructure across the country.

Currently our city planning systems and legislative framework only provide limited opportunities for governments to create and enforce urban development outcomes, ones that consider our changing climate and ensure that development is suited to the local climate of a town or city. As our cities grow and as our climate changes, we call upon all levels of government to adopt a place based approach that prioritises efficient buildings and homes, and urban design that mitigates urban heat through increased greencover, increased use of light coloured surfaces, increased use of water sensitive urban design principles.

31
Parkes Shire Council, NSW

That the National General Assembly calls upon the Federal Government to:

1. Agree that they have a significant obligation to recognise the scientific consensus that the climate system continues to be affected by known activity, and;
2. That a Minister be appointed, and funds be allocated, to assist Councils in their strategic response to the potential impacts of a changing environment.

Objective:
Many schools of thought exist in relation to severity of Climate Change, however there is general agreement on the need to collect, analyse, interpret and better understand the scientific facts associated with the world’s climate. The latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report suggests there is climate warming and that the rate of warming is increasing at the higher end of existing climate prediction models. There are also climate-change sceptics which would dispute these assertions.

The scientific "precautionary-principle" was developed to cater for matters of science where complete evidence or ideologies are unclear or conflict. In essence, this principle seeks to protect the public from exposure to harm, when scientific investigation has found a plausible risk, and that is the circumstance with the science on climate-change.
It is therefore recommended that Parkes Shire Council put a Motion for debate to the National General Assembly of the Australian Local Government Association to address Climate Change as detailed below.

**Key Arguments:**

n/a

31.1

Brimbank City, VIC

That this National General Assembly, recognising the impact of climate change on local communities around Australia, calls on the Federal Government to adopt and implement evidence-based greenhouse emission reduction targets in line with Australia’s international obligations under the Paris Agreement.

Meeting these targets should include working with Local Government to transition to renewable energy, reduce transport emissions through the promotion of public transport, electric vehicles, and better cycling and walking connections, reduce the amount of waste going to landfill, and maintain and increase Australia’s vegetation canopy cover in both urban and rural areas.

**Objective:**

Australia is among a number of countries currently not on track to meet their unconditional Paris carbon emissions reduction targets by 2030, as found in the 2018 Emissions Gap Report released in 2018 by UN Environment.

**Key Arguments:**

Under the Paris agreement, Australia’s aim is to reduce emissions by 26-28 per cent on 2005 levels.

The Paris emissions reduction targets were set at the climate conference in 2015, and represent the first ever legally binding global climate deal.

The agreement holds 195 signatory countries to a global action plan to keep global warming “well below” 2 degrees Celsius. The 2018 Emissions Gap Report released in 2018 by UN Environment states that “There has been no improvement in Australia’s climate policy since 2017 and emission levels for 2030 are projected to be well above the [Nationally Determined Contribution] target”.

31.2

Maribyrnong City, VIC

That the National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to acknowledge the current and future impacts of climate change and to work with Local Government, industry and communities to reduce waste production and emissions, incentivise all sectors to change to more efficient technologies, increase urban vegetation cover, and increase support for households to access energy efficient upgrades.

**Objective:**

Climate changes is a critical national environmental issue that requires the immediate attention of all tiers of government.

**Key Arguments:**

With independent modelling from CSIRO and the Bureau of Meteorology (among others) predicting an increase in droughts, less rainfall and increasing average temperatures; which has a direct impact on the environment and communities, a joint approach from all tiers of government, industry and community is required to mitigate these future impacts.
31.3
Ballina Shire Council, NSW

That the National General Assembly call on the Federal Government to develop a funding formula that will support the capacity of local governments to implement long-term financial plans for mitigating and adapting to climate change.

Objective:
In 2015, the Commonwealth released its National Climate Resilience and Adaption Strategy, wherein it recognises the need to take a leadership role in positioning Australia to adapt to climate change impacts that may affect national prosperity or security. The Commonwealth recognises the need to work effectively with State, Territory and Local Governments in the development and verification of assessment tools (e.g. risk assessments, including modelling). The Commonwealth acknowledges that much of the climate change science and associated information is too costly for individual businesses, groups or local governments to generate for use in adaptation planning. While many adaptation and mitigation decisions will be based on local decisions and implemented at a local government level, it is clear that the cumulative climate change risks have the long-term potential to undermine the national economy, national security or affect natural systems of national significance. The Commonwealth therefore has a responsibility to ensure Australia is well placed to deal with these risks. Local governments are on the front line in dealing with climate change impacts. They have a critical role to play in ensuring that particular local circumstances are adequately considered in the overall adaptation response. They are also strongly positioned to inform State and Commonwealth Governments about the on-the-ground needs of local and regional communities. The extent of climate change adaptation and mitigation undertaken at a local government level will undoubtedly play a substantial role in addressing the Commonwealth’s climate change strategy.

Key Arguments:
Local governments provide public goods and services and manage public assets. These include, for example, providing flood and coastal protection, emergency management, public health and safety measures, and natural resources protection, as well as managing public assets such as public lands and reserve systems and government-owned infrastructure. Local governments are taking steps to ensure that climate change risks are appropriately factored into their management and funding of public assets. Addressing risks and managing and adapting to climate change impacts is however a long-term obligation, it requires a collaborative effort from all tiers of government because it is clear that the magnitude of climate change adaptation and mitigation works can in many cases exceed the financial capacity of local governments. By way of a case study, Ballina Shire Council commissioned a technical study in 2018 on existing sea defences at Lennox Head, a coastal town in Ballina Shire on the north coast NSW, population around 8,000. The study considered the adequacy of existing protections and the cost associated with their enhancement and renewal. The precursor to this study was the Coastal Zone Management Plan (CZMP) for the Ballina Shire Coastline adopted by Council and certified by the NSW Minister for Planning in 2016. The CZMP is the culmination of various studies and consultative processes undertaken by Council, including a public exhibition process and broad community feedback. The CZMP has identified Ballina Shire’s exposure to a number of coastal hazards:

- Beach erosion due to offshore movement of sand
- Shoreline recession due to sediment deficits
- Coastal inundation resulting from storm events. Shoreline recession generally occurs over the long term whereas beach erosion and inundation is generally the result of a severe storm event or a series of events. Seven Mile Beach at Lennox Head was identified as a priority due to existing public and private infrastructure located in the hazard zones. Preliminary estimates of the future requirement for ongoing protection works at this location are in the order of $29 million:
  - Stage 1 Byron St to Foster St $7.5m
  - Stage 2 Foster St to SLSC $12.5m
  - Stage 3 SLSC to Lake Ainsworth Sport & Recreation Centre $9.0m. Ballina Shire Council needs to plan strategically how and when it will be able to finance the implementation of these major capital works.

However, it is clear that the Council is unable to fund works of this magnitude without it impacting significantly on other programs, unless of course other funding sources are identified. This will inevitably require significant Government financial assistance and further policy development. The predicament for Councils in developing long-term financial plans covering such costly climate change adaptation and mitigation works is that they are unable to reliably factor in external financial assistance as there are currently no secure funding opportunities. The solution therefore would be for Federal Government to develop a funding formula that provides an equitable and long-term commitment of financial support which local governments can then incorporate into their long-term financial plans.
Willoughby City Council, NSW

That the National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:

Establish a National Strategy for climate change adaptation and resilience comprising the following:

1. Processes for the integration of climate change adaptation into local/state strategic planning.
2. A system for gathering, storing and reporting information/mapping on climate change risks, exposure, impacts and vulnerability.
3. Establish sea level rise benchmarks and associated policy and implementation guidelines for Local and State Governments.
5. Strategies for engaging the community and all relevant stakeholders in climate change adaptation projects.
6. Engagement/education materials for communities in becoming climate change resilient, building on work done through the ‘Resilient Sydney’ project.

Objective:
Government strategy on climate change adaptation and resilience.

Key Arguments:
Climate change projections for NSW suggest an increase in maximum temperatures by 0.4-10c by 2030 and hot days above 35 degrees, with more fire danger days in summer and spring, and a variation in rainfall, with rainfall increasing in summer/autumn and decreasing in spring/winter. Climate change will have a significant impact on the operations and management of public assets and the wellbeing of local communities.

(A number of NSW Councils have undertaken local climate change adaptation planning, however there is no consistency across the state. Previously the NSW Government developed sea level rise benchmarks providing guidance and impetus for inclusion in Council policy and on-ground works. The removal of these benchmarks was a step backwards and saw a decline in proactive action and preparedness of some local councils/communities).

A national Climate Change Adaptation Strategy, including sea level rise benchmarks, is needed to guide local government, facilitating adaptation to climate impacts in the coastal zone and enhance community resilience. This Strategy could provide an overarching framework for councils’ Coastal Management Programs. It should be developed via a partnership between national, State and Local Governments and their communities and include a long-term resourcing plan for implementation.

Hobart Council, TAS

That this National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to give consideration to indemnifying Councils that undertake climate change mitigation initiatives.

Objective:
The Australian Government needs to give consideration to providing a nationally consistent approach to climate change, supported by up-to-date good-quality information, to minimise the potential liability that councils are exposed to in their decision making and their actions and initiatives around climate change.

Key Arguments:
Local governments unquestionably have the most significant role in responding to climate change. They are at the forefront of climate change action and have important roles in providing leadership and educating their communities to understand and accept their responsibilities to address climate change. In addition, councils must manage climate change impacts on their assets, services and programs with, in most instances, limited resources in a highly changeable policy landscape and uncertainty of the timing and extent of climate shifts. It is critical that there is a consistent approach to climate change that is
nationally led and engages with councils assisting them to manage the burden of costs and address the inequities that result from limited resources and the different approaches taken across various jurisdictions.

It is imperative that the Australian government sets a high level climate agenda and coordinate State and local governments through ongoing funding and research that is bipartisan and merit based (not competitive). It is further necessary that a centralised advisory body is established to support local government decision making and manage the considerable transitions and disruptions towards low carbon economies.

34
Tweed Shire Council, NSW

That the National General Assembly calls on the Federal Government to establish a Task Force on climate-related Financial Disclosures for inclusions in annual reports for all levels of Government, including Councils. This report is to utilise and be based upon the Financial Stability Boards Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) recommended framework.

Objective:
Climate Change related financial disclosures

Key Arguments:
An extract from the website of the Financial Stability Board states:
Policymakers have an interest in ensuring that the financial system is resilient to all forms of risk. In April 2015 the G20 asked the FSB to consider climate risk and in December 2015 the FSB launched the industry-led Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) to develop recommendations on climate-related financial disclosures. The Task Force published its final recommendations in June 2017.

Disclosure of climate-related financial information is a prerequisite for financial firms not only to manage and price climate risks appropriately but also, if they wish, to take lending, investment or insurance underwriting decisions based on their view of transition scenarios.

The TCFD developed four recommendations on climate-related financial disclosures that are applicable to organisations. The recommendations are structured around four thematic areas:

1. Governance: The organisation’s governance around climate-related risks and opportunities.
2. Strategy: The actual and potential impacts of climate-related risks and opportunities on the organisation’s businesses, strategy, and financial planning.
3. Risk Management: The processes used by the organisation to identify, assess, and manage climate-related risks.
4. Metrics and Targets: The metrics and targets used to assess and manage relevant climate-related risks and opportunities.

35
Bega Valley Shire Council, NSW

That the National General Assembly encourages Councils to join the Climate Council’s Cities Power Partnership or similar program, to share information and foster local government projects to tackle climate change.

Objective:
Key question in Call for Motions Discussion Paper – How can local governments collaborate, build partnerships to address climate change?
Key Arguments:
The Cities Power Partnership is an extensive local government climate action network, comprising over 100 Australian Councils. Its Knowledge Hub, analytics tools, publications and expertise, demonstrate best practice and success stories of how local government and communities can save significant resources and foster renewable energy.

36
Blue Mountains City Council, NSW

That the National General Assembly calls on the Federal Government to work with ALGA to provide advice on how councils across Australia can approach the aim of achieving carbon neutrality in as much of the sector as possible.

Objective:
Being Carbon Neutral is a process that requires ongoing engagement and action to reduce our carbon emissions. Being Carbon Neutral encourages and educates communities in how they can reduce their carbon footprint.

Investigating the feasibility of gaining certification as a carbon neutral organisation under the National Carbon Offset Standard (NCOS) is essential. Local Councils beginning the process of achieving NCOS carbon neutral certification is one tangible action that would contribute to limiting global warming to 1.5°C and avoiding the most severe impacts of climate change.

Key Arguments:
Despite being so vulnerable to the effects of climate change, it is clear that Australia is contributing little to solutions. Limiting global warming to no more than 1.5°C is a formidable challenge, but solutions are available. Solutions include, energy demand reductions, decarbonisation of electricity and other fuels, electrification of energy end use, deep reductions in agricultural emissions, and some form of carbon dioxide removal with carbon storage on land or sequestration in geological reservoirs. Local Councils around Australia can make a significant contribution to limiting global warming by progressing towards the carbon neutrality.

The key premise for carbon neutrality is “First reduce what you can, then offset the remainder”. Carbon offsets are generated by funding projects, which generate an equivalent reduction of Greenhouse Gas emissions somewhere else, such as tree planting.

NCOS is a national standard that drives deep carbon emissions reductions in the organisation, with the ultimate goal being to have zero net emission from Council operations. To achieve this in line with NCOS a council must;
- Measure their carbon footprint annually by a qualified and experienced NCOS consultant;
- Prepare an annual Public Disclosure Summary including an emissions reduction strategy;
- Offset emissions annually that haven’t been eliminated through NCOS approved carbon credits;
- Independently verify the offsets by an independent registered auditor and reporting every three years;
- Certification fees paid annually to the Department of the Environment and Energy.

A number of local councils in Australia have successfully taken this approach and are NCOS certified as carbon neutral.

37
Bass Coast Shire, VIC

That the National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to support initiatives by councils to develop and implement coastal climate change adaptation plans, to improve the sustainability and resilience of coastal settlements vulnerable to increasing climate change risks.

Objective:
This motion is directly related to two of ALGA’s 2019 Federal Election initiatives and within the advocacy document; 5. Protect communities from the impacts of natural disasters, and 6. Support communities with their climate change response.

**Key Arguments:**
This motion directly reflects the 2018 Australian Coastal Councils conference communiqué. Representatives of Australian coastal councils attending the Australian Coastal Councils Conference at Geelong, Victoria, from 21 to 23 March 2018, identified a critical need for additional support from the Australian Government to strengthen the capacity of local government to respond effectively to increasing climate change risks. These risks include widespread coastal erosion, more severe extreme weather events, and rising sea levels. The delegates attending the conference resolved to issue a communiqué concerning this matter.

37.1
Shoalhaven City Council, NSW

That the National General Assembly calls on the Federal Government to respond to the Communiqué developed by the Australian Coastal Councils 2019 Conference.

**Objective:**
The coast and marine environment plays a critical role in the social, economic and environmental fabric of the Nation, and a coordinated national response is required to deal with Coastal Hazards.

**Key Arguments:**
The Communiqué is as follows:
We call on the Australian Government to adopt the following key policy initiatives with the aim of developing a coordinated national response to deal with coastal hazards including rising sea levels, more severe extreme weather events and widespread coastal erosion:

1. Resources to Manage the Coast on behalf of all Australians
Introduce a national funding formula to provide the resources necessary to manage and maintain the coast effectively on behalf of all Australians, including the funds needed to increase the adaptive capacity of councils to address climate impacts.

2. Allocate Financial Assistance Grants to address coastal hazards
Broaden the range of ‘disabilities’ listed under Financial Assistance Grants to include factors such as the vulnerability of coastal areas and communities to coastal hazards.

3. Intergovernmental Agreement on the Coastal Zone
Develop a coordinated national approach to coastal governance through an Intergovernmental Agreement on the Coastal Zone in cooperation with Australian, state, territory and local governments. This would clearly define the roles and responsibilities of each tier of government in relation to coastal zone management.

4. National Coastal Policy
Ensure that the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Coastal Zone forms the basis for a National Coastal Policy which outlines the principles, objectives and actions to be taken to address the challenges of integrated coastal zone management for Australia.

5. Increase funding for Australian climate research programs
Allocate increased levels of funding for Australia’s climate science research programs conducted by CSIRO and other research bodies, including the restoration of funding for the National Climate Change Research Facility or establishment of a similar body and continuing support for CoastAdapt. This is essential to ensure appropriate guidance in relation to responding to coastal hazards is accessible to Australia’s coastal councils so that coastal communities and assets are adequately prepared to address the adverse effects of climate change impacts.

The scale of dealing effectively with coastal hazards along Australia’s vast coastline requires a national approach, national leadership and national funding. We therefore call on the Australian Government to play a lead role in addressing these challenges in consultation with local government authorities, which are knowledgeable in relation to these matters and connected to their communities.
38
East Gippsland Shire, VIC

That the National General Assembly call on the Australian Government to review and clarify the Natural Disaster Funding Arrangements for protective coastal infrastructure having regards for:

- The critical role that protective coastal infrastructure has in ensuring the social and economic functioning of coastal communities;
- The changing climate and forecast increase in the frequency and intensity of coastal storm related events and coastal flooding; and
- The quantum of investment in protective coastal infrastructure across Australia by Local Government.

Objective:
Population settlement in Australia is highly urbanised and predominately focused on our coastal areas with 90% of the population living within 100km of the coast. The Local Government sector plays a significant role in managing the infrastructure that protects our coastal communities. Protective infrastructure plays an important role now in making these places viable and will be increasingly important as the climate changes. The ability of Councils to manage impacts to and replacement of protective coastal infrastructure is likely to be seriously challenged over time. A future focus on protective coastal infrastructure is required.

Key Arguments:
There are significant reforms being implemented in respect to the way that Natural Disaster Funding Arrangements will operate across Australia. This includes continuing refinements to the categories of critical infrastructure and essential public assets that will be eligible for support funding for recovery purposes, with an emphasis for transport and related infrastructure.

While the need to reform the system has been well documented, it is considered that there is a need to better understand the likely future impacts to protective coastal infrastructure as coastal storms and inundation events increase in frequency and intensity for coastal communities.

A significant proportion of the Australian population lives on the coast and coastal towns and cities make a significant contribution to the community and the economy. Many coastal communities are reliant on the existence of protective coastal infrastructure to ensure the functioning of the town. This infrastructure includes Seawalls, protective groins, port infrastructure and training walls.

There is significant investment in this infrastructure by Governments and Local Councils across the Australian Coast. The importance of this infrastructure to the viable social and economic functioning of coastal places requires consideration in the context of the changing climate, changing funding arrangements and clarity is required in respect to how coastal communities and Councils will be assisted to reinstate this critical infrastructure.

39
Willoughby City Council, NSW

That the National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to commit to:

1. The establishment of National Coastcare Program, facilitated by Local Government and/or regional/state government facilitators to support local community coastal conservation and education initiatives; including the development of a long-term financial investment plan and state government grant program to fund Coastcare.
2. Undertake a review of the future costs to local government associated with managing risks and liabilities of coastal hazards.
3. Establish national Coastcare program with funding (funding model provided under the NSW Coastal Management Program with a view to providing long-term funding for local councils and reviewing the appropriateness of the 50/50 grant funding contribution requirement).

Objective:
Adequate funding for coastal management program (CMP) actions and funding established for community based coastal programs and initiatives.

Key Arguments:
Managing current coastal pressures, including population growth, development and coastal hazards, requires a significant increase in state government funding. Present and future pressures arising from sea level rise, increased storm intensity and inundation and flooding will further increase costs to local councils with respect to maintaining and restoring coastal infrastructure assets and recreational assets valued by the community, including beaches, parks and walking tracks; and continued access to the foreshore. Local councils and state government agencies are required to ensure that coastal assets are resilient to climate change impacts in the future.

With the Coastal Management Act 2018 and associated polies now in force, it is prudent for local councils in collaboration with state government agencies, to develop CMPs. Whilst a funding program has been put in place for the delivery of CMPs, it is likely to fall short in terms of the actual funding required for necessary actions/works that these programs may identify and is unable to be applied by some councils due to the 50/50 funding contribution requirement which some councils are unable to match.

Establish national Local council and community coastal programs are important and should be supported. Other states have an active Coastcare program, whilst in NSW this program has faded into obscurity in recent years. Whilst Landcare Australia still supports Coastcare, this program is largely reliant on enthusiastic members of the community to form a group and or volunteer their time.

There is limited funding provided to Coastcare groups and the primary funding options include crowdfunding/fundraising or sponsorship which puts resource/time pressures on volunteers who may not have the skills in this area. Whilst community-based volunteer groups are vital in creating stewardship and connection to the coast it is recognised that community groups require the support and skills of local councils and/or regional/state government agency facilitators to run the program, as well as a stable source of government funding to enable continuity and success of the program.

40
Tenterfield Shire Council, NSW

That the National General Assembly calls for the drought affecting most of the country be escalated to Natural Disaster status, thus facilitating Disaster Recovery finance arrangements to be enacted.

Objective:
The drought knows no state boundaries, nor do rivers and flood plains with the exception of Central and Northern QLD most of Australia is seeing unprecedented drought conditions. Until a multi-tier government approach of ‘emergency’, is made, much effort and time will be wasted.

Key Arguments:
Drought is a National issue that would best be addressed by collaboration across all States and all three tiers of Government.
South Burnett Regional Council, QLD

That this National General Assembly calls on the Federal government to continue to promote opportunities for the sustainable delivery of water for urban, commercial and agricultural development and security of current supplies and calls on the Federal Government to amended Legislation and Regulation to allow for immediate funding for capital projects where business cases have been completed and approved by State Governments and Water Authorities.

Objective:
Essential National Productivity Issue

Key Arguments:
The $1.3 billion National Water Infrastructure Development Fund (the fund) is implementing the Australian Government’s commitment to build the water infrastructure of the 21st century. The fund is accelerating the detailed planning and construction of water infrastructure projects that will deliver new and affordable water, enhance water security and underpin regional economic growth, including irrigated agriculture and industry.

This vital yet scarce resource which provides a fundamental ingredient to foster development and grow urban, regional and rural communities.

The next phase will be the provision of funding for infrastructure provision which is identified during this planning phase.

Brewarrina Shire Council, NSW

That the National General Assembly call on the Federal and State Government Ministers to address the urgent need for action on the Darling Barwon river system to ensure that the supply of safe drinking water and flows for stock and domestic use is the priority at all times, including priority over and above the release of water from dams for large scale irrigation, irrespective of the circumstances in which allocations have been pre-purchased or pre-allocated for large scale irrigation.

Objective:
We have recently observed the release of pre-allocated irrigation water for large scale irrigation at a time when Walgett, Bourke, Menindee and smaller communities along the Barwon Darling river system were either completely out of water or on severe restrictions and major fish kills were regular events.

When questioned on the issue, the NSW Minister for Water responded by saying that there had been no allocation of water and that the 3gl of water a day that was being released was water had been stored in dams from previous storm events. It also seems that recent rain events in QLD were not permitted to flow down the river into NSW despite the desperate need. It seems absurd that the Governments would withhold water that could have been used to provide for stock and domestic use and town water supplies, simply because of the allocation system in place and that water was needed for large scale irrigation

Key Arguments:
Water is a scarce resource and in times of drought the value of water increases the dryer it becomes, however it seems that large scale irrigators do not face the same issues as other farmers reliant on water for on farm use and that town water supplies are of less value then the needs of large scale irrigators.

If the Governments both NSW and QLD, had imposed an embargo on irrigation for three weeks, the water released from State owned Dams and local storm events would have easily filled the town weirs along the river and provided a much needed flush for local stock and domestic use. The fish kills experienced at Menindee and other areas could have been avoided if the priority was changed.
The economic benefits from growing and exporting cotton do not outweigh the benefits from having water for stock and domestic use. It’s time for a rethink on where the priorities are and to make timely, tough decisions in the best interests of the river communities. Just as no one can guarantee rain, Governments should not enter into agreements to provide water for large scale irrigation when there are higher priorities.

Even in Canberra people understand that you cannot drink cotton and that all the money in the world cannot make it rain.

43
Wentworth Shire Council, NSW

That the National General Assembly actively lobby the Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition to call for a Royal Commission into the Murray Darling Basin.

Objective:
Concerns have been raised by both the Productivity Commission and the South Australian Murray Darling Basin Royal Commission about the governance and legality of the Murray Darling Basin Plan and operation of the Murray Darling Basin Authority.

Key Arguments:
Concerns raised by both the Productivity Commission and the South Australian Murray Darling Basin Royal Commission about the governance and legality of the Murray Darling Basin Plan and operation of the Murray Darling Basin Authority, as well as the fact that $8bn of $13bn has been spent, yet so many rivers, towns and communities and related ecosystems are struggling, while irrigation industries and water trade flourishes. There is also concern about the slow pace of metering in the Northern Basin, compliance and outcomes of investigations, despite frequent reports suggesting urgent responses are required. Recent fish kills and investigations also support a whole of Basin perspective, and a focus on connectivity, both of which have thus far been ignored or overlooked.

44
Wentworth Shire Council, NSW

That the National General Assembly call on the Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources and the Murray Darling Basin Authority to do complete accounting of all water storages, including open channels, diversions and on-farm storages holding unmetered or temporary water.

Objective:
There is concern that water is being held outside of the river channel, which would better contribute to connectivity, river health and recharge of groundwater.

Key Arguments:
The trope that water travelling along the river systems to the ends of the rivers is wasted water, which could go to the highest value use. What this value ignores is the need for rivers to flow, flush, provide habitat and restore riverine ecosystems, occasionally flood and provide overbank flows and pulse, to promote fish recruitment and movement across the Basin.
45
Wentworth Shire Council, NSW

That the National General Assembly call for an immediate assessment and complete public reporting of all groundwater Basin supplies, storages and recharge capabilities from the Minister for Agriculture and Water.

Objective:
To provide information and accounting baseline from which all of Australia’s precious groundwater supplies can be monitored and protected.

Key Arguments:
As so many rivers have been dry for so long, there is concern that this will effect the basins’ and aquifers’ abilities to recharge and an increase in use of notes adds to concerns that groundwater is being overused, or not properly or regularly accounted.

46
Toowoomba Regional Council, QLD

That the National General Assembly request the Commonwealth Government to create a national strategy to enhance water security in inland Australia.

Objective:
Applies across the nation.

Key Arguments:
Access to water and security of supply is critical to growth of decentralised inland towns and cities and rural agricultural potential.

47
Wentworth Shire Council, NSW

That the National General Assembly calls on the Minister for Trade to do a complete public report detailing all foreign investment and holdings in Australian water industries, infrastructure and trading operations.

Objective:
This has the potential for a National Security issue where the security of critical human water needs, town water and stock and domestic may be at increasing risk.

Key Arguments:
Concern is that if above a certain percentage, the security of critical human water needs, town water and stock and domestic may be at increasing risk.
Wentworth Shire Council, NSW

That the National General Assembly calls on the Prime Minister, Leader of the Opposition and Water Minister, to recognise concerns from Indigenous groups, traditional owners and custodians that:

1. they are unable to continue cultural practices, due to lack of cultural flows;
2. there is an increased financial impost on high Indigenous population towns for drinking water, where same is unavailable, or of poor quality;
3. a lack of genuine, integrated and informed consultation has been the norm in matters of water management and projects which directly affect native title holders, traditional custodians and Land Council groups and individuals, combined with lack of feedback or Minutes from meetings with Government representatives and agencies; and
4. local First Nations people hold knowledge from greater timelines than current records about flows, floods, movement and interplay of the entire riverine ecology, yet there is a resistance to engaging with that knowledge, utilising the skills and management practices used for many centuries (45,000 years in our region), despite clear desire from most groups to assist and play a more active role in water and land management.

Objective:
There is a sense of continuing colonialism mentality in relation to Water Rights.

Key Arguments:
There is a sense of continuing colonialism mentality, ignoring or paying only lip service to First Nations engagement, in some very dry areas even a feeling of genocide as water is taken away and has been shown to increase crime, decrease health outcomes and reduce opportunities to pass on cultural practices and traditional ceremony.

“There may be Native Title, but they took away our Water Rights“ - Badger Bates

District Council of Streaky Bay, SA

That the National General Assembly calls on the Federal Government to provide incentives for rural / regional Councils to create micro systems which allow for effective and efficient water storage and management systems to accommodate domestic use.

Objective:
Water in general, and particularly in rural and remote areas, is at a premium. Current water allocations and infrastructure centre primarily on urban and peri urban centres. For rural and remote areas to grow they must find answers to the provision of consistent and potable water to their communities. Consistent, reliable and potable water currently makes supporting both tourism and regional growth a difficult, perplexing and costly issue for Local Councils. Assistance in finding innovative ways to capture, manage and distribute this precious and increasingly rare commodity will mean Local Councils will be able to deliver water supply to meet their communities’ increasing demands and expectations now and into the future.

Key Arguments:
New and developing technologies such as desalination and recycling of water may provide answers for Local Councils but Local Councils are not water experts. Local Councils need assistance in finding, understanding and accessing relevant research and technologies to fully understand the environmental and community impacts such technologies may bring in order to assess fully the risks associated with them.

With most rural and remote communities being situated in the most drought prone areas, and with climate change expected to exacerbate the issue of access to water, technologies which allow for: the diversion of run off into storage facilities; the capturing of what rainfall there is; the ability to create potable water; and the ability to recycle water, will all assist rural and remote communities better prepare and be more resilient to the climate change phenomena.
If Local Councils less access to State funded infrastructure such as water pipelines, the burden for maintenance and supply will also be reduced. Local Councils in rural and remote areas then may be able to become water suppliers to their communities, and where neighbouring Councils are too small or unable to install such systems, may find synergies and partnerships which allow for larger Councils to assist and supply those unable to access water from State reservoirs.

50
Willoughby City Council, NSW

That the National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to undertake to:


3. Review BASIX (or equivalent.) to enhance and ensure the best practice implementation of Water Sensitive Urban Design into all new developments and retrofitting into existing developments.

4. Commit to a long-term investment program for the management and maintenance of water infrastructure in cities.

5. Introduce a standard requiring Water Utilities, as a minimum, to undertake secondary treatment of sewage released from ocean outfalls.

Objective:
Government policy direction, and action to achieve sustainable and integrated water management for urban cities.

Key Arguments:
According to the ABS, New South Wales is projected to remain the largest state, reaching over 9 million people by 2027. Sydney is projected to increase from 65% of New South Wales' population in 2017 to 68% in 2027. Population growth will drive a significant rise in the demand for infrastructure services, particularly in capital cities or coastal urban areas.

This population growth will impose additional demands and pressures on aging urban water infrastructure, leading to more frequent overflows, leaks, flooding and shortages. Adding to this is the increased likelihood of extreme weather events such as droughts, storms or floods under a changing climate. Conserving water supplies, managing water services and infrastructure, and ensuring water security will be critical components for NSW.

Aging water infrastructure or assets that are not purpose built to cope with a broad range of conditions are particularly vulnerable, leading to asset failure and increased renewal and replacement costs. It is recommended that a long-term investment program be developed to assist local Councils and water utilities fund the management and maintenance of water infrastructure.

Urban development also increases the area of impervious surfaces within a catchment, generating larger volumes of stormwater runoff. This increases the pressure on stormwater infrastructure and contributes to poor water quality, carrying pollutants such as oils, heavy metals and nutrients to our waterways, which negatively impact on ecosystem and public health. Water pollution hotspots occur throughout the Sydney Coastal Councils Group region caused by stormwater pollutants and or sewer contamination from overflows or ocean outfalls. In order to achieve better water quality for all our waterways, including Sydney Harbour, there needs to be collaboration by local and state government. In recognising the challenges, there is a need to manage water in the urban context as an integrated interconnected system in order to create sustainable, liveable cities.

Many local councils and water utilities are already utilising more efficient, decentralised approaches to conserve potable water and capture stormwater runoff. Increased water efficiency measures can lessen the demand for potable water supplies in urban cities, resulting in greater environmental benefits and a sustainable water supply in the future. To achieve this outcome there needs to be direction, leadership, commitment and investment from government.
51
Tweed Shire Council, NSW

That the National General Assembly calls on the Federal Government to substantially increase levels of funding for the environment in the 2019/20 Budget and to increase future funding for the environment with the aim of achieving at least 5% of the Federal budget’s dedicated to environmental protection.

Objective:
Federal Budget – Environment Protection.

Key Arguments:
According to Australia’s State of the Environment Report 2016 - “The outlook for Australian biodiversity is generally poor, given the current overall poor status, deteriorating trends and increasing pressures. Our current investments in biodiversity management are not keeping pace with the scale and magnitude of current pressures. Resources for managing biodiversity and for limiting the impact of key pressures mostly appear inadequate to arrest the declining status of many species. Biodiversity and broader conservation management will require major reinvestments across long timeframes to reverse deteriorating trends.”

52
Inner West Council, NSW

That the National General Assembly calls on the Federal Government to:
1. review the national limit for PM 2.5 in light of the fact that recent scientific evidence finds there is no safe level of PM 2.5.
2. take immediate steps to protect vulnerable people, for example school children from exposure to PM 2.5 air pollution.
3. release all reports, submissions and analysis including health studies on all major infrastructure projects in the future and to all current projects under construction.

Objective:
Community Health and Wellbeing.

Key Arguments:
The national limit for air pollution PM 2.5 is 8. Scientific research however, finds that there is no safe level of PM 2.5, which is linked to heart disease, cancer, premature birth and can impact lung and brain development. There is also evidence that it may be linked to diabetes, depression in adolescents and dementia. On projects such as the WestConnex toll road project in Sydney levels well above the national level are regularly being recorded.

53
Moree Plains Shire Council, NSW

That the National General Assembly call on the Federal Government to review the current Federal/State disaster arrangements to assess:
• The need to ensure that disaster recovery places most emphasis on infrastructure that improves flood resilience as compared to simple replacement of the infrastructure in place at the time of the flood;
• The appropriateness of the current cost thresholds which trigger disaster arrangements and the degree to which these amounts are manageable by local government;
• The role of the insurance industry in sending price signals, but also the impacts of those price signals on insurance affordability for existing landholders.
Objective:
Infrastructure that meets the needs of local communities, in particular Strategy 3.1.

Key Arguments:
Progress in terms of the meaningful development in Federal/State disaster arrangements has been grindingly slow. Many of the key arguments relating to ensuring that there is a positive benefit in terms of improved resiliency arising from disaster recovery funding have been debated for over 30 years. In addition, the issues of cost – shifting to local government have recently become more acute with councils are needing to decide whether to accept a higher threshold in terms of self – funding in return for some additional flexibility in the utilisation of funds. The Disaster Mitigation Working Group addressed these and other matters in a report issuing in October 2005. The recommendations of that report have yet to receive serious consideration. Given the time elapsed since 2005 it is appropriate to reconsider the matters covered by the Working Group in particular in light of the increased variability and volatility associated with natural events. An earlier version of the group had a more diverse membership which specifically included the Insurance Council of Australia as well as planning professionals. This ensured a wide focus rather than one excessively focused on emergency management and responses. The membership of the Disaster Mitigation Research Working Group would be an appropriate model.

54
Hobart Council, TAS

That this National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to review the National Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements to consider broadening the definition of essential assets to include assets that are currently regarded as non-essential.

Objective:
Climate Change.

Key Arguments:
Australia is profoundly impacted by natural disasters and communities need appropriate and adequate relief and support to recover from these events. With increased intensity of extreme rainfall events projected, like the one experienced by Hobart in May 2018, a review of the definition of what is deemed to be an 'essential asset' under the National Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements requires review.

55
Darebin City Council, VIC

That the National General Assembly call on COAG Energy Council to commit to a Trajectory for the improvement of energy performance in existing homes by the end of 2019, including commitment to work with State, Territory and local governments to:

a. Introduce mandatory disclosure of energy performance for all buildings when they are sold and leased;

b. Mandate minimum energy efficiency performance standard for rental properties, as part of broader standards for what constitutes healthy and habitable rental housing;

c. Develop and implement programs to improve the energy efficiency of all social housing, including community housing;

b. Provide information and equitable incentives for home owners to upgrade their homes, with targeted support for upgrades to people on low incomes; and

d. Progress related measures including obligations on energy companies to achieve annual energy efficiency reductions, disclosure and information obligations on real estate companies and lending institutions.
Objective:
Based on the COAG Energy Ministers recommendation on Friday 8th February the Building Ministers Forum made directions to the Australian Building Codes Board to investigate implementation of the trajectory into the National Construction Code. This is a three-year process that will start this year for implementation in 2022.

The National Construction Code is Australia’s is a national developed set of rules that define buildings standards, performance and methods of construction. The Code is developed through the COAG process and given legal effect by relevant legislation in each State and Territory. While the states and territories can derogate from the code i.e. the Victorian Government was the first to introduce the 6 Star standard – having a national approach and national consistency makes a more cost effective and consistent environment for industry and the consumer.

The current review of the National Construction Code – to be implemented in 2022 – is an opportunity to set higher standards for new homes.

These standards should ensure that new homes need significantly less energy to maintain a healthy living environment, thereby reducing household energy costs and health and safety risks. Improving building efficiency can also make a significant contribution to achieving Australia’s emissions reduction targets.

Key Arguments:
Energy is an essential service, and integral to creating wellbeing and positive health outcomes for people and communities. The poor energy performance of homes, combined with significant increases in energy costs over the past decade, mean that many are now living in homes that are damp, too cold in winter and too hot in summer. Living in these homes, dealing with high electricity bills, and going without the energy, can lead to financial stress, poor health and make it harder to work, to get an education or to be a part of the community.

People on low incomes and/or who rent, have little choice or control over the efficiency performance of their home and major energy-using fixed appliances. They face even greater risk of high energy bills or living without the energy they need.

Improving the energy performance standard of our homes is an opportunity to benefit people and the community through:

- lower energy bills – improvements in energy efficiency requirements of the National Construction Code could reduce average energy costs by up to $900 per household annually, according to a recent study by the Australian Built Environment Council (ASBEC) and Climateworks Australia;
- improved health and well-being - reduce social isolation, illness, stress, and mortality rates, resulting in economic and social benefits including lower spending on health care and services. Respected medical journal The Lancet reported that each year more than 6% of deaths in Australia are due to the effects of cold living environments while a further 1% are heat related.
- improved resilience of the electricity system – reduced burden on the electricity grid, reducing the need for network investment for peak demand, and resulting in lower prices for all, according to ASBEC; and
- reduced emissions – actions to reduce emissions from the building sector could deliver 28 per cent of Australia’s 2030 emissions reduction target, reducing the economic, environmental and health risks of climate change people face.

That National General Assembly (NGA) calls on all Federal political parties, to commit to increased funding and action to address the growing problem of homelessness in Australia, by:

Developing a national plan to reduce homelessness which:

- Places the provision of affordable and social housing at the centre of the plan to reduce homelessness
- Is informed by Housing First principles of providing stable housing and quality, personalised support
- Includes the expansion of evidence based models, which have demonstrated success in ending homelessness, including Youth Foyers and Common Ground
• Establishes specific targets and strategies to reduce homelessness among Indigenous Australian, who currently comprise 20% of Australians experiencing homelessness
• Includes sub strategies for people rough sleeping, women and children escaping family violence, older people, particularly older women, young people exiting care and juvenile justice, people exiting corrections and those with multiple and complex needs.

Developing a national Housing Plan which:

1. Makes affordable and social housing a priority with a long-term national housing plan with associated Ministerial portfolio to drive integrated reform across Government, at all levels of Government and across industry sectors.
2. Delivering housing related taxation instruments, and other incentives, that will increase the supply of affordable housing by attracting institutional and private investment with models like an enhanced ‘build to rent’ scheme that will create affordable private rental housing.
3. Addressing the funding gap between costs and rental income for low income households with subsidised rental, e.g. longer-term ‘NRAS’ type models, access to affordable finance etc.
4. Direct Government investment to grow the supply of community housing, and build the capacity of the community housing sector (e.g. Nation Building program).

Objective:
The 2016 Census data on homelessness showed over 116,000 people were homeless. That is roughly one in every 200 people, and includes families with children, young people, older people, single adults and people with disabilities. Homelessness in Australia has risen 30% in the past decade. Every day 261 people are turned away from homelessness services. A lack of short-term (emergency) housing, long-term social housing and affordable housing remains the biggest obstacle to reducing the number of homeless people.

It’s up to all levels of government to make a concentrated contribution to maintaining and increasing the proportion of social and affordable housing.

Key Arguments:
Australia’s housing affordability crisis has developed over decades. Current housing approaches will not solve what is a multi-layered and highly complex problem. A comprehensive plan is needed with new models and mechanisms that see all three levels of government and all three housing sectors — public, private and community — work to address the affordable housing challenge.

Our social housing system no longer provides a safety valve for an over-heated private rental market. The 2016 Census shows a steady decline in the proportion of households living in social housing over 25 years, from 7.1 per cent of all households in 1991 to 4.2 per cent in 2016.

A study released in June 2018 by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, showed almost 190,000 Australians are on the social housing waiting list.

Australia has one of the smallest proportions of social housing among Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries.

Over the four years to 2015-16, the number of low-income households in rental stress grew more than twice as fast (19.4 per cent) as the overall number of low income households (9.9 per cent). In 2015-16, 47 per cent of low-income renters in capital cities were paying more than 30 per cent of their income in rent.

In Port Phillip this picture is even bleaker, with less than one percent of private rental housing affordable to low income households. Overall, rental housing is unaffordable to all households up to the lower 60-70 per cent of the income range.

The Commonwealth Government, and political parties must commit to improving housing and homelessness outcomes for all Australians across the housing spectrum.
56.1
City of Onkaparinga, SA

That the National General Assembly expresses its concern about the current epidemic of homelessness sweeping Australia and calls on all councils to institute measures to assist by way of introducing or expanding their anti-poverty policies and procedures.

Objective:
Anti-Poverty and Homelessness are national issues.

Key Arguments:
This 2019 motion calls for ALGA to reiterate their stance and bring the motion to the Council of Australian Governments (COAG). We are aware local governments’ experience the effects of poverty and disadvantage and that our libraries and community centres provide essential social support, computer and wifi access and other services to those experiencing hardship.

56.2
Darebin City Council, VIC

That the National General Assembly calls for:
1. a coordinated, national response to housing issues, incorporating all levels of government.
2. mandatory controls in planning schemes, in the form of inclusionary zoning, to require affordable housing contributions as part of private development.

Objective:
Australia has faced a structural housing affordability problem for the last 60 years, whereby the growth in the cost of housing has outstripped growth in wages. In addition, the last 20 years have seen a significant reduction in government investment in public housing. These factors, and others, have resulted in a housing system that is unaffordable for increasing numbers of Australians.

The lack of affordable, secure housing in Australia will have significant social and economic impacts, not only on the individuals affected, but upon our society. There is significant cultural, social and economic importance attached to homeownership, and the inability of increasing number of people to enter the property market will have significant consequences. For example, the Australian government relies on the fact that many retired Australians own their own home in calculating the aged pension. If future generations do not have secure housing, there will be significant impacts upon the ability of the government to support and house older Australians.

Capital cities, particularly Melbourne and Sydney, have been acutely impacted by the lack of investment in public and community housing by successive governments. There are now more than 80,000 Victorians, including 20,000 children, on the waiting list for subsidised housing. Again, this has severe implications for those individuals directly affected, but also for society more broadly.

Key Arguments:
Housing affordability has become a critical issue in contemporary Australian society. There has been a structural affordability problem in Australia for the past 60 years – between 1960 and 2006 house prices increased by 2.7% per annum on average, while incomes increased by only 1.9% per annum. Housing prices have increased far beyond incomes. At the same time, housing supply has failed to keep pace with demand. Concessions and tax exemptions have increased demand, and incentives for housing supply have been limited. Rapid migration and population growth has increased demand for housing, particularly in large cities. There is a lack of institutional investment in Australia’s rental housing market in part because of the lack of tax concessions and low investment returns. Superannuation funds in Australia have invested in the housing market in Europe and the US, but to a very limited extent in Australia.

As house prices rise, increasing numbers of people, particularly those on low and very low incomes, are unable to enter the property market, and rely on private rental housing. In Darebin, 1.9 per cent of private rental stock is affordable to very low income earners. Demand for affordable rental housing adds to demand for government-subsidised housing. There are more than 80,000 people, including 20,000 children, on the waiting list for social housing in Victoria. Many commentators, and
Council, believe housing in Australia is at a crisis point. All levels of government must take action to address declining housing affordability and the severe undersupply of affordable housing.

The planning system has received significant attention for its role in housing affordability, specifically the planning mechanisms that can be used to contribute to affordable housing supply. While such mechanisms have been adopted in some local jurisdictions in Australia, they have not resulted in significant outputs, in part due to a lack of support at the level of state and national government.

There is a need for a coordinated, national response to housing affordability. The policy levers that impact housing affordability span federal, state and local government. A national response should include establishment of a national body that is responsible for forecasting demand and supply and the development of a national housing strategy; tax reform to demand side incentives that work to reduce housing demand; implementation of supply side tax incentives that work to increase supply; significant investment and/or incentives for affordable housing, and finally, implementation of planning mechanisms, such as inclusionary zoning, that ensure that affordable housing is delivered as part of private development.

56.3
Bega Valley Shire Council, NSW

That the National General Assembly call on the Federal Government to encourage State and Territory Governments to include a definition of tiny houses in planning legislation, to offer a flexible, legitimate housing model.

Objective:
Affordable housing is widely recognised as a key national concern yet there has been limited successful programs and the crisis escalates throughout urban and regional Australia. Key Question – how can local government embrace disruption and innovation?

Key Arguments:
The Tiny House movement has gained momentum in Australia in the last six years for affordability and environmental reasons. Australia’s affordable housing crisis requires multiple different solutions. Tiny houses are just one small element but they face legislative impediments. Innovative housing formats should be embraced and dealt with consistently. Tiny houses [on wheels] are actually legal in very few local governments in Australia. They fall between the cracks, legally, and most council planning departments do not recognise tiny homes. Local councils tend to deal with tiny houses as a variation of a caravan and apply laws accordingly, including limiting length of occupancy.

57
Melbourne City, VIC

That the National General Assembly call on the Australian Government to:
1. Recognise the national significance of the financial implications of cladding rectification for building owners.
2. Establish a rectification relief fund, providing access to grants and low or interest-free loans to expedite unsafe cladding removal.

Objective:
All states and territories will be confronted with the need to address the issue of building cladding rectification and in a way that allows this to occur in a timely and co-ordinated manner. A nation-wide approach is needed.

One such avenue is through a government funding model where owners of buildings with combustible cladding have access to grants and low interest or interest-free loans.
Key Arguments:
Following the November 2014 fire at the Docklands Lacrosse building, the Victorian Building Authority conducted an audit of building permits in the Melbourne CBD and surrounds. Other states soon followed with audits and legislative responses to this issue.

In some cases, building owners are able to make a claim against the builder for the cost of rectification, which involves the removal of combustible cladding from buildings. For the most part, building owners are left with the task of paying to rectify their buildings. The private market to provide financing options for cladding rectification is currently immature.

The cost of rectification is one of the biggest obstacles in rectifying buildings with combustible cladding and the Commonwealth is best placed to assist with financing options.

57.1
Blacktown City Council, NSW

That the National General Assembly calls for the Commonwealth and all State Governments to provide a consistent and uniform national regulatory approach with workable methodologies to address the fire safety risks posed by combustible external cladding and the use of non-conforming building products on certain types of buildings.

Objective:
While much of the regulation of building products is in State jurisdiction, a national approach to major safety issues is essential. This matter has been previously on the agenda of COAG, but effective future action has not yet been confirmed.

Key Arguments:
Each State will require legislative response, which must be complementary. In NSW, the Department of Planning and Environment has sponsored legislative reforms to address the fire safety risks posed by combustible external cladding on certain types of buildings under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Amendment (Identification of Buildings with External Combustible Cladding) Regulation 2018 (the Regulation).

NSW has prohibited the use of Aluminium Composite Panels (ACP) with a core comprised of greater than 30% polyethylene by mass in any external cladding, external wall, external insulation, façade or rendered finish in certain types of buildings under the Building Products (Safety) Act 2017. The building product use ban commenced 15 August 2018 and remains in force until revoked.

NSW government agencies have notified councils and provided a list of properties which may have buildings that may have been constructed, or are under construction, utilising potentially non-compliant external combustible cladding.

After consultation with other councils throughout NSW we have become aware that the adopted working procedures and policies relating to the investigation and enforcement action vary considerably, there appears to be little consistency amongst councils and the various stakeholders when addressing the matters associated with external combustible cladding and the use of non-conforming building products.

This lack of regulatory uniformity is amplified at the national level.

Councils across Australia are now seeking further support, assistance and direction from both State and Commonwealth Governments to establish a uniform and consistent workable methodology on any recommended future course of action to address the fire safety risks posed by combustible external cladding and the use of non-conforming building products on certain types of buildings.

57.2
Moreland City Council, VIC

That the National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to make legislative changes for increased accountability of private building surveyors to ensure compliance of building works they have approved.
Lake Macquarie City Council, NSW

That the National General Assembly calls on the Council of Australian Governments to ensure all state and territory governments implement in full the recommendations of the 'BUILDING CONFIDENCE: Improving the effectiveness of compliance and enforcement systems for the building and construction industry across Australia' report by Peter Sherrod and Bronwyn Weir.

Objective:
The key objective of the motion is to adopt all measures outlined in the Sherrod Weir report which will improve accountability of all persons involved in the building construction process which will increase protection for home owners and residents.

Key Arguments:
The report, 'Building Confidence – Improving the effectiveness of compliance and enforcement systems for the building and construction industry across Australia' presents a long overdue guide to much needed reform of Australia’s building regulatory system. Modernisation of the system is crucial if the Australian public is to retain confidence that the built environment in which they live, work and play is safe and compliant with standards all Australians are entitled to expect.

Lake Macquarie City Council advocates a consistent national approach to building regulation in place of the piecemeal jurisdictional approach currently in place. It is particularly noteworthy that in the commissioning of the Sherrod Weir report, a national approach to examining Australia’s building regulation system has been adopted, rather than previous approaches that have focused on individual jurisdictions.

City of Mitcham, SA

That the National General Assembly calls on ALGA to work with the federal government to develop and implement a national framework for mandatory building specifications to reduce non-permeable surfaces and increase domestic rainwater harvesting and re-use, for all new residential developments.

Objective:
This motion, seeks support for a national approach to address local government renewal/upgrade of stormwater infrastructure /assets to meet emerging climate anomalies and community expectations.

Key Arguments:
With increasingly high density of housing there is an increase in additional non-permeable ground surfaces, and rainwater run-off is increasingly directed into metropolitan storm water systems. In many cities the storm water systems do not have capacity for the additional volume and in some areas there are no adequate underground storm water systems leading to flooding. Collection and re-use of rain water will relieve the pressure on local government storm water infrastructure, reduce the amount of rainwater being transferred out to sea and also reduce demand for expensive mains water.
Darebin City Council, VIC

The National General Assembly urges:

1. State and Territory Building Ministers to implement the Trajectory recommendations through the National Construction Code to be implemented in 2022, including:
   a. A step change in minimum energy performance standards to at least a 7-star NATHERS equivalent and the introduction of an energy usage budget (whole-of-building approach);
   b. Enabling renewable energy to contribute to the energy usage budget but not replace energy efficiency measures;
   c. Extend the National Construction Code to include minimum performance standards for fixed appliances;
   d. Strengthen the requirements of the National Construction Code to apply to a greater number of major renovations in existing homes;
   e. Work with industry to ensure effective compliance with minimum standards through skills training and incentives, and improved mechanisms for dispute resolution and redress. Provide a well-resourced regulator with adequate tools and powers to address non-compliance; and
   f. Provide additional funding and assistance to ensure all new social housing complies with minimum energy performance standards.

Objective:
Based on the COAG Energy Ministers recommendation on Friday 8th February the Building Ministers Forum made directions to the Australian Building Codes Board to investigate implementation of the trajectory into the National Construction Code. This is a three-year process that will start this year for implementation in 2022. The National Construction Code is Australia’s is a national developed set of rules that define buildings standards, performance and methods of construction. The Code is developed through the COAG process and given legal effect by relevant legislation in each State and Territory. While the states and territories can derogate from the code i.e. the Victorian Government was the first to introduce the 6 Star standard – having a national approach and national consistency makes a more cost effective and consistent environment for industry and the consumer.

The current review of the National Construction Code – to be implemented in 2022 – is an opportunity to set higher standards for new homes.

These standards should ensure that new homes need significantly less energy to maintain a healthy living environment, thereby reducing household energy costs and health and safety risks. Improving building efficiency can also make a significant contribution to achieving Australia’s emissions reduction targets.

Key Arguments:
Energy is an essential service, and integral to creating wellbeing and positive health outcomes for people and communities. The poor energy performance of homes, combined with significant increases in energy costs over the past decade, mean that many are now living in homes that are damp, too cold in winter and too hot in summer. Living in these homes, dealing with high electricity bills, and going without the energy, can lead to financial stress, poor health and make it harder to work, to get an education or to be a part of the community.

People on low incomes and/or who rent, have little choice or control over the efficiency performance of their home and major energy-using fixed appliances. They face even greater risk of high energy bills or living without the energy they need.

Improving the energy performance standard of our homes is an opportunity to benefit people and the community through:

- lower energy bills – improvements in energy efficiency requirements of the National Construction Code could reduce average energy costs by up to $900 per household annually, according to a recent study by the Australian Built Environment Council (ASBEC) and Climateworks Australia;
- improved health and well-being - reduce social isolation, illness, stress, and mortality rates, resulting in economic and social benefits including lower spending on health care and services. Respected medical journal The Lancet reported that each year more than 6% of deaths in Australia are due to the effects of cold living environments while a further 1% are heat related.
• improved resilience of the electricity system – reduced burden on the electricity grid, reducing the need for network investment for peak demand, and resulting in lower prices for all, according to ASBEC; and
• reduced emissions – actions to reduce emissions from the building sector could deliver 28 per cent of Australia’s 2030 emissions reduction target, reducing the economic, environmental and health risks of climate change people face.

61
Brimbank City, VIC

That this National General Assembly calls on the Federal Government to ensure three year old and four year old children can access quality early education through permanent ongoing funding to the national pre-school and kindergarten program for all four year olds, and progressive extension of the program to cover all three year olds.

The National General Assembly calls on the Federal Government to work with Local Government to ensure proper planning, to have facilities built and upgraded and teachers recruited and trained, to enable the success of the expanded program.

Objective:
Federal funding is only secured until December 2019 for 15 hours of four-year-old kindergarten. The National Partnership Agreement for the National Quality Agenda on Early Childhood Education and Care will also not be renewed. This is the system that oversees regulation and quality assessment of all early childhood education and care services.

Key Arguments:
Kids who have a quality early childhood education do better in life on average.
• In general, kids who attend kinder have a smoother transition to primary school.
• They have better social and cognitive skills compared to children who do not attend kinder.
• On average, kinder kids have superior literacy and numeracy once they’re at school.
• In school and beyond, young people who attend kinder remain ahead of those who don’t attend.
• They’re more likely to finish year 12.
• On average, they experience higher levels of employment, financial security, health and wellbeing.

61.1
Maribyrnong City, VIC

That the National General Assembly urges the Australian Government to improve cost of living pressures for families by:
• Providing an ongoing commitment to fund 15 hours of four year old kindergarten, and
• Matching the Victorian Government’s commitment and investment ($4.8 billion over 11 years) to start kindergarten at the age of 3 years.

Objective:
This motion relates directly to Strategy 2.4 of ALGA’s Strategic Plan 2017-2020 to “… work in partnership with the Commonwealth to deliver human services at the local level with adequate levels of funding”.

Key Arguments:
Ongoing funding for 15 hours of 3 and 4 year kindergarten is essential to bring Australian children up to OECD standards for early learning. In 2012 Australia’s investment in early learning amounted to just 0.1% of GDP, in comparison to an OECD average of 0.5%.

Children deserve the best start in life with a high quality, stable education and the potential for children to miss out due to inadequate funding for kindergarten is high.
There is irrefutable international and national evidence linking early learning attendance to improved student results in numeracy, reading and literacy outcomes. These outcomes are most marked for children from refugee, new arrival and disadvantaged backgrounds.

For every $1 invested by governments in early childhood education, there is a $2 - $4 return through higher wages, more tax revenue, reduced school and criminal justice expenditure.

61.2
Mitchell Shire, VIC

That National General Assembly call on the Federal Government to lead a national discussion through the Council of Australian Government to develop a permanent funding arrangement for the provision of Universal Access to Early Childhood Education services and infrastructure.

Objective:
For the Coalition of Australian Government to develop a permanent funding arrangement for the provision of Universal Access to Early Childhood Education services and infrastructure.

Key Arguments:
The Federal Government’s agreements to the National Partnership on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education has supported states and territories to deliver quality preschool/kindergarten education in the year before school since commencement in 2009. Evidence shows that quality early childhood education programs are best started in the early years of development which leads to reduced developmentally vulnerability and school readiness with enduring benefits over time. Additionally, children from disadvantaged backgrounds are reported to benefit from an increase in positive education and life outcomes. Therefore, a commitment to ongoing funding for universal access to early child education needs to be developed for both services and infrastructure.

61.3
Maribyrnong City, VIC

That the National General Assembly call on the Australian Government to commit capital costs for the construction and renewal of early years infrastructure for a rapidly growing population, and provide future generations with access to 15 hours of both 3 and 4 year old kindergarten.

Objective:
This motion relates directly to Strategy 2.4 of ALGA’s Strategic Plan 2017-2020 to “… work in partnership with the Commonwealth to deliver human services at the local level with adequate levels of funding.”

Key Arguments:
Local government capital investment in kindergarten, maternal and child health and integrated early years facilities is substantial and consistent with a commitment to a universal services platform.

Council’s priority for early years provision is facilitating early years services for a rapidly growing community and renewal and development of contemporary infrastructure that are multipurpose and multi-generational.

Over the next 20 years capital investment of approximately $40m is required for the development of 5 new facilities in the City of Maribyrnong alone to meet the forecast population growth and demand for early years.

This scenario is being played out in municipalities across the country and as such we believe that the Federal Government should commit capital costs for the construction and renewal of early years infrastructure to provide future generations with access to 15 hours of both 3 and 4 year old kindergarten.
62
Wyndham City, VIC

That the National General Assembly calls on the new Federal Government to commit to ongoing funding, highlighting that Australia is already the most expensive country for childcare costs according to the OECD.

Objective:
This motion addresses Key Question 3 in the Future Focused Discussion Paper guide to 2019 NGA Motions as all levels of government have current and future roles in the provision of kindergarten services.

Key Arguments:
Australian Local Governments have taken joint advocacy action to call for continued Federal Government funding off their share of 4 year old kindergarten.

This action has occurred through ALGA’s previous NGA’s, as well as more recently through the I Love Kinder Campaign started by Wyndham City Council and supported by the Municipal Association of Victoria. Other state-based peak bodies and individual Local Governments have also more actively lobbied for continued funding, rather than funding cuts.

Now that all State and Territory Ministers have joined with ALGA to support ongoing Federal Government Funding, and given the recent Federal Election, it is timely for Australian Local Governments to remind the new Federal Government of this critical issue and the need to stop these kindergarten funding cuts.

63
Forbes Shire Council, NSW

That the National General Assembly call on the Minister to provide additional ‘Drought Relief Payments’ to regionally based child care centres and preschools to pass onto families as free preschool places and attendance for 2-5 year olds.

Objective:
Early Childhood Education is highly valued for the development of children and recognised as a vital link for the success of their future education, social skills and ability to contribute to society. With 2.1 million people living in outer regional areas of Australia, 324,000 in remote and 174,000 in very remote areas, with high levels of the population made up of families it is vital these areas are not forgotten or under resourced. It has been reported that 40% of people living in outer-regional areas have issues accessing services so it is clear more needs to be done to improve this.

Key Arguments:
- In September 2018 $3M was announced by the NSW Government as part of a ‘Drought Relief Payment’ package which was to go towards supporting early childhood services in drought affected communities. The funding was used to assist families through transport assistance, fee subsidies and crisis planning with the pre-school. This funding was allocated to services based on enrolment numbers, location and level of drought intensity.
- Currently there is no full subsidy for early education for children under 4 years of age. Drought and the related financial pressure felt by families in farming communities can impact on their ability to afford early education. Enrolments can decrease which impacts the services available and their ability to continue to operate, employ staff and make continued improvements which in turn impacts the local community. This also has long term implications for socialisation and learning in children.
- Regional areas of Australia are recognised as one of the most expensive places for early childhood education, funding to alleviate these costs and create a more even playing field is required. Making early education most accessible for families also reduces the gap between services and education quality between city and country areas.
That the National General Assembly (NGA) calls on the Federal Government to reverse its cuts to (and fully fund) the Status Resolution Support Services (SRSS) program.

Objective:
Many Councils are concerned by funding cuts to the SRSS program by the Commonwealth Government, as it will cut income and case management support of many people seeking asylum and dramatically increase the demand for support at the local municipality level. The decision to cut SRSS will apply across Australia.

Key Arguments:
Since 1993 the Federal Government has financially supported people while their claim for asylum is being considered. This program is now called the Status Resolution Support Service (SRSS) program. It provides a basic living allowance (typically 89% of Newstart allowance – currently equating to $247 a week), casework support and access to torture and trauma counselling. It is delivered by not-for-profit agencies across Australia and is also used to support other vulnerable migrants in need.

In August 2017, the Home Affairs Department reduced those able to access the program, including people studying English for employment. As a result of a further eligibility change on 1 May 2018, SRSS asylum seeking recipients who are assessed as being job ready will start exiting the program. The Federal Government maintains the program is designed for short-term, tailored support and that asylum seekers who have work rights, and are considered ‘job ready’, should be obliged to work.

In July 2018, the Refugee Council of Australia estimated that proposed changes to the SRSS has left 7,500 people across Australia hungry and homeless. Loss of income and case management support will be accentuated by the uncertainty of their status in Australia, language and cultural barriers, and the effects of torture and trauma. It is counterproductive to force people into being homeless and hungry when most are likely to be in Australia for the long-term.

States, local communities and charities will bear the brunt of the consequences of these changes: overstretched agencies will see an increase in people seeking emergency relief for food, clothing, blankets and support to pay rent. Housing and homelessness services will see more people. For example, in the City of Port Phillip service providers like Launch Housing are currently turning away more than 50 percent of people who need crisis accommodation. This situation will get worse as the changes to SRSS take effect.

64.1
Cumberland Council, NSW

That this National General Assembly of Local Government calls on the Federal Government to urgently review the current restrictive eligibility requirements for the Status Resolution Support Scheme with a view to restoring access to this program to all people seeking asylum until a resolution of their status is complete.

Objective:
To ensure that a universal safety net is available to all people in Australia which provides access to a basic form of income for housing, medications and food.

Key Arguments:
In 2018 the Australian Department of Home Affairs changed the eligibility to its Status Resolution Support Service (SRSS) which meant that a significant number of people seeking asylum in Australia lost access to basic income assistance for housing and food, a caseworker and torture and trauma counselling.

The SRSS program is the only Government-funded social security support available for people seeking asylum. These people are now at risk of homelessness and destitution.
64.2
Greater Dandenong City, VIC

That the National General Assembly calls on the Minister of Immigration, to restore full Status Resolution Support Services (SRSS) benefits to those that have been exited from the program and also those that would have been previously eligible from the program who continue to be in need.

Objective:
The Australian Government has a moral responsibility to provide support to people until they receive the outcome of their asylum claims and can move forward with their lives in a positive way. The Australian Government’s operational decision has effectively transferred the burden of care and support for people seeking asylum to the local government level.

People seeking asylum reside in approximately 362 municipalities, representing over half (57%) of the 633 municipal districts across Australia. A substantial number of these will be affected by the changes. This is a national issue.

Key Arguments:
The SRSS program provides vital support to individuals and families living in the Australian community while they wait for their refugee status to be finalised. It provides help with the basics of life including housing, food, clothing, medical services and the costs of putting children through kindergarten and school. It also provides access to counselling and mental health support.

In June 2018 changes to the SRSS program meant thousands of people seeking asylum would no longer fit the eligibility criteria and progressively be exited from the program. At the end of December 2018 approximately 2000 single people and couples without children had been exited nationally. Assessments for couples with children were scheduled to take place from early 2019. Those exited have no income and allied supports and are at extreme risk of destitution and homelessness.

Community services, voluntary organisations and charities in municipalities where people are resident are not coping with the increased demand.

According to the Refugee Council of Australia, based on late 2018 data from the Department of Home Affairs, 13,299 people are at risk of losing support, 4059 of those are children. Within Victoria alone, the number at risk is 5863.

This motion is in alignment with the motion passed by the Municipal Association of Victoria and is supported by the Victorian Local Governance Association. This motion is in agreement with objectives of the Local Government Mayoral Taskforce Supporting People Seeking Asylum, a national coalition of councils seeking to have the SRSS program reinstated in full for all people seeking asylum who have need.

Councils who have already indicated their support of this motion are:
1. City of Whittlesea
2. Darebin City Council
3. Yarra Ranges Council
4. City of Greater Geelong
5. City of Wagga Wagga
6. Maribyrnong City Council
7. Hume City Council
8. Wyndham City Council
9. Wellington Shire Council
10. Inner West Council
11. City of Monash
That the National General Assembly call on the Australian Government to:

• The development of a comprehensive national primary health policy and plan that would articulate and benchmark the health services that should be available in all areas throughout Australia based on need;
• Reform of the Primary Healthcare system in order to address the unequal distribution of the primary healthcare workforce by seeking to allocated Medicare provider numbers based on need; and
• Learning from overseas experience about developing more robust primary health services that can treat people in a community primary health environment rather than in an expensive acute setting.

Objective:
While the provision of health services has not been a role that is traditionally undertaken by Local Government, there is an increasing realisation by many Councils in rural and remote areas that to support the viability of communities, ensuring provision to an appropriate level of medical services is critical. There are situations where Local Government has acted to address these concerns because of the need to act in the face of market failure when it comes to the equitable access to medical services in Australia. It is considered that this issue is an important consideration in current discussion about future population distribution in Australia to ensure that we do have sustainable and appropriately serviced rural and regional towns.

Key Arguments:
Australia, when compared with other similar countries, provides good healthcare with good health outcomes and high levels of life expectancy. Unfortunately, these health outcomes are not equally spread throughout Australia.

Life expectancy can vary up to 10 years depending on the place a person lives.

Australia has a very hospital centric health system with high levels of avoidable hospital admissions and ever-increasing Emergency Department presentations for health issues that could have been better managed in a primary health environment.

In 2013 the Commonwealth Government assumed the role of planner and funder of primary health services in Australia while state governments continue responsibility for public hospital provision.

The cornerstone of primary health service provision are General Practitioners (GPs) and Medicare is their primary funding mechanism. Medicare is a throughput and market driven funding mechanism.

Access to GPs and Medicare funding is unequally distributed throughout Australia as the funding follows the GP and other health practitioners in a market driven provider led service model. Medicare provider numbers are not allocated on a needs basis but are allocated to providers based on where they want to work.

This leads to Medicare funding and provision of GPs and other Medicare funded services being located and more available in wealthier and healthier communities where most GPs and other health practitioners choose to live and practice.

The market driven nature of the system means that many localities, especially small country towns and rural areas have unequal access to services despite being communities that experience worse health outcomes.

Past attempts to review Medicare funding and distribute provider numbers based on need have not been successful.

Australia has no comprehensive national primary health policy or plan that could provide a benchmark for needs based health service provision.

One of the outcomes of this is that many communities experience complete lack of and or inadequate levels of health workforce and funding. Local governments are often left to deal with this policy failure when it results in the threatened or actual closure of medical practices in rural areas.
The ability to access medical services is a significant contributor to the sustainability and viability of communities, and will be a key consideration for people choosing to live in the country as our population ages.

65.1
South Burnett Regional Council, QLD

That this National General Assembly calls on the Federal Government to review the funding and support to community health services with particular emphasis on outer regional, rural and remote communities.

Objective:
National Health

Key Arguments:
South Burnett Regional Council actively supports the concept of community hospitals being delivered as a private public partnership model that can provide positive benefits for rural and regional communities. The private hospital in Kingaroy is an example of this. The hospital is owned by Council and was leased to a Foundation and sub leased to a private service provider. The hospital was to close with the then private provider set to cease providing it’s services at this hospital. Council ramped up it’s focus on maintaining medical services to the local and surrounding communities by developing a charitable foundation for what is now known as the Lady Bjelke-Petersen Community Hospital. Successful negotiations with another private provider enabled this community Hospital to stay open and retain vital medical services to benefit the wider South Burnett Community. Of interest, 10,500 people signed a petition launched by Council to save the hospital.

Over 91% of the revenue for the hospital is publicly sourced. For example, a welcomed philanthropic gesture from a prominent Australian Business and Business Woman saw $600,000 provided to kick start fundraising by the Foundation to purchase equipment for the hospital.

The funding model for this private hospital is that patients are charged for care (emergency department and admissions) with private health insurance used where available to meet some or all of the costs to the patient. Visit the hospital’s webpage for more information.

Continued support for Community Hospitals give much need relief to the public health system whilst engaging the community and other partners to deliver quality value added options for accessing medical services.

66
Leeton Shire Council, NSW

That this National General Assembly calls on the Federal Government to address the shortage of medical professionals in rural and regional areas of Australia by adopting the Australian Medical Association’s five key priority areas being:

1. Encourage students from rural areas to enrol in medical school and provide medical students with opportunities for positive and continuing exposure to regional/rural medical training;
2. Provide a dedicated and quality training pathway with the right skill mix to ensure doctors are adequately trained to work in rural areas;
3. Provide a rewarding and sustainable work environment with adequate facilities, professional support and education, personal comfort, and flexible work arrangements, including locum relief;
4. Provide family support that includes spousal opportunities/employment, educational opportunities for children’s education, subsidy for housing/relocation and/or tax relief; and
5. Provide financial incentives including rural loadings to ensure competitive remuneration.
Objective:
One of the key requirements to attracting and retaining population outside the coastal fringe of Australia is access to appropriate health services - specifically, suitably qualified general practitioners (GPs). While a number of programs have been established and delivered to attract doctors to regional areas, there is still a disparity between the numbers of GPs per 100,000 population in metropolitan areas and those in regional Australia. To address this issue, a multi-faceted approach is required for Federal, State and Local governments to work in a collaborative way and deliver to regional, rural and remote communities an adequate level of health service staring with reasonable access to a general practitioner. These services do not operate in a vacuum and only survive when the support networks of the practitioners are also supported.

Key Arguments:
Information contained within the Australian Medical Association’s Position Statement on Rural Workforce Initiatives 2017 highlights the disparity or mal-distribution of general practitioners. Statistics from 2016 indicate that for every 100,000 head of population within metropolitan regions there is 437 general practitioners. This number falls to 264 in areas considered to be remote.

The issue is not just about numbers but also about the right skill mix. Rural medical practice requires individuals to possess a broad range of different skills – with primary care practitioners representing the backbone of rural health care. The average age of rural doctors in Australia is nearing 55 years, while the average age of remaining rural GP proceduralists – rural GP anaesthetists, rural GP obstetricians and rural GP surgeons – is approaching 60 years.

Other factors for consideration are:
- Life expectancy is lower for people in regional and remote Australia. Compared with major cities, the life expectancy in regional areas is one to two years lower, and in remote areas is up to seven years lower.
- The age standardised rate of the burden of disease increases with increasing remoteness, with very remote areas experiencing 1.7 times the rate for major cities.
- Coronary heart disease, suicide, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and cancer show a clear trend of greater rates of burden in rural and remote areas.
- The number of medical practitioners, particularly specialists, steadily decreases with increasing rurality. The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare reports that while the number of full time workload equivalent doctors per 100,000 population in major cities is 437, there were 272 in outer regional areas, and only 264 in very remote areas.
- Rural medical practitioners work longer hours than those in major cities. In 2012, GPs in major cities worked 38 hours per week on average, while those in inner regional areas worked 41 hours, and those in remote/very remote areas worked 46 hours.
- There is a health care deficit of at least $2.1 billion in rural and remote areas, reflecting chronic underspend of Medicare and the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (MBS) and publicly-provided allied health services.
- International medical graduates (IMGs) now make up over 40 per cent of the medical workforce in rural and remote areas.

66.1
Gladstone Regional Council, QLD

That the National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to consider appropriate initiatives to improve the level of healthcare in regional and rural Australia.

Objective:
An Australian Institute of Health and Welfare study in 2018 highlighted that Australians living in rural and remote areas across the country generally present inferior statistics in terms of health and welfare outcomes. Among the findings were a higher mortality rate, higher rate of deaths due to land transport accidents, higher incidence of smoking, lack of exercise, high rate of overweight or obese people.

Key Arguments:
While studies continue to indicate the inferior health standards outside the greater capital city areas, the Australian Government also needs to acknowledge the current service gap and that it continues to grow, particularly in the smaller towns.

Programs to promote regional areas to healthcare professionals have not provided the necessary increases, prompting the Royal Flying Doctor Service to ask that the government and policy makers need to work with the relevant communities to
develop innovative ways to deliver more comprehensive health services. Sustainability needs to be a consideration in these discussions.

Virtual service delivery methods are a means by which to meet the challenge to provide access to services for small towns and communities however funding is required.

66.2
Whitsunday Regional Council, QLD

That this National General Assembly call on the Federal Government to develop a national strategy to attract and retain General Practitioners to regional and remote areas.

Objective:
Shortages of health care services across Australia clearly have a big impact and patients who fail to get an appointment at their local doctor surgery when they are unwell have limited options.

Key Arguments:
Council has repeatedly expressed its concern regarding health care services within the Whitsunday Region and the lack of and need for practicing General Practitioners in the local government area. Council is therefore seeking support for a motion that the National General Assembly call on the Federal Government to develop a national strategy to attract and retain General Practitioners in regional areas.

66.3
District Council of Streaky Bay, SA

That the National General Assembly calls on the Federal Government to develop better, more effective mechanisms for medical interns to complete placements in rural areas.

Objective:
It has become increasingly difficult to attract GPs and other allied health professionals to rural and remote areas for reasons that are not fully understood other than that working in rural and remote areas may not be perceived to be as attractive as urban and peri-urban areas. A program making it more attractive to place those currently studying to gain their medical degrees in these rural and remote communities would expose them to a broader scope of skills and practice understanding.

Key Arguments:
Whilst rural and remote areas suffer with medical professional shortages, these areas face the same issues of an aging populations, a more mobile youth population and growing communities. The hours for GPs in rural areas are often very long as they remain on call for emergency work even outside of normal working hours. GPs do however become a significant figure in any rural and remote community and their skills become broad ranging with exposure to practice areas not available to those in urban and peri-urban facilities.

To ease the workload for GPs in rural areas, many turn to locums however this option costs at least $2,000 per day which is a prohibitive cost to local communities and most privately owned practices. As a result many Local Councils are becoming more involved in the management of their General Practices in order to ensure continuing access for their communities and to assist the GPs themselves.

A program making it more attractive to place those currently studying to gain their medical degrees in these rural and remote communities in order to expose them to the conditions and experiences those already qualified in these communities work.
66.4
Forbes Shire Council, NSW

That the National General Assembly calls on the Minister for Health to urgently form a joint task force with representation from Local, State and Federal government, to formulate and financially support a model for specialization training based in regional areas and fund financial relocation packages for the engagement of doctors in rural towns.

Objective:
The shortage of rural health care professionals is a nationwide issue. Rural areas across the country are struggling to retain doctors and maintain the same level of health services available in the capital cities. Rural Australia produces the vast majority of Australian exports every year with a growing export market totalling $49 billion in the 2016-17 financial year (ABARES). To maintain a strong agricultural industry and be ready for the opportunities that the Asian Century offers a sustainable population needs to be maintained in rural areas, and they need to be supported by high quality health care services available to all people in rural areas.

Key Arguments:
• Communications with the Rural Doctors Association have related that ongoing training is essential for all medical professionals. In particular, junior doctors need to gain further experience and further training for specializations. To progress in their career and gain the required experience and training it is common for professionals to return to capital cities. There are few professional development opportunities in rural areas and in addition professional isolation is a major concern.
• There is a lack of relocation assistance available for professionals who do choose to move to rural areas. The move to rural areas can be difficult especially for partners of doctors who may struggle to find employment in their chosen field and adequate schooling for their children particularly in secondary years
• These two issues above need to be used in a hand in hand two pronged approach. Simply offering relocation assistance will not work in the long term to retain medical professionals. If they do not have the access to professional development as well it is unlikely they will remain in rural areas.

67
Mitchell Shire, VIC

The National General Assembly calls on the Federal Government to reorient the mental health services system funding in rural and regional communities, invest in long term stable funding arrangements focused on operating a continuum of services across the life stages prevention, early intervention and tertiary services.

Objective:
Ensuring good mental health is essential to the wellbeing of individuals, families and the community. The Federal Government must act where the evidence is clear, to ensure the mental health service system provided to rural and regional communities is sufficient to maintain and increase with population growth and change.
The request is for the Federal Government to reorient its investment:
• Integration of services underpinned by long term stable funding arrangements
• A support service system that is not limited to out-reach. The service system is adequately funded to physically operate a continuum of services from prevention and early intervention, ensuring capacity to address the needs of a range of diverse age groups across the life spectrum.
• The mental health workforce is appropriately supported and resourced to address rising complexities.

Key Arguments:
The imperative to improving the mental health and well-being of individuals and communities is clearly recognised with one in five Australians experiencing ill mental health. The lack of access to locally based services forces already vulnerable people to seek appointments further away with significant wait list times and the need to travel long distances. Delays in treatment increase the risk of escalating symptoms. Heightened rates of community mental illness are a symptom of systemic inadequacies, and challenges such as these are contributing to an increase of poor mental health.
There is a clear economic case, with the right investments, it is possible to improve the mental health of individuals and communities. There is the opportunity now to strengthen local responses that improve mental health outcomes across the life stages.

67.1
Leeton Shire Council, NSW

That this National General Assembly call on the Federal Government to increase funding for the provision of and access to mental health services in rural and remote areas of Australia.

Objective:
One in five Australians will experience a mental health disorder each year, and with 29% of the population living in regional or remote areas, the need for mental health services is significant. Poor access to mental and other health services has direct linkages to population increases in metropolitan and major regional cities. With the 66% of Australians currently living in a capital city and projections that this number will increase to 74% by 2061, remedial measures are required now to affect any real change in these statistics. Increased funding for mental health services in rural and remote areas of Australia will have a direct impact on the number of deaths by suicide as well as a secondary impact to reduce the migration of those from rural and remote areas seeking to access adequate mental health support to not only metropolitan areas but major regional cities as well.

Key Arguments:
According to the National Health Survey, people who live in regional and remote areas reported slightly higher rates of mental health problems than people living in cities. Furthermore, Australians living in rural and remote areas tend to have a lower life expectancy and higher rates of disease, which can have a negative impact on mental health.

The problem is made worse by poor access to health care services. According to the National Rural Health Alliance, people in cities receive on average 40% more mental health services than those in rural and remote areas.

To support this argument, according to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare states, compared with major cities, the rate of suicide in rural and regional areas is about 40 per cent higher while the rate in remote areas is almost twice the major cities rate. In rural areas there can often be apprehension around help seeking and a fear of the stigma sometimes associated with mental illness - particularly in smaller communities where individuals are more visible, and confidentiality may be less assured.

However, according to Mental Health Services in Australia the per capita Medical Benefits Scheme expenditure for mental health services in very remote areas is less than 15% ($7.44) of the expenditure in major cities ($50.94). Regional remote areas fare slightly better at $13.15 per capita – which equates to 25.8%.

The total number of registered psychologists in Australia is around 30,000 but only 18% are based outside of a city.

In many respects, mental illness is like physical illness; given appropriate and timely intervention and treatment, mental illness can be successfully managed. Many people who have experienced mental illness are able to lead healthy and fulfilling lives. With strong national leadership, adequate resources flexibly used and local service planning, mental illness can be well managed in rural and remote areas as well as in major cities.

The 1993 Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission’s National Inquiry into the Human Rights of People with a Mental Illness found that people affected by mental illness suffered from widespread systemic discrimination and were consistently denied the rights and services to which they are entitled. This Inquiry recommended a major government effort to redress negative community attitudes towards people with a mental illness. The Inquiry also recommended added emphasis in health budgets for prevention and for mental health research. Governments were found to be relying increasingly on NGOs to provide services but to be treating NGOs as peripheral in the allocation of funds. The Inquiry also made recommendations on culturally appropriate services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and people from non-English speaking backgrounds.

Although there has been a response to this inquiry, more needs to be done to ensure those living in rural and remote areas of Australia who have mental health issues are supported and able to remain within their local communities.
That the National General Assembly calls on both the Government and Opposition to ensure that there are tangible outcomes of/from the $300M+ National Ice Taskforce.

Objective:
The negative impact of ice on local communities and families across Australia is increasing, disrupting families, impacting employment and placing individuals at risk of harm and poor health.

While the National Ice Task Force fund is $300M, the funding to local communities is not significant enough to address the issues and the harms caused.

For example, Frankston received $40K in the first tranche of funding. This was expended on information and awareness raising. Drug addiction is a long term issue for which further funds will be required to continue to address the issue.

Key Arguments:
All LGA’s who have pockets of disadvantage are likely to carry a greater burden of AOD harm, interrelated health and social concerns, higher rates of family violence and child protection reports and higher rates of homelessness.

In addition, it is likely that higher rates of young people (15-24years) are disengaged from education and employment.

As an example, the municipality of Frankston, Methamphetamine is the second most common primary drug of choice (after alcohol) amongst adults accessing AOD services in the Frankston Mornington Peninsula in 2017/18. Frankston also had the third highest rate (per 100,000 population) of ambulance call-outs related to crystal methamphetamine of any Local Government Authority across metropolitan Melbourne in 2017/18. According to wastewater testing, the quantity of MDMA and methamphetamine detected in South Eastern Melbourne doubled between March 2014 and March 2015. Frankston Hospital also has the third highest rates of hospital admissions for illicit substances in Victoria.

Every funding opportunity to address AOD harms must be maximised. Local funding for local actions is a fundamental opportunity to establish local priorities and solutions.

1 = Source: www.amboaadstats.org.au accessed 10th December 2018
3 = Peninsula Health 2018-28 Ambulatory Service Plan

That the National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to commit to a productivity commission review into private health insurance.

Objective:
While recent reforms have occurred to private health cover in order to assist Australians to understand their level of cover, the reality is that people continue to find private health insurance a complex area. A classification into four common tiers, which will be based on new minimum standard clinical categories, forms a role in the reforms.

What was not addressed within the reforms were business models adopted by some private health insurance companies whereby incentives are offered to genuine healthcare providers to service customers. Outwardly this could appear to be an attempt to drive higher profits by reducing competition in the healthcare provider sector.

Key Arguments:
Australians contribute to health insurance with the expectation of receiving value for money services during times of greatest need.
Private health insurance and its workings continue to remain a complex area to many. Accordingly, a level of suspicion exists around “members choice” or “preferred” suppliers of healthcare services and their link to the relevant health insurer. In order to provide members with greater confidence regarding the legitimacy of their scheme, there should be greater transparency around these connections.

While it is recognised that the Productivity Commission exercises no executive power, it is acknowledged that the majority of past recommendations made by this body have been accepted. There are three core principles under which this body operates: independence, transparency and a community-wide focus. All of these values would be a priority when considering a review of private health insurance as the matter affects 45.6% of Australians.

Gladstone Regional Council, QLD

That the National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to review the policy around rebate structures for bulk billing services particularly to address the lacking services available to people in regional and rural centres.

Objective:
There exists concern as to the ability of Australians in rural and regional centres to have access to bulk billing services on the same basis as their urban counterparts. On the one hand, it is acknowledged that it is the right of a public practice to charge fees above the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) fee structure, and that competition levels will have an effect. However, the greater number of vocationally recognised (VR) doctors in urban areas provides both greater choice of service and potential for lower costs.

Key Arguments:
Access to bulk billing services in regional and rural areas can be limited compared to the facilities available in more urbanised parts of Australia. Where the practice does not offer an option to bulk bill, the patient must pay the difference between the Medicare rebate and the practice fee. The greater number of bulk billing doctors situated in urban environments creates an inequity between patients dwelling in more populated areas and those who are regionally based.

While ultimately, the business models adopted by private practices will determine the charges applicable for services, there should be programs put in place to address the existing inequality. Programs to promote regional areas to healthcare professionals, a review of the MBS fee structures or an extension of the rebate scheme to non-vocationally recognised (non-VR) doctors should all be considered.

Darebin City Council, VIC

That the National General Assembly calls for:

1. The maintenance of block funding for the delivery of the Commonwealth Home Support Program beyond June 2020,
2. States, Territories and the Commonwealth Governments to grant an exemption to local government providing home care services from the National Competition Policy.

Objective:
Reforms in the aged care sector have been driven by the federal government to achieve a nationally consistent system.

The current reform agenda provides certainty of funding for Commonwealth Home Support Program services only to the end of June 2020. It is unclear how the federal government will proceed with funding model beyond then although it was previously expected that block funding would end at that time, and a competitive market of service providers created instead.
This situation is creating uncertainty for older Australians in receipt of these services, for service providers and for the workforce.

ALGA adopted a resolution in 2018 to write to the Government requesting that block funding for these services be maintained for local governments. This motion would carry on that work.

Additionally, the government should provide certainty of funding until after the Royal Commission into Safety and Quality in Aged Care delivers its recommendations and that these recommendations are considered to inform any future aged care funding models.

Furthermore, many local government who are providers of these services provide additional subsidies to ensure that quality of services are maintained at a high. The additional subsidy in local government allows for better pay and conditions for workers in the sector, a reflection of the minimum skills and qualification staff delivering these services hold.

**Key Arguments:**
The Federal Aged Care Reforms in the home support sector is creating ongoing uncertainty for community members, the workforce and for service providers. The possible cessation of current Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) block funding in mid-2020 is adding to this uncertainty.

The Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety commenced its work and it is expected to deliver its final report in April 2020, the close proximity of this to the anticipated end of block funding would not provide government with the time to consider, findings and recommendations to potentially make changes to the funding model if required. Therefore, block funding should be extended to provide certainty to the community and to the workforce.

If the competitive market for CHSP is introduced after June 2020, National Competition Policy will apply to the services of many councils, and will effectively remove the ability of councils to subsidise their services. This could make it impossible for those councils to continue their services. Legal advice obtained by Darebin indicates that the Victorian government can approve an exemption to National Competition Policy to local government-provided home care services. This would allow local government’s continued involvement in service provision if and when the service model changes. The anticipated federal reforms should not disadvantage older Australians.

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**72**

**Darebin City Council, VIC**

*That the National General Assembly calls on the Federal Government to introduce two new Home Care subsidies to medication management, and nursing services. This will allow Home Care Packages recipients to receive these two crucial services and maintain care in the community.*

**Objective:**
Access to affordable services that support older Australians to maintain their independence is important to individuals and carers wellbeing nationally.

Home Care Packages are a federally funded initiative that aims to have a national consistent approach to funding of services to people in the community. The current gaps in funding makes it difficult for people to access nursing services and medication management. This is a national concern due to the national application of guidelines and funding formula.

**Key Arguments:**
Home Care Packages are funded by the federal government to help older Australian with complex care need to live independently in their own homes.

As at 30 June 2018, there were 91,847 older Australians in receipt of Home Care Packages nationally, with additional 40,000 packages announced this financial year so far.

The federal government pays a range of care subsidies and supplements depending on the care requirements, and funding levels of a package are allocated based on the care needs. Currently Level 1 and 2 (basic and low needs) can access nursing services at the subsidised Commonwealth Home Support Program rate from nursing providers for short term when the Home Care Package funding have been fully allocated to other services, this is not available for Level 3 or 4.
Older people who are on a Home Care level 3 or 4 package, are assessed to have intermediate and high needs, although these level of packages have higher care subsidies levels, however due to the complex care need requirements and cost of case management service recipients are left with little funding to support them with all their care needs. This includes the medication management cost and the purchase of nursing services to meet their needs adequately. This motion argues for the government to consider specific supplements for the nursing support and medication management for people on these level 3 and 4. This anomaly and lack of funding for these two services places additional pressure on older Australians and their carers as it renders these services out of reach for people on a package.

73
Frankston City, VIC

That the National General Assembly expresses its concern to both the Government and Opposition on current deficiencies in the current NDIS funding arrangements and calls on both the Government and Opposition to make funding arrangements offered by the government to providers more attractive.

Objective:
National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is a new national way of supporting people with a disability; moving clients to a consumer directed and fully funded market driven model.

Key Arguments:
Frankston City Council made a decision in November 2017 not to register as an NDIS provider after considering the impact on its service and the community. Council remains committed to providing support through the transition to NDIS and an advocacy role in disability support across the municipality.

Local Government does not necessarily provide a specialist disability service; however, is fortunate that there are often many specialist disability service providers within their local community. The NDIS is a market driven, fully funded scheme and as such service providers are not expected to subsidise program expenditure. Under the National Competition Policy Local Government is unable to subsidise.

These changes impact on Local Government’s ability to continue to deliver these services due to the considerable financial impact of setup costs, ongoing costs, and predetermined fees verses the actual costs to deliver as well as the NDIS model of service pays in arrears.

74
Town of Port Hedland, WA

That this National General Assembly advocate to the Federal Government through the Minister for Regional Development, that appropriate policies are put in place to support centres located in and around mining areas in terms of population growth, investment and job creation.

Objective:
A 2017 Deloitte report commissioned by the Minerals Council of Australia, has found the mining and mining equipment, technology and services (METS) sector has accounted for 15 per cent of Australia’s gross domestic product (GDP), highlighting its significant contribution to Australia’s economy. The report, found the mining and METS sector contributed $236.8 billion in 2015-16. Both sectors support 1.1 million jobs nationwide – around 10 per cent of overall employment. Although the sector makes a major contribution nationwide, there are particular regions where this is more significant, particularly in Western Australia. The mining and METS sector accounted for a $37.8 billion economic contribution to WA’s Pilbara region – 88 per cent of total regional economic activity. It also accounted for nearly 94,000 jobs both directly and indirectly in the area.

Key Arguments:
To support the national objective of this proposed motion Port Hedland can be utilised as a main example. Port Hedland is the largest bulk exporting port in the world, and is recognised for its efficiency, productivity and innovation. The annual
throughput at the Port is around 500 million tonnes, with the Pilbara’s Port Dampier and Port Hedland accounting for around 75% of the State’s and 50% of all global seaborne iron ore exports. Port Hedland activity contributes to $2.3 billion in tax to the WA Government and a further $2.4 billion to the Commonwealth. Port Hedland’s gross regional product is approaching $5 billion: it was just over $2 billion 10 years ago. Port activity sustains almost 5000 full time equivalent jobs (direct and indirect), which is half of the total of the town of Port Hedland.

In accordance with ‘An Economic Study of Port Hedland Port’ (November 2017, ACIL Allen Consulting) the Port Hedland Port Supply Chain accounted for $18.5 billion in direct economic output in the Western Australian economy in 2015-16.

Port Hedland and other mining centres in the Pilbara can be considered as functioning as the ‘economic powerhouse of the Nation’ due to extensive mineral and hydrocarbon assets and close proximity to existing and emerging high demand Asian markets.

However, more recently there has been a significant contraction in both mineral prices and subsequently, economic, employment and community investment in the Pilbara Region is entering a new phase. Port Hedland and its residents are not immune to the same set of challenges which plague WA’s non metropolitan regions; namely – lack of an understanding of the realities and potential of the region by policy makers in Perth and Canberra; lack of strong local leadership and vision; few economies of scale as a direct result of the sheer size, scale and remoteness of regional WA; high cost of doing business; inadequate economic and social infrastructure (in particular transport, communications, health and education); lack of ability to attract and retain a sustainable population; a growing ageing population; unequal opportunities and a lack of involvement in regional development by Aboriginal people; sub-optimal land use; and poor partnerships and low levels of engagement between community, business and government (CEDA, 2016).

These aforementioned challenges create broad impacts; namely – impediments to regional growth and development; reduction of regional amenity and liveability; hampering of the development and execution of practical responses to realise the unique potential of characteristic regional assets; a poorly skilled local workforce and regional ‘brain drain’; contribution to the continuous exodus of families and young people due to a lack of education, training and employment opportunities; a strain on already stretched services; and poor health, education and employment outcomes, particularly for Aboriginal people.

In summary local government needs state and federal support to put appropriate policies in place to ensure continued and sustainable population growth, investment and job creation.

75
Parramatta Council, NSW

That this National General Assembly call on the Federal Government to provide support and funding to address the significant risks posed, nationwide, by asbestos contamination in public lands and buildings.

Objective:
The objective of this motion is to seek commitment for federal funding to support Local Governments, in all states and territories, to deal with the risks posed by asbestos in public buildings and lands. This motion seeks to ensure the availability funding from the federal level to ensure local government authorities have equal capacity to identify and treat asbestos contamination, regardless of other normal budgetary constraints, and to dedicate resources to the future safe eradication of asbestos from our communities.

Many local councils do not have the financial resources to deal with the significant costs to local agencies in addressing the risks that asbestos poses to the community, and the disparity which exists between states and authorities in relation to capacity to pay for asbestos identification and remediation. Currently, funding for remediation differs between states, and must often be accommodated within existing budgets at a significant sacrifice to essential community services. Historically, grant funding available for asbestos related remediation and education is very limited, and is often a “drop in the ocean” when considered against the real costs of managing the issue.

All communities should be capable of efficiently and effectively dealing with the human and environmental health risks posed by asbestos contamination within their bounds, regardless of their financial capacity.
Key Arguments:
Currently, expectations for asbestos contamination management, and funding available for the remediation of contaminated lands, differs across states. Local Government Authorities are left to bear the significant costs of remediating public lands and buildings affected by the legacy of asbestos use in Australia. This includes the management and replacement of public buildings which utilised asbestos products in their construction, the management of former landfills (often converted to use as parklands) where both domestic and industrial asbestos waste was deposited, the ongoing battle against illegal dumping on public and community lands, and the increasing community demand for assistance in identifying and disposing of asbestos products from their homes.

A number of Council’s in NSW are dealing with the challenges posed by this issue currently. City of Parramatta, for example has approximately 30 “James Hardie legacy sites” within its boundary; sites known to have received asbestos waste as fill, a number of which are now community parks and reserves which must now be identified, tested, and in many cases, remediated, at significant expense to the ratepayers of Parramatta. Treatment of one part of one Crown reserve affected by this legacy cost in excess of $2 million; it is conservatively estimated that Council will need to divert $10 million from other essential projects over the life of these works to address the problem. Council must undertake these works to ensure the ongoing safety of its residents and visitors – this work is not optional. While in the Sydney metropolitan area City of Parramatta has the lion’s share of such sites, other sites continue to be identified, affecting a wider range of local government areas, who will also need to rapidly find significant funding to ensure their communities remain safe.

Sufficient and available funding will ensure that decisions are able to be made on the basis of risk, and not influenced by the financial limitations of the agency with responsibility for dealing with the problem. As we have seen with the ‘Loose-Fill’ asbestos remediation programs operating first in the ACT, and then later in NSW, a well organised and well-funded programme identification and remediation can effectively contain and manage the environmental and health risks, as well as ensuring community confidence in their governing bodies to deal with asbestos effectively.

Asbestos, in both the built, and natural environments, continues to pose a threat to the health of Australians, and presents an ongoing challenge to those agencies responsible for addressing that risk. As researchers warn of the impending “third wave” of asbestos related illness, more is needed to support those authorities who are tasked with addressing the problem in our communities. Support and funding is needed at the federal level to ensure that local government agencies across Australia can provide the resources to educate their residents about the safe identification and removal of asbestos products; can offer their residents free or reduced rate disposals; can identify affected community buildings and lands, and can remediate those lands without delay, and without detriment to their other funded services.

76
Whitsunday Regional Council, QLD

That this National General Assembly call on the Federal Government to develop a national regulation approach to short-term holiday letting, such as AirBNB, which could be administered at the local level.

Objective:
With the rise of AirBNB and other online rental platforms, AirBNB regulation has become an evolving and complex issue for local governments across Australia.

Key Arguments:
This is a divisive issue for many communities and Council believes the Commonwealth Government should help local governments prepare for the future by developing a national regulation on short-term holiday letting, which could be administered at the local level.
77
Nillumbik Shire, VIC

That this National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to provide direct funding to assist local government to address the risks of climate change through the development of renewable energy facilities and support related community actions.

Objective:
Climate change affects all communities. The effort to reduce emissions should be supported and promoted to all communities across Australia.

Key Arguments:
The economic, social and environmental prosperity of Australia is dependent on stable, competitively priced, supply of low emission energy.

In recent years, there has been very little Australian Government funding available to local government to implement mitigation actions. For many resource-constrained Councils finding funds to reduce their own fossil fuel based energy profile, through the implementation of building, lighting and fleet upgrades is extremely difficult, with many competing community needs. Significant action is required now, not in the future when the change is irreversible.

Local government in partnership with the various greenhouse action alliances are in a position to support the community directly in reducing emissions and transitioning to cost effective renewable energy solutions that best fit local community need. Seed funding to support business cases and shovel ready projects can support. It remains critical that vulnerable sectors of the community receive assistance to ensure they are protected from the predicted impacts. Improved technologies in the energy area are increasing productivity and efficiency, and this is critical to delivering an effective service through community facilities. Such technologies are often out of the financial reach of lower economic groups in the community and support for programs that facilitate their uptake will have the multiple benefits of reducing greenhouse gases and energy costs with the latter reducing the stress on low income households. A balance between funding mitigation actions and adaptation actions must be found. We must continue to address greenhouse emissions to achieve significant reductions that will allow communities to prosper. We cannot continue to adapt indefinitely.

78
Gladstone Regional Council, QLD

That the National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to commit to investment in the development of future energy sources in order to ensure diversity of alternative sources of dispatchable power.

Objective:
The issue of climate change affects all communities across Australia, and it is it the responsibility of all levels of Government to address ongoing emissions and their impact. Utilising new technology to develop alternative sources of energy which are more environmentally responsible will assist in meeting efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

A commitment by the Federal Government to investment in the development of alternative energy sources will assist in advancing Australia in the sphere of innovation and generate future employment.

Affordability of power is a major issue across the country and alternative energy sources may provide potential cost savings for consumers.

Key Arguments:
Australia has long relied on the easy accessibility of its natural resources such as coal, oil and natural gas. With these resources existing in finite quantities, and current Community concerns around their contribution to climate change, there is a strong argument for exploring alternative energy sources. Other countries around the world are actively researching and exploring new technology.
While it is possible for a local council to be a vocal supporter of alternative energy sources such as hydrogen, biofuels and solar energy, and actively encourage investment in their own Region, the support of all levels of Government is required to provide potential investors with confidence. A local government will have access to limited funds with which to entice investment, however a pledge of funding from the Australian government will send a clear indication to the community of their commitment to both climate change and the economic development that can come from emerging technologies and industries. This economic prosperity could potentially extend to renew rural regions across Australia who may have natural resources relevant to the new energy economy.

It is acknowledged that there has been a period of significant rises in the prices of electricity and gas. The Australian Government, while not the primary influencer of price outcomes, can still play a role through incentivisation and coordination of action at other levels of government. Any flow on effect to prices from these actions would ultimately, to some extent, be expected to extend to end users. This would be of benefit to both the business and consumer sectors.

79
Bega Valley Shire Council, NSW

That the National General Assembly calls on Councils to facilitate and support the establishment of community renewable energy hubs in their municipalities.

Objective:
Climate Change: Key question in Call for Motions Discussion Paper – How can local governments collaborate, build partnerships to address climate change?

Key Arguments:
Community solar farms and local energy sharing make obvious sense environmentally and also financially by enabling solar bulk buys, supporting local jobs, local suppliers and ultimately more affordable energy.

80
Penrith City Council, NSW

That the National General Assembly call on the Federal and state governments to implement the recommendations of the Parliamentary Inquiry into the Australian Government’s role in the development of Cities, to provide financial support, in the form of grants, to projects which demonstrate potential to generate significant employment growth in the rapidly expanding, outer suburban communities of Australian cities.

Objective:
Rebalancing the spatial structure of our capital cities needs public policy reform and investment that supports dispersing jobs and housing more evenly across the metropolitan area, including bringing new jobs closer to where the population lives. Aligning jobs growth, transport and social infrastructure to the fastest growing suburbs to create a polycentric city with multiple activity hubs is critical for the continued liveability and productivity of the nation’s capital cities.

Key Arguments:
The Fast Growing Outer Suburbs play an important role supporting the productivity of cities by increasing labour supply and the provision of diverse and affordable housing. The 31 fastest growing suburbs accounted for 35 per cent of Australia’s population growth over the last five years (2011-2016), and continue to grow at 3 per cent per annum, significantly faster that the Australian growth rate (1.7 % p.a. between 2011 and 2016), with almost 1 in 5 Australians now calling the fast growing suburbs home. (Profile iD, 2018).

Aligning jobs growth, transport and social infrastructure to the fastest growing suburbs to create a polycentric city with multiple activity hubs is critical for the continued liveability and productivity of the nation’s capital cities.
With unprecedented growth forecast for our capital cities, we call upon on all levels of government to rebalance the cities spatial structure through evidence based metropolitan planning which integrates land use, transport and social infrastructure.

Importantly, to prevent further isolation of growth communities with poor job and infrastructure access, delivery of the metropolitan plan should adopt a place-based approach to the delivery and sequencing of development and infrastructure.

Furthermore, as continued population and housing growth places pressure on our natural environment through rapid greenfield development, the importance of green space and next generation infrastructure to mitigate urban heat island effect, promote sustainable use of resources, retain biodiversity and create attractive places for people to live is paramount.

81
Wyndham City, VIC

That the National General Assembly calls on the Federal Government to develop City Deals or Partnerships or an equivalent funding and delivery vehicle to:

1. Address opportunities and threats presented by rapid technological change
2. Better integrate economic, physical, infrastructure and employment assets
3. Improve governance and collaboration across all levels of government to ensure more resilient innovation and employment hubs that embrace the ‘4th Industrial Revolution’.

Objective:
This motion addresses Key Question 2 in the Future Focused Discussion Paper guide to 2019 NGA Motions.

Key Arguments:
Nearly all States and Territories have Employment and Innovation Clusters, Hubs or similar. Rather than reinvent the wheel, this motion calls for all levels of government to collaborate to harness more advantages from these hubs.

ALGA can help to drive a national focus through COAG’s Transport and Infrastructure Council on innovation and employment with the aim to lift these hubs and related policy and investment to ensure they can play their role in addressing technological change and disruption.

82
District Council of Streaky Bay, SA

That the National General Assembly calls on the Federal Government to provide funding and support for migrant workers with Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) backgrounds to expedite transition of the recognition of their skills, making the available to re-enter the workforce, with an emphasis to filling rural demands where these skills are in critical shortage.

Objective:
The transition of qualifications for professionals such as General Practitioners is long and costly for migrants. There has been considerable discussion concerning the burgeoning problem of migrants gravitating primarily to large city centres and concerns raised that this is not assisting rural and remote communities address significant and urgent skills shortages. In order to make moving to rural and remote areas more attractive, the development of a system whereby those who choose to move to a rural or remote community may complete their transitional training sooner, or at a discounted rate, may go some way to addressing those issues of migrant population concentration and rural and remote skills shortages. Service in these communities would need to be under the supervision of a fully qualified professional.
Key Arguments:
Australia is continuing to encourage skilled migrants into the country in order to address known skills shortages. On arrival, it is often true their qualifications do not easily map to Australian standards of education and practice. Transitioning of skills, particularly for medical and allied health professionals is an often arduous and costly enterprise with many giving up prior to receiving Australian qualification. This is detrimental to Australia as it is not addressing recognised skills shortages in an effective and efficient manner.

For rural and regional communities skills shortages are increasingly difficult to address and their communities rely on access to such qualified people as General Practitioners to continue to remain viable. Those migrants entering the country with the required skills currently need to stay close to relevant universities in order to complete their transitional training. During this time they and their families become accustomed to the Australian urban lifestyle. If placement in rural and regional communities, offered a more cost effective and / or faster transition time, it is believed more skilled migrants may be willing to take up rural and remote positions. After serving an amount of time in these communities they would obviously have the option to return to more urban areas.

83
Town of Port Hedland, WA

That this National General Assembly call on the Federal Government to continue extensive consultation with local and state governments, the community sector, medical experts and other relevant stakeholders with a view of creating and implementing appropriate policies to manage anti-social behaviour to support people, families and communities in places where high levels of welfare dependence, and drug and alcohol abuse, co-exist with high levels of social harm.

Objective:
Like all communities, those in regional and remote areas are made up of people from a range of backgrounds. They have different strengths and aspirations, and face many different challenges. But regional and remote communities also face a range of geographically specific issues that can make them more vulnerable to alcohol and other drug harms.

These include social isolation, infrastructure limitations, the increased prevalence of natural disasters such as fire, drought and flood, and stressors such as the closure of a region’s major employer, or even the death of a much loved community member.

All tiers of government need to work with and help communities to improve their ability to deal with adversity, conflict and change. This includes increasing community resilience and social cohesion to provide opportunities to tackle alcohol and other drug use.

Key Arguments:
The Pilbara region and Port Hedland can be used as an example to illustrate the national objective of this proposed motion, inasmuch as they do not escape the social challenges found in any community. However, the region’s isolation and tough environment exacerbate certain problems. Drug and alcohol issues are prevalent in both the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal community and usage and associated negative impacts are escalating. Incidents of domestic violence and anti-social behaviour are also increasing and, more often than not, the two factors are interrelated. Increasing suicide rates amongst Aboriginal youth have sparked State inquiries.

The Pilbara displays two main indicators of health inequality in WA – socio-economic disadvantage and a large Aboriginal population. Hedland Health Campus is one of the Region’s major health service providers; however, access to mental health and specialist services is still limited, or non-existent. The delivery of health services to remote Aboriginal communities involves high costs. Aboriginal Medical Services operating in the ToPH are often presented with complex health issues for which they do not have the adequate resources to address. Data on health care shows a decline in positive outcomes and quality of service with increasing distance from metropolitan areas. For example, a recent study by the WA Primary Health Alliance found that the Pilbara is the site of the second-highest number of preventable hospitalisation cases in WA, with South Hedland cited as a hotspot for seven of the top 10 conditions by volume (of people). Investment in digital technology, for example, telehealth and e-health records could help to deliver better health services to the Region.

The delivery and maintenance of infrastructure in remote Aboriginal communities is particularly challenging due to high costs and complicated logistics associated with long travel distances and harsh physical environments.
Adequate health, education and employment options and opportunities are critical to liveability. Ultimately, the majority of people do not, or cannot stay in places with poor amenity resulting from inadequate infrastructure and opportunities. A consequence of this is that transient communities find it harder to build social capital and connection, and this results in a prevalence of social issues such as substance abuse and domestic violence. There is a common misconception that within the Pilbara region these social issues are generally isolated to the Aboriginal community. This is not the case.

A number of initiatives to tackle social issues associated with excessive drug and alcohol consumption have been suggested and or trialled in various parts of Australia. Some examples being income management measures, such as drug testing and cashless debit cards for welfare recipients, changes to liquor control legislation and banned drink registers.

The intent of this motion is to ensure that the Federal government continues to work with State and local government, and all other relevant stakeholders, to create and implement a holistic policy framework to deal with the issues and associated anti-social behaviour described above.

84
Blue Mountains City Council, NSW

That the National General Assembly calls on the Commonwealth Government to address the financial impact of visitation on local councils by exploring additional revenue raising options, including differential rates for tourism businesses, bed taxes and Federal/State funding programs specifically for tourism infrastructure renewal and maintenance.

Objective:
As tourism continues to grow, local government areas across Australia welcome the economic opportunities this presents. In 2016–17, tourism directly contributed $55.3 billion to Australia’s economy, accounting for 3.2% of national GDP (i). Tourism visits are expected to grow 31% between 2016 and 2026 to 385 million visits (ii).

However, many Councils and communities face increased financial burdens from tourism growth. In 2015/16 local governments in Australia spent an estimated $373M on the operation of visitor information centres, events, festivals, promotion, marketing and development of tourism (iii).

These costs are primarily borne by ratepayers, as Councils have limited options available to generate revenue to cater for increased visitation. The increased costs of providing visitor facilities and services also reduces the funding available for the maintenance and renewal of infrastructure like car parks and toilets.

There is a need to explore revenue raising options that go beyond simply requesting locals pay more. This includes differential rates for tourism businesses, bed taxes, and Federal/State funding programs specifically for tourism infrastructure renewal and maintenance.

Key Arguments:
Many councils face the challenge of providing improved infrastructure and services for an increasing volume of visitors. Visitation to the Blue Mountains has increased by more 50% in the last 5 years, and the region now attracts over 4 million visitors a year (i). This exceeds previously published forecasts.

Blue Mountains City Council has a significant role in supporting tourism. Many of the City’s major attractions, surrounding and associated facilities are managed by Council.

In order to leverage the economic value of tourism, investment in product and infrastructure is needed. Funding options need to be supported by the Federal and State governments.

Funding mechanisms available to local government to fund visitor infrastructure include:
   a. Local government rates collected from owners of rate-able properties. Rates currently fund a large portion of the visitor services and infrastructure managed by Councils. This is not an equitable source of funding - rate payers are not the primary facility users.
b. Differential local government rates for tourism businesses are difficult to implement under the current rating framework in NSW. As prescribed in the Local Government Act 1993 (NSW), the land category is based on a location rather than a business type. In some other states, rates may be differentiated based on business types.

c. Bed taxes target visitors staying overnight in commercial accommodation. Other special taxes and levies include hotel occupancy tax and short term rental occupancy tax. Under the Local Government Act 1993 these taxes cannot be applied in NSW. They also exempt the significant proportion of total visitors who are day visitors (83% of visitors to the Blue Mountains) (ii).

d. Federal and State government grants are commonly used to fund infrastructure projects. However, grants are not a reliable or long-term form of funding. Grants are primarily for new infrastructure, and exclude ongoing costs — which are ultimately passed on to ratepayers.

e. Voluntary contributions may be made by individuals or businesses. For example, in Byron Shire Council, a $2 donation is requested at Council owned caravan parks. Donations do not represent a sustainable funding stream to fund ongoing or periodic infrastructure costs.

f. User pays systems have been adopted, to varying degrees, by Councils in all Australian states and territories. Fees may be charged for parking, camping, commercial activities and entry to protected areas. Challenges associated with their implementation include consumer resistance, costs of monitoring and compliance, and displacement of visitors to other (free) sites (iii).

Whilst tourism is promoted by the Federal and State governments, it is not adequately supported by funding. There is a need to explore revenue raising options not currently available, including:

1. More flexibility for councils to charge different rates for different businesses, such as tourism businesses;
2. Bed taxes and other levies;
3. Dedicated federal/state government funding for ongoing operation of visitor facilities.

(i) Destination NSW
(ii) Blue Mountains Destination Management Plan, Blue Mountains City Council, 2016
(iii) Visitor Infrastructure Investment Strategic Plan, Blue Mountains City Council, 2018

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**Yarra City, VIC**

That the National General Assembly calls on the Federal Government to:

1) Establish a Royal Commission into the gambling industry and the $24 billion in annual gambling losses nationally, the highest in the world in per capita terms; and

a. Embrace national harm minimisation policies to reduce gambling harm in Australia such as:

b. Following the lead of the UK Labour Party in supporting a ban on credit card usage with Australian licensed online gambling companies;
   i) Introducing further restrictions on gambling advertising, emulating the approach taken with the tobacco industry;
   ii) Establishing a national ombudsman scheme to process consumer complaints and resolve customer disputes with online gambling companies; and
   iii) Introducing a ban on federally registered political parties from owning gambling licences issued by Australian governments, including for the operation of poker machine venues.

**Objective:**

While regulation of venues is largely a matter for State Governments, given impacts nationally, it is sought that the Federal Government use powers at its disposal to identify and assist in harm minimisation.

**Key Arguments:**

Rather than being seen solely as a legitimate recreational activity, elements of the gambling industry are increasingly being shown to be predatory, deliberately misleading users and preying on the vulnerable. Gambling is identified in research to cause harm linked to adverse mental health, family violence, poverty, homelessness and suicide. Negative health and other impacts and costs are as high as from diabetes, bipolar disorders and drug dependence.
85.1
Mitchell Shire, VIC

That the National General Assembly call on the Federal Government to develop a national public health approach to gambling harm.

Objective:
It is imperative that greater consideration be given to the health and wellbeing outcomes of Australians impacted by the harms of gambling now and into the future. This can only be achieved by taking a comprehensive public health approach. A public health approach offers the government significant opportunity to respond and mitigate the negative consequences of electronic gambling machine (EGM) harm for individuals, families and communities. It includes implementing a range of evidenced informed effective public health measures, (not limited to):

- Reduce venue operating hours
- The Productivity Commission found that the four-hour minimum closing period is insufficient to allow an adequate break in EGM use for EGM users. The minimum closing period should be extended from 4 to 8 hours for all venues.
- Electronic Machine design and features:
  - Legislation that limits maximum $1 bet per spin and maximum loss of $120 per hour
  - Reduced spin rates
  - Eliminate EGM deceptive and misleading features such as losses disguised as wins and fake 'near misses'.

Key Arguments:
Evidence from two government Productivity Commission Reports (1999 and 2010) along with numerous national and international research studies indicate EGMs are the most addictive form of gambling and that there is a fundamental issue with the product. Gambling machines (pokies, poker machines) are designed to addict and maximise player losses. The current approach is failing to protect those most vulnerable to the harmful effects of gambling and is compounded by the location and density of gaming venues in areas of social and economic disadvantage. The benefits of such a national approach to the future health, well-being and prosperity of the Nation cannot be underestimated. A public health approach is focused on putting people ahead of big business - the poker machine industry to ensure and support thriving, healthy and well individuals, families and communities.

86
Brimbank City, VIC

That this National General Assembly, recognising the impact of gambling harm on local communities around Australia, calls on the Federal Government to introduce more stringent classification of video games that include loot boxes or similar items, to reduce the harm that arises from the convergence of gaming and gambling, and the consequent normalisation of gambling.

That this National General Assembly also calls on the Federal Government to close existing loopholes which enable gambling advertisements to be broadcast on television and radio during children’s viewing and listening hours.

Objective:
Although most gambling regulation is the responsibility of state government, the federal government has responsibility for online gambling and gambling advertising. Australian federal government recently introduced a ban on gaming advertisements during live sport before 8.30pm. The ban, which will cover all sports broadcasts on TV and radio (except racing), starts five minutes before kick-off and end five minutes after full time.

The current betting advertising ban is only before 8.30pm, however many sporting events are televised beyond this point and still engage families and children.

Key Arguments:
When children and teenagers play simulated gambling games (featuring either real money or fake money), they are more likely to grow up and gamble with real money. One study found that almost 30% of adolescents who played simulated poker went on to play real poker with real money later in life. The low classification of gambling games in Australia is out of line with the broader laws on gambling.
In all states, there are strict laws on who can enter a casino and who can gamble, with every state imposing age restrictions roughly correlating with adulthood. If these general laws were imposed on gambling games, they would receive a classification of R (18+) – the highest possible rating – rather than G (for a general audience).

Recent research by Associate Prof Samantha Thomas at Deakin University found that;
- Over 90% of children can recall having seen a sports betting advertisement.
- Many children have a very detailed recall of the content of betting advertisements – including brand names, plot lines, and ‘deals’.

Parents thought that gambling marketing should be designated to certain times when children were unlikely to be watching television. Research from the Murdoch Children’s Research Institute show that the average bedtime for 9 year olds is 9:00pm

86.1 Wyndham City, VIC

That the National General Assembly calls on the Federal Government to strengthen the national broadcasting codes to ensure there is no gambling advertising or promotion of odds during live sport broadcasts, regardless of the time of day.

Objective:
This Motion meets ALGA’s national objectives to meet the needs of Councils across Australia. It relates directly to Strategy 2.4 of ALGA’s Strategic Plan 2017-2020 to “... work in partnership with the Commonwealth to deliver human services at the local level with adequate levels of funding.”

Key Arguments:
Improved municipal data would assist with the targeting of human services to address problem gambling.

In relation to advertising of sporting odds during live sports broadcasts, successive Federal Governments have expressed their opposition to this form of advertising, yet the national broadcasting codes that regulate the advertising are not sufficient.

As TV is still the dominant sport medium, it is the most important place to start to control the advertising of odds during broadcasts.

87 Wyndham City, VIC

That the National General Assembly calls on the Federal Government to work with State and Territory Governments to develop new and/or updated systems to collect and publish online gambling expenditure data at a municipal level.

Objective:
This Motion meets ALGA’s national objectives to meet the needs of Councils across Australia. It relates directly to Strategy 2.4 of ALGA’s Strategic Plan 2017-2020 to “... work in partnership with the Commonwealth to deliver human services at the local level with adequate levels of funding.”

Key Arguments:
Improved municipal data would assist with the targeting of human services to address problem gambling.
In relation to advertising of sporting odds during live sports broadcasts, successive Federal Governments have expressed their opposition to this form of advertising, yet the national broadcasting codes that regulate the advertising are not sufficient.

As TV is still the dominant sport medium, it is the most important place to start to control the advertising of odds during broadcasts.

88
Manningham City Council, VIC

That the National General Assembly call on

- The Australian Government to provide grant funding for local governments who have adopted ‘Smart City’ parking sensor technology to implement infrastructure to enable the data to be made available in near real time to Open Data Platforms and technology providers to increase the benefit of this information to the community.

- All local governments with parking sensor technology, in the absence of any additional Commonwealth funding, to develop programs to provide information in near real time to Open Data Platforms and technology providers to increase the benefit of this information to the community.

Objective:

- Several local governments across the country have embraced the technology revolution ‘Smart City’ by implementing Vehicle Detection Technology (VDT) sensors in parking bays to enable more efficient parking management at activity centres.

- The value of the parking data obtained from the fixed location sensors would be greatly enhanced by making it available in near real time via Open Data Platforms and commercial smartphone applications, products or services. As more data becomes available via smart phone applications, the value and usage of these data sources to Australians also increases.

Key Arguments:

- The VDT sensors are in-ground devices that detect vehicle movements in and out of individual parking bays, to indicate whether bays are available or unavailable, the allowed length of time for each bay, and whether a bay is restricted to those holding a disabled parking permit.

- A number of local government organisations have implemented VDT sensors in on-street and activity centre parking bays. Several thousand car parking places are now covered by this technology.

- Communications infrastructure, relays and services are required for the near real time data transmission of parking information to data platforms hosted in the Cloud. Generally these data sets update approximately every two minutes.

- Parking data can be made available in Open Data Platforms for developers, entrepreneurs and members of the public to access and use at no cost. These parties are encouraged to extract and use this data to create smart phone apps, products or services that detail parking information such as available and unavailable on-street parking, and areas and times of high and low parking demand.

- Making this information available in near real time will help people park more efficiently, reducing time spent looking for an available parking bay, resulting in improved traffic flow and lower vehicle emissions. Improved utilisation of parking bays in activity centres has a flow on economic benefit for traders.

- The Australian Government are asked to support the current local governments with parking sensor technology to grow this innovation through the increased provision of initiative grants to ensure improved outcomes for the local community.

- Local governments with parking sensor technology are encouraged to develop programs to implement wireless relay communications and data platforms to make parking data publicly available in near real time.
That the National General Assembly calls for state and territory local government associations to take a leadership role in developing and supporting members in their transition to Smart Communities; and for Australian, State and Territory Government bipartisan support for integrated policies and programs which encourage and support the development of Smart Communities.

Objective:
Local Government is facing increased challenges and economic pressures created by limited revenue growth, environmental load created by human activity, ageing infrastructure, and cost shifting. The expectations of residents and businesses are also changing with Councils required to provide more facilities or infrastructure, better service at lower cost and communicate through multiple channels.

Thinking differently about how Local Government can deliver services in a smarter way, by leveraging the internet, cloud, mobile and social technologies, will enable it to better deliver on community expectations.

Technology alone is not considered the foundation of a Smart Community. How technology is used as part of a wider approach to help the community function effectively is the focus of Smart Community development.

While there are many Councils doing a range of work in this area there is a lack of structured coordination and information sharing, which could fast track the creation of Smart Communities and the nation-wide range of benefits this can offer.

Further, the need for integrated policy and programs to support open data, new soft and hard infrastructure and technology, and to build the skills and capabilities required to successfully develop and operate as Smart Communities, will be critical.

Key Arguments:
The utilisation of Smart Community/City technology is a means to:

- Deliver services and manage assets more effectively and efficiently in the future;
- Better understand our community and its needs through the use of data and information that informs strategic planning and investment decision making;
- Maximise organisational performance and return on investment;
- Increasing community satisfaction; and
- Create a modern and future focussed investment and lifestyle environment in our communities, which is supported and enabled by collaboration between Councils, external stakeholders, businesses and the community.
- A ‘smart’ Council has greater capacity to contribute to and provide leadership to the development of a ‘smart community’ and the flow on social and economic benefits that are generated as a result.

While many Councils are actively exploring, pursuing and progressing as Smart Communities, there is a significant amount of duplication of effort occurring and a lack of industry sector guidance or support available.

There are a number of member-based organisations that have been formed to fill the void arising from a lack of local government industry leadership. While some of these groups are doing some good work, there is a need for sector wide approach to improve efficiency and effectiveness and mitigate the vendor driven development of smart communities which is currently occurring. This is particularly important in communities where skills, knowledge and resources are scarce.

There are opportunities for collaboration, entrepreneurial approaches and embracing disruption and innovation in the Smart Community space, but this can only occur through leadership. The Australian Local Government Association should be actively advocating for the development of integrated policies and programs, across all levels of government, that support the transition of communities to Smart Communities or Cities, as well as providing guidance on efficient and effective Local Government transformation.
Central Highlands Regional Council, QLD

That the National General Assembly calls on the Federal Government to, at the very least, maintain but preferably increase funding for the mobile blackspot programme to connect regional Australia to the digital economy.

**Objective:**
The federal government considered removing or reducing 2018-2019 budget for the blackspot funding programme and, if reduced or removed, regional communities will continue to be disconnected from the digital economy.

Without the adequate level of resources, limited progress will be made against any action plan to address the digital divide and regional communities will continue to fall behind the advanced and rapid pace of the digital economy.

**Key Arguments:**
Despite high speed broadband infrastructure, fibre network, wireless, ADSL and digital services in Emerald that enhance access to social services, education, health care and service business operations, this is not the case for important agricultural pursuits located in extremely close proximity to Emerald and also other regional communities.

Additionally, many homes and business, even within Emerald, are unable to connect to the NBN due to infrastructure in the ground.

In 2017, CHDC in partnership with council commissioned a Digital Audit and Action Plan to understand the gaps in connectivity throughout the region.

This plan identified a number of deficiencies across the region and an action plan was developed in response.

Possible solution: Where regional areas have invested resources towards identifying infrastructure and technological gaps in digital economy participation, provide funding to remediate these gaps and connect regional areas into the digital and technological ecosystem.

90.1
Nillumbik Shire, VIC

That this National General Assembly call on the Australia Government to secure, further Mobile Black Spot funding to increase the safety, well-being and liveability of regional and rural communities.

**Objective:**
The Mobile Black Spot Programme is an Australian Government initiative designed to fulfil a 2013 election commitment to extend mobile phone coverage and industry competition for the provision of coverage in remote, regional and outer metropolitan areas.

The Government has committed $220 million to the Mobile Black Spot Program to invest in telecommunications infrastructure to improve mobile coverage and competition across Australia. This is supported by co-contributions from state and local governments, mobile network operators, businesses and local communities.

Under the first three rounds of the program (round 1, round 2 and the Priority Locations round), the Government’s commitment has leveraged a total investment of more than $680million.

On 10 June 2018, the Australian Government announced it had allocated a further $25 million of Mobile Black Spot Program. At this stage there is no further announcement planned for the Mobile Black Spot Programme.

**Key Arguments:**
More than 10,000 sites were nominated under the Mobile Black Spot Programme as having inadequate mobile phone coverage. In 2019, communication should be a basic necessity, particularly for those living, working and travelling in regional and remote Australia.
This lack of mobile phone coverage severely impacts business, industry, health services, education and other government services and requires serious consideration and commitment to close the inequity in communication services between metropolitan and rural communities. It also poses a significant danger for communities living in regional and rural areas within a bushfire prone landscape. In Victoria, communities saw first-hand the issues created by the combination of mobile phone blackspots, power outages and bushfires. Poor mobile phone coverage in regional and rural areas potentially put people’s lives at risk during the devastating bushfires.

The Mobile Black Spot Program is well over halfway complete and despite the funding committed, only 867 new base stations from more than 10,000 nominated sites have been deployed across the country. Furthermore, not all base stations funded under the first three rounds of the program are all operational.

Council is seeking a commitment to the continuation and strengthening of the Mobile Black Spot Funding to support regional and rural communities. Previous funding rounds have been insufficient to address local blackspot issues, and address this significant infrastructure issue.

90.2
Whitsunday Regional Council, QLD

That this National General Assembly call on the Federal Government to improve regional and remote mobile and data connectivity to ensure access to this essential service across Australia, including rural and remote regions.

**Objective:**
Mobile and data connections are an essential service across Australia.

**Key Arguments:**
Council is seeking support to request that the Commonwealth Government recognise that mobile and data connections are an essential service across Australia and improve this in rural and remote regions.

90.3
Litchfield Council, NT

That the National General Assembly calls on the Federal Government to include identified mobile black spot sites from the Northern Territory in its Mobile Black Spot Program – Priority Locations.

**Objective:**
The Australian Government has committed $220 million to the Federal Mobile Black Spot Program to invest in telecommunications infrastructure to improve mobile coverage and competition across Australia.

The Mobile Blackspot Program has released a priority blackspot sites list in April 2018 that does afford all States and Territories the opportunity to participate in the Program. Specifically, Northern Territory and South Australia are conspicuously absent. The number of priority sites identified in each state is as follows, Queensland – 49, NSW – 31, Victoria – 19, Tasmania – 11 and WA – 7.

The Program provides local governments with the prospect of partnering with other tiers of government, mobile network operators and local communities to improve mobile coverage in their areas, contributing to economic development and community wellbeing. Whilst not all Local Governments will be in a position to bid, they all should be afforded the opportunity to do so on behalf of their communities.

**Key Arguments:**
Supported by co-contributions from state and local governments, mobile network operators (Optus, Telstra and Vodafone), businesses and local communities, four rounds of funding have been released to date.
That the National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to work with rural and regional councils to:

- Develop innovative solutions for the placement of telecommunication infrastructure that takes account of both the challenges of black spot locations and the protection of unique and distinctive natural landscapes and environs.
- Research and trial viable alternatives to tower infrastructure that address black spot challenges whilst protecting unique and distinctive natural landscapes and environs.

**Objective:**

With a vast and unique landscape across Australia, many local government areas are challenged in managing and balancing the competing needs for improved communication whilst protecting the natural environment and the amenity of residents. This motion calls on the Australian Government to work with local government on innovative solutions to improve telecommunication blackspots in a way that is sympathetic to natural landscapes and environs. Alternatives to tower infrastructure are critical to protecting the environment and minimising impacts. Innovation will benefit many local government areas across Australia that are attempting to balance these competing needs.

**Key Arguments:**

- There are currently limited options available to improve communication blackspots, particularly in rural and regional Australia.
- Tower infrastructure for improved communication often impacts on sensitive and distinct landscapes including view lines.
- In situations where Council is an authorising authority it is often difficult to balance the competing interests of the community with respect to communication needs and natural environment protection and amenity.
- Innovative solutions targeting alternatives to towers would provide options that meet the needs of the broader community whilst meeting the expectations of improved communications in rural areas.
- Local Government has an unrivalled understanding of the issue and community needs and expectations and the Australian Government could ensure better outcomes for communities by engaging local government in developing a medium to long term solution that addresses all community needs.

That the National General Assembly (NGA) calls on the Commonwealth Government to amend the Telecommunications Act 1997, to improve the existing standards for the delivery of so called “low impact” facilities, by introducing guidelines or other regulation that requires enhanced consultation with the community and other stakeholders and consideration of community amenity in the design and placement of facilities.

**Objective:**

Telephone companies licensed by the Australian Communications and Media Authority as ‘carriers’ can install so called ‘low-impact’ facilities without seeking state, territory planning or council approval. The location of “low impact” facilities, such as roadside cabinets, (small) radio communications dishes and antennae, cable pits, and public payphones, are not regulated because their size means they are meant to have a low visual impact and be less likely to raise planning, heritage or environmental concerns.

**Key Arguments:**

The Telecommunications Code of Practice, made by the Minister in 1997 and amended in 2002, requires that when a carrier is installing low-impact facilities, it must take all reasonable steps to:

- ensure as little detriment, damage and inconvenience as practicable is caused
- ensure that the land is restored to a condition that is similar to its condition before the installation began
- act in accordance with good engineering practice
• protect the safety of persons and property
• minimise interference with public utilities, roads and paths, traffic and land use
• protect the environment (including ecosystems, people and communities; resources; qualities and characteristics of locations and areas, and the social, economic and cultural aspects of all these)
• co-locate facilities with the existing facilities of other carriers or public utilities, or utilise public easements
• cooperate with any other carriers or utilities engaging in a similar activity for the same land to cause as little detriment, damage and inconvenience as possible
• find out whether it is necessary to notify the Environment Secretary of the installation.

The Code of Practice has not been properly enforced and the local community has complained that facilities like those required for the delivery of the NBN are located in inappropriate areas. Often there is limited engagement about the location of these facilities and, as a result, local amenity is adversely affected.

Clearer, enforceable Codes or Guidelines are needed so that telecommunication companies cannot disregard the views of the local community.

91.1
City of Adelaide, SA

That the National General Assembly call on the Australian Government for changes to the Telecommunications Act 1997 (Cth) and/or the Telecommunications (Low-Impact facilities) Determination 2018 to either:
• Remove public payphones from the definition of “low-impact facility”, or
• Otherwise require planning approval for payphones.

Objective:
The Telstra SmartHub project is a national project involving the installation of digital payphones with associated large format digital signage. The digital payphones replace existing payphones in most cases, although there may be additional ones installed too. At 2.64m high and 1.09 metres wide the digital payphones are considerably bigger than the existing payphones. The signage is a 75-inch LED screen mounted to the back of the payphone housing and a smaller LED screen above the payphone instrument.

According to the Telecommunications (Low-Impact facilities) Determination 2018 under the Telecommunications Act 1997 (Cth), Telstra may install the digital payphones and LED screens without approval (although a permit is required in the City of Adelaide). While the public payphone, cabinet or booth can be used to display advertising related to the supply of standard telephone services, approval is required for commercial third-party advertising.

This is a national roll-out, occurring in five capital cities (Perth, Brisbane, Melbourne, Sydney and Adelaide), in the first instance. Payphones are located throughout Australia in urban, regional and remote areas as part of Telstra’s Universal Service Obligation (USO). The physical environment of local communities, and the capacity to influence planning outcomes, is an interest shared by Local Government Authorities.

Key Arguments:
Payphones were last substantially redesigned in the late 1980s. Customer expectations of services and facilities have changed since then. The new digital payphones offer wi-fi and USB charging points and other features such as emergency messaging that Councils could tap into.

While it is not unreasonable for payphones to be redesigned to meet contemporary demands, there is a question about the reasonableness of a determination that public payphones are a “low impact facility”, given their size, and the inclusion of a large format LED screen for advertising. The planning and road safety issues associated with such signage (illumination, animation, advertisement changeover time, orientation to the roadway, location in relation to traffic lights) exist irrespective of the content of the advertising i.e. whether it is third-party or not.

The effect of the low-impact determination in the USO is that councils and State planning authorities have no role in determining the number or location of payphones. Nor is there authority to deny the advertising component (other than for display of third-party advertising).

It is also noted that Telstra’s planned display of third party advertising in breach of the USO has significant potential to devalue existing commercial arrangements that some Councils have in place for products such as bus shelter advertising.
Telstra has around 17,000 pay phones, yet more than 99% of Australians have access to one commercial mobile network. Usage of payphones when measured between 2010 and 2013 showed to be decreasing dramatically, with reports indicating that only 9 per cent of people had used a payphone in the six months to May 2013.

The 2017 Aust Govt Productivity Commission Inquiry into the Telecommunications USO determined that it may not be required as a voice fixed line is to be made available to every residence and business premise (as guaranteed by the Federal Government with rollout of the NBN), and decided that no change to the USO would be considered until 2032. In recognition of this the roll out of the SmartHubs could be considered premature, particularly given the planning considerations raised by their size and potential use to display advertising content.

Requiring planning approval for the installation of SmartHubs would allow each Council to assess applications with reference to planning considerations relevant to the proposed site. In the case of payphones, those considerations could include matters such as pedestrian safety, the safety of road users, and placement in relation to traffic lights.

92
Manningham City Council, VIC

That the National General Assembly call on the Australian Government to provide grant funding to support development of Local Government data warehouses, master data management repositories, and associated canonical data models. This support would be on the basis that the developments would be used to contribute to a nationwide standard for Local Government data definitions and data warehousing, and could be leveraged by other Councils.

Objective:

- Local government is struggling to provide efficient and cost-effective services given constrained revenue base, increasing demand and expectations from citizens; and opportunities presented by new IT developments such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Data Analytics and Mobile Devices (Apps).
- Councils are essentially investing substantial amounts of money in attempting to understand a large number of very similar data sets, extract and blend this disparate data; and then provide access to new upstream services and channels.
- An ‘Australian Local Government Core Data’ concept based on a common data model and common access services will allow councils to fast-track mobile and internet based solutions for their customers.
- Some Councils have embarked on a Data Management and Business Intelligence strategy developments and are at varying stages of development with data types and sources are very similar across the sector.
- A centralised body could be established to oversee development and maintenance of common data standards including master data for entities such as Person, Organisation, Asset, Service, Supplier, Sensor, Location etc.
- This canonical model will then form the basis of a national data warehouse that could be populated and accessed by each council or indeed government department as required.
- Furthermore State and Federal Government would have direct access to a source of truth that has not been manipulated by broker organisations.

Key Arguments:

- Local government has enormous and increasing amounts of data to administer when providing often over 100+ services to citizens.
- Council data is stored in numerous application silos with each council investing large amounts to understand and access this data.
- Data capture especially via IOT sensor data is growing exponentially as are the opportunities to process this data.
- A common model and central store would facilitate a huge amount of IP sharing across councils and expedite service delivery to citizens and organisations alike.

Local Governments across the country strive to provide services based on a series of complex underlying data sets. These data sets are identical in most cases so each council is investing valuable time and money attempting to understand and use this data. In fact only more advanced councils can even afford to do this.
A common national standard for data definitions and a store of such data would provide huge benefits to councils and citizens alike. Councils should be supported and encouraged in development of, and contribution to this common national standard.

**93**
Albury City Council, NSW

That the National General Assembly calls on Standards Australia to provide more affordable access to the full suite of Australian Standards for the Local Government sector and requests the Australian Government to support that access.

**Objective:**
Local government authorities use an extensive range of Australian Standards across their operations to ensure that delivery and enforcement of services and functions meet approved standards. The cost associated with maintaining access to, or keeping the relevant Australian Standard current, is a significant impost to any one individual local government authority. A more holistic approach that considers all local government authorities is warranted given the significance of Australian Standards on local government authority operations.

**Key Arguments:**
At this time, each local government authority must either purchase the relevant Australian Standard individually, identify specific Australian Standards to individually negotiate a packaged cost, or pay an annual subscription fee to access the full suite of Australian Standards. The annual subscription to the full suite of Australian Standards for each local government authority ranges between $40,000 to $50,000 per annum. Given the broad and changing nature of the functions and activities undertaken by local government authorities, full access to the suite of Australian Standards would ensure that every local government authority maintains currency with the most up to date standard in order to effectively undertake their functions. The current cost associated with accessing the various Australian Standards is prohibitive, particularly for those local government authorities that are small to medium in size or have limited funds. A more united approach to negotiating reasonable and affordable access to these standards is needed.

**94**
Whitsunday Regional Council, QLD

That this National General Assembly call on the Federal, State and Territory Governments to develop a national approach to Local Law infringement management for the sharing of information cross-state boundaries to enable debt recovery.

**Objective:**
It is in the national interest that infringement management, including debt recovery, are managed effectively and that local governments, as the level of government closest to the people, are able to efficiently enact and initiate infringement management.

**Key Arguments:**
Council is seeking a national approach to infringement management and debt recovery, which will allow a more comprehensive and coordinated approach to these matters across state boundaries.
That the National General Assembly call on the Australian Government to modernise the provisions in the Copyright Act 1968 to reflect exemptions to local government authorities that are the same as Commonwealth and State government.

Objective:
Commonwealth and State government agencies are given exemption from the provisions of the Copyright Act 1968 if the act is done for the services of the Commonwealth or State. Given the nature of local government authorities in providing functions and services to their community on limited resources, further consideration should be given to providing the same level of exemption that is afforded to Commonwealth and State government agencies. This would remove uncertainty across the various levels of government, and limit precious resources and funding being spent on managing copyright issues including defending legal action.

Key Arguments:
Local government authorities across Australia regularly use material that may be subject to copyright protection in order to undertake their functions and deliver the services that their communities need. Copyright Collecting Societies are becoming more active in ensuring that the copying or reproduction of their members’ works are appropriately licensed and are taking legal steps to address alleged breaches. Copyright licencing through the various Copyright Collecting Societies adds a significant cost impost, particularly to small and medium local government authorities. This, coupled with the fact that these licensing arrangements do not provide licensing for a significant proportion of copyright material, leaves local government authorities exposed to potential legal action and pulls precious resources and funding away from being able to deliver those functions and services that our local communities need.

That the National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government, to develop Australian standards for the provision of national standards for cycling infrastructure including separated bikeways.

Objective:
Infrastructure provided for people who ride cycles on streets and roads is managed by various road authorities and local councils around Australia.

There is guidance for the design of these facilities (via Australian Standards and ‘Austroads’ Guidelines), however current advice is limited to the provision of basic facilities.

It is widely acknowledged that the provision of a safe and low-stress cycle network would result in cycles being a legitimate transport choice for more people.

‘Cycles’ in this context include bicycles, scooters, cargo bikes, unicycles, tricycles, and other mobility devices that use human power.

Development of a more integrated and standardised approach to a cycling network would involve the installation of specialised infrastructure and traffic control devices, rather than line-marking of cycle lanes, which has been the majority approach in Australia to date.

The development of a safe cycle network would have significant and wide-ranging health, environmental and economic benefits for individuals, wider society and all levels of government.

To fill the gap in applicable standards, many transport authorities have developed their own guidance for the provision of cycling infrastructure, which focus on the types of facilities that could be used by all.
Consistent with the approach for other traffic control devices, it is appropriate that a national set of standards and guidelines be developed to ensure that all relevant authorities are provided.

**Key Arguments:**

People riding cycles benefit in a range of ways - improved physical and mental health, money saved from the alternative car or public transport travel, as well as experiencing flexibility, speed and reliability in travel times.

There are also significant benefits to society when an individual chooses to ride a cycle – congestion on our road or public transport networks is reduced, overall health costs and required investment in public transport and road networks are lower, the impact on our carbon footprint is reduced and noise levels, air quality, the sense of community in our streets and the liveability of our cities improves.

Current levels of cycle riding in Australia are low. Nationally only 1.1% of trips to work are by bike, compared with 68.7% by car. (ABS 2016).

The biggest barrier to getting more people to cycle is a concern for their safety in the road environment. Research has shown that people are much more likely to choose cycling as a transport mode if the infrastructure provided is physically separated from traffic, rather than traditional painted cycle lanes.

There are currently no national standards or guidelines in Australia for the planning, design and implementation of physically separated cycling infrastructure or other facilities that could be used to form a safe and inclusive cycling network.

The national standards/guidelines that are currently in place focus on line-marked cycle lanes and other ‘advisory’ treatments that appeal to a very small section of the community. These guidelines exclude the cycle riding needs of most of the population.

In countries with a long history of cycling, there are well developed national standards and guidelines for the planning, design and construction of appropriate infrastructure that create networks of safe riding environments, which allows cycling to be a legitimate transport choice for all communities.

Countries such as Denmark and the Netherlands have high rates of cycle riding among all sections of their communities, including children riding to school as well as older people riding as part of their daily lives. Cities in these countries generally enjoy a high quality of wellbeing and often rank highly in liveability indices. In these cities the high levels of cycle use helps to reduce congestion, improve air quality, keep the community healthy and happy and reduce the need for investment in infrastructure for traffic and public transport.

It is well documented that providing a connected network of safe cycling facilities that are separated from traffic is likely to significantly increase the number and variety of people that choose to use cycles. This is borne out by the significant increases in cycle use in the various locations where safe facilities have been provided.

As has been experienced in a several cities worldwide, the development of connected networks of safe cycling facilities is likely to have a significant positive impact on Australian cities.

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**Blacktown City Council, NSW**

That the National General Assembly calls on the Commonwealth Government to:

1) Immediately set up an investigation into electricity and gas pricing and specifically their impact on local government and all communities.

2) Take effective action with energy providers for reduction in the cost of energy, in order to assist local government and communities to reduce their escalating expenditure.

**Objective:**
The escalating cost of electricity and gas supplies is an urgent national issue, which directly affects the financial sustainability of local government and the wellbeing of all communities.
Key Arguments:
Local Governments and communities have been hit with unreasonably high increases in both electricity and gas costs. Councils across Australia are experiencing extreme hardship in meeting budget due to unforeseen additional energy costs. These increases are impacting on local services, community wellbeing and investment in renewable energy sources.

The contract price increase for the electricity component in 2019 is typically 40% or more, compared to 2018 contract pricing.

Natural gas pricing has continued to escalate, despite all efforts from local government to see the price stabilise. Councils with high gas usage are having to consider other options to reduce their gas usage to the detriment of their customers and sustainability.

The cost of natural gas continues to escalate due to the sale of this commodity off-shore. In NSW, the current government contract expires in December 2019. Indications are that natural gas will increase by a further 50%, putting extreme financial pressure on councils.

Councils are also faced with reduced subsidies that have limited our funding for effective climate change adaptation and mitigation measures.

Councils across Australia are seeking further support from both the Commonwealth and State Governments to take action with energy retailers to reduce the cost of electricity and gas. Local government’s most significant expenses continues to be street lighting, necessary to maintain safety and security and natural gas for aquatic centres to maintain a liveable standard for the community including local schools and aged care.

Darebin City Council, VIC

That the National General Assembly calls on local government associations to develop and implement a national communications campaign to raise the level of awareness and understanding of the work Councils do in regional and metropolitan Australia and rebuilds the trust in local government as an institution.

Objective:
Levels of trust in government and politicians in Australia are at their lowest levels in history*. Engagement across the three tiers of government is also declining. This very real concerns are set against the backdrop of an information landscape that has seen the decline in influence of traditional media and the increase in prevalence and power of democratic media, where individuals can access, share and produce content. As well, the increasing diversity of our communities and ways people consume media and information makes communicating effectively and clearly even more challenging.

There is a need for the ALGA to lead the development of a national campaign that helps build trust and confidence in local government and strengthens the relationships with our communities and stakeholders. We need a compelling national story that articulates the purpose of local government and contributes to improving overall accountability and transparency.

Key Arguments:
The 2018 report Democracy 2025 by the Museum of Australian Democracy (MoAD) and the Institute for Governance and Policy Analysis at the University of Canberra (UC-IGPA) identified that fewer than 41 per cent of Australian citizens are currently satisfied with the way democracy works in Australia. This is significantly down from 86 per cent a decade ago.

Satisfaction has fallen particularly sharply since 2013 when 72 per cent of Australian citizens were satisfied. Approximately three in 10 respondents trust federal government and less than four in 10 trust state or territory government or local government.

Only 47 per cent of millennials trust local government, 37 per cent of Generation X and less than half of the Baby Boomers.

The levels of social trust are also in decline, with social trust between people falling below 50 per cent for the first time to 47 per cent and there is a group of people who are completely disconnected from traditional politics. This group, in particular, are very difficult to reach.
However, the report also showed here were also strong levels of support for reforms aimed at creating a stronger community or local focus to decision-making. And people want to access detailed information about innovative reforms, projects and policies.

A strategic and coordinated communications campaign led by the ALGA will contribute significantly to improving the level of trust in local government, raising the awareness and understanding of what Councils deliver to their local communities and strengthen transparency and accountability.

* Democracy 2025 by the Museum of Australian Democracy (MoAD) and the Institute for Governance and Policy Analysis at the University of Canberra (UC-IGPA)

99

**Shire of Christmas Island**

That the National General Assembly of Local Government (NGA) supports the local governments in the External Territories (Norfolk Island and the Indian Ocean Territories) in their attempt to be able to access comparative funding from the Commonwealth to that of other local governments in Australia, which have access to funding opportunities from their respective State Governments.

**Objective:**
The Norfolk Island Regional Council commenced on 1 July 2016 under Commonwealth statute. It operates under the NSW Local Government Act 1993 applied by the Commonwealth pursuant to the Norfolk Island Applied Laws Ordinance 2016. Norfolk Island does not belong to a State or Territory, therefore there is no equality of access to services and grant funding equivalent to that which is accessible by local governments belonging to a State or Territory.

**Key Arguments:**

External Territories are governed under Commonwealth statute and operate under applied Commonwealth law. They do not belong to a State or Territory; therefore there is no equality of access to services and grant funding, equivalent to that which is accessible by local governments belonging to a State or Territory.

All local governments, and the citizens in these, should have equal access to the funding opportunities that are distributed through the taxation system.

The Constitution of Australia states:

117. Rights of residents in States

A subject of the Queen, resident in any State, shall not be subject in any other State to any disability or discrimination which would not be equally applicable to him if he were a subject of the Queen resident in such other State.

Turning now to the Norfolk Island Regional Council, which came into being on 1 July 2016 following the removal of self-government by the Australian Parliament in 2015. This change brought with it a raft of new fees, charges and other imposts to a geographically isolated island in the Pacific, where economies of scale are unavailable to the island’s small businesses. With limited means to pay competitive wages, Norfolk Islanders have been, on one hand, offered a social security safety net that is geared towards the cost of mainland living, and on the other hand have had some hefty additional costs to bear, meaning they pay a great deal more than residents of mainland Australia.

As a very limited example of living costs, Norfolk Islanders currently pay: $0.71 per kWh for electricity; $2.41 for a litre of petrol; while 1 litre of fresh milk can be between $9 and $11.

Currently, Norfolk Island Regional Council delivers many State-type services. It also provides electricity generation and reticulation, telecommunications, and owns and operates an international airport, and yet Norfolk Island is precluded from the State-level funding.

Many of these issues also apply to the Indian Ocean external Territories of Christmas and Cocos Islands.
External territories are not asking for hand-outs, but instead seek to be able to apply for competitive funding grants the same as any other local government authority in Australia. The Norfolk Island Regional Council is excluded from this process.

It is worth noting that Norfolk Island is an external territory under the authority of the Commonwealth of Australia; has a New South Wales postcode; votes in the Federal seat of Bean in the ACT, but not in State elections; and has an international phone number that makes communications with the outside world prohibitively expensive.

In summary, like the Indian Ocean Territories, Norfolk Island is different and complex. Norfolk Island wants the opportunity to apply alongside every other local government area for competitive funding grants.

Central Highlands Regional Council, QLD

That the National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to support the reinvigoration of core horticultural research disciplines within all states of Australia, to service the needs of the horticulture sector that is facing ever increasing challenges in profitable production, export market access and biosecurity (to name just a few).

Objective:
Australian horticulture is worth approximately $9 billion annually. However, maintaining and growing the value of horticulture is continually increasing in complexity. Quarantine restrictions, agrichemical residues, biosecurity etc, all influence horticultural profitability. These issues are all technically challenging, and rely on specialised expertise to develop solutions. In the past ~20yrs a decline in this expertise has taken place. Positions have been lost from state departments of agriculture, which previously bridged the gap between the farm gate and more fundamental research (e.g. universities), by supporting industry-focused, applied research and extension. More specifically, key “ology” positions have been lost: entomology, pathology, physiology etc. In contrast there has been a surge in the biosecurity discipline, but this discipline has been focussed on issues that, if biosecurity systems are functioning properly, are absent from the farm. This scenario has led to the neglect of issues which limit profitability on a daily basis. The lost expertise is what is needed to solve the day to day production limitations AND provide the technical expertise to underpin responses to biosecurity system failures; such as the eradication of diseases like citrus canker. Hence a reinvigoration of these research disciplines is needed to support our valuable horticulture industries.

Key Arguments:
Case study of the Australian citrus industry:
Notable examples of citrus-focussed positions no longer being filled, or no longer having any significant citrus involvement, include: Technical Advisor to Citrus Australia Limited (formerly citrus pathologist Pat Barkley); citrus pathologist positions in most state departments of agriculture (e.g. Dr Bob Emmett - Vic, Dr Peter Taverner & Dr Nancy Cunningham - SA, Dr Andrew Miles & Peter Mayers - Qld), citrus entomologists (e.g. Dan Smith & Chris Freebairn, Qld), horticulturists/physiologists (e.g. Dr Michael Treeby, Peter Gallasch) and local Industry Development Officers (e.g. Megan Connelly, NT, Simon Powell, Qld, Sandra Hardy, NSW). No doubt several examples have been missed.

Examples of emerging issues exacerbated by the loss of expertise:
• Citrus canker: this is a bacterial disease of citrus that has been discovered in the Northern territory and is currently under eradication at a cost of ~$20M. Variants and relatives of this disease have been discovered in the NT approximately every 10 years since the early 1990’s, resulting in eradication campaigns for two of the three past detections. However, in spite of the frequency and expense in these cases, citrus-specific expertise in the NT is lacking. Citrus canker also resulted in a major eradication campaign in Emerald in 2004 at a cost of close to $18M, yet citrus-specific pathology expertise is also absent in Qld.
• Gall wasp: Gall wasp is a pest of citrus that has steadily been growing in severity in several parts of Australia including Qld, however citrus entomology positions within the Qld agriculture department have been lost, with no effort to replace these staff. As a result the pest has been able to develop to damaging levels before any effort has been made to develop solutions.
• Huanglongbing (HLB) disease: HLB is the most devastating disease of citrus worldwide. The disease, and insect that spreads it, are currently absent from Australia, but their presence in countries immediately to Australia’s north poses a real risk to Australia. The seriousness of the disease attracted over 500 delegates from 23 countries to the recent International Research Conference for HLB in California. In spite of the threat this disease poses to Australian citrus production, specific expertise in the states most at risk (Qld & NT) are largely non-existent.
These few examples have been provided to illustrate the reactive approach to dealing with technical issues of importance to the citrus industry. It would be far more beneficial to growers to have a consistent and reliable pool of technical expertise through a proactive approach to technical resourcing, rather than “calamity funding” that sees large sums of money spent after the fact. Furthermore, the existing reactive approach to technical problems has done little to develop and maintain the necessary expertise for production challenges faced today and in the future.

Leeton Shire Council, NSW

That the National General Assembly requests the Australian Government to honour its intention contained within its reservation (1) to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and enact legislation to specifically implement the terms of article 4 (a) being:

(a) Shall declare an offence punishable by law all dissemination of ideas based on racial superiority or hatred, incitement to racial discrimination, as well as all acts of violence or incitement to such acts against any race or group of persons of another colour or ethnic origin, and also the provision of any assistance to racist activities, including the financing thereof;

Further, that in keeping with the terms of Article 4 (c) the Australian Government prohibit a member of parliament from utilising parliamentary resources for the purposes to promote or incite racial discrimination.

Objective:
With almost 50 per cent of Australians born overseas or with a parent born overseas and almost one quarter of Australians speaking languages other than English in their homes, Australia is a truly diverse nation. This diversity brings not only a richness to our society but, sadly, creates an environment for racism and hate-speech inflamed commentary to exist. Support for this motion will assist in the growth of Australia as a nation that genuinely welcomes “those who’ve come across the seas” and will help build an inclusive and safe society for all. Recent events have demonstrated how unchecked racism can have catastrophic outcomes for communities and cultures who seek only safety and peace. Ratifying Article 4(a) will establish a mechanism for remedial action to be taken before unbridled bigotry becomes a life threatening reality. Many local government areas across the country actively welcome those from other nations and faiths to share our bounteous plains. Action on Article 4(c) of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination will provide the necessary framework to shape a future nation where diversity of origin and belief are welcomed and celebrated.

Key Arguments:
In light of events following the Christchurch New Zealand mosques incidents on Friday, 15 March and as a Council which is a member of the 161-strong cohort of Refugee Welcome Zones across Australia we have made a commitment to welcoming refugees into the community, upholding the human rights of refugees, demonstrating compassion for refugees and enhancing cultural and religious diversity in the community. These newer members of our community are drawn from a diverse group of cultures, religious beliefs and social backgrounds with the hope of creating a new life for themselves and their families in regional areas of Australia. This migration is valuable to the local economy through the provision of on farm labour to meet demands of a predominantly agricultural region. Attracting persons of diverse cultural backgrounds is made more complex when representatives at a Federal level are seen to be actively campaigning against such migration. As such, it is our contention that referred to section of the International Convention is well overdue for ratification by the Federal Government with adequate penalties put in place.

The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination 1966 was one of the first human rights treaties to be adopted by the United Nations (UN). The Convention is widely supported, with more than 156 countries (four-fifths of the membership of the UN) having ratified it. Australia ratified the Convention on 30 September 1975 with its only reservation being:

1. The Government of Australia ... declares that Australia is not at present in a position specifically to treat as offences all the matters covered by article 4 (a) of the Convention. Acts of the kind there mentioned are punishable only to the extent provided by the existing criminal law dealing with such matters as the maintenance of public order, public mischief, assault, riot, criminal libel, conspiracy and attempts. It is the intention of the Australian Government, at the first suitable moment, to seek from Parliament legislation specifically implementing the terms of article 4 (a). Article 4(a) requires that each of the following be declared an offence punishable by law:
all dissemination of ideas based on racial superiority or hatred, incitement to racial discrimination, as well as all acts of
violence or incitement to such acts against any race or group of persons of another colour or ethnic origin, and also the
provision of any assistance to racist activities, including the financing thereof.

102
City of Onkaparinga, SA

That the National General Assembly calls on the Federal Government to significantly raise Newstart, Youth Allowance and all underfunded social security payments and that all payments be indexed at the same rate as the pension, as this has been recognised as an absolute minimum standard of living.

Objective:
Newstart is a national issue.

Key Arguments:
The ALGA National General Assembly of 2018 passed a motion calling for a raise to Newstart Allowance.
The rate of Newstart is acknowledged to be grossly inadequate at a rate of $278 per week ($15k per year) and now is in its' 25th year without a raise in real terms, it not only harms the health of unemployed persons and their ability to find work, but also increases the strain on local governments. Focussing on the future - we would like for Newstart and all social security payments to be immediately raise to a liveable standard.

102.1
Roper Gulf Regional Council, NT

That the National General Assembly calls for the Australian Government to work with local government to look into future energy needs and costs for Regional Councils throughout Australia to build-up resilience to environmental factors.

Objective:

Key Arguments:
This motion is with regard to the reliance on diesel energy generation in remote towns where several small towns could be converted to solar and small town battery as well as Council services and the running of vehicles and heavy plant on diesel. That the notion that fuel rebates have been made available in the past directly to Local Government needs a long term commitment form the Commonwealth to divert these funds to local, regional and remote arterial so that communities and Councils can opt for less fuel dependant models of vehicles such as four wheel drives etc.

103
Wyndham City, VIC

That the National General Assembly calls on the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Transport and Infrastructure Council to expand their Terms of Reference to include the prioritisation of identified Employment and Innovation Hubs across Australia as places to bring together new high-value and innovative businesses, educational institutions and researchers.

Objective:
This motion addresses Key Question 2 in the Future Focused Discussion Paper guide to 2019 NGA Motions.

Key Arguments:
Nearly all States and Territories have Employment and Innovation Clusters, Hubs or similar.
Rather than reinvent the wheel, this motion calls for all levels of government to collaborate to harness more advantages from these hubs.

ALGA can help to drive a national focus through COAG’s Transport and Infrastructure Council on innovation and employment with the aim to lift these hubs and related policy and investment to ensure they can play their role in addressing technological change and disruption.

104
Roper Gulf Regional Council, NT

That the National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to support the provision of essential aged care and disability services and infrastructure in regional and remote towns.

Objective:

Key Arguments:
This motion is in relation to the development of Aged and Disability Care infrastructure where eligible clients do not receive similar services and opportunities as others living in urban centres.

105
Frankston City, VIC

That the National General Assembly call on the Australian Government to address the need for strong food security measures to protect the public from food contamination. This request is to be made due to various instances of interference in food security (i.e. needles found in vegetables) over the past twelve months.

Objective:

Food security is a national issue that has the potential to affect all Australian’s and food businesses. All Australians should have access to affordable, safe and nutritious foods within their community.

This issue should be debated due to the high risk of public health and safety concerns and the significant economic consequence on food industry and the government if an incident was to occur. With new emerging trends and food safety risks on the rise, there must be an improvement to the current food safety standards and stronger security measures must be implemented.

Key Arguments:
Stronger security measures are required to ensure that the public’s safety and health is protected. New food policy should be developed and implemented to address the recent food security issues Australia experienced, and current policies, including the National Food Plan should be reviewed and strengthened where required.

Further commitment is also required from the Federal Government to provide the enhancement of local and state initiatives that will deliver more accessibility to affordable, safe and nutritious food. As such, this will reduce the consequences of a food security incident occurring in Australia.

Food industry should establish and develop a network for information sharing to discuss food security, hygiene and safety of food products. Improved education and monitoring needs to occur across food growers, importers and retail outlets to gain compliance of safety standards, which may require collaborative approach between state and local government.
That the National General Assembly call on the Australian and State and Territory governments to ensure food security and sustainability for future generations, including introduction of national legislation to protect the ‘right to farm’.

Objective:

Key Arguments:
Although State Governments have provisions to preserve prime agricultural land, there are numerous occasions when such land is alienated or the ability of farmers to continue normal farming practices compromised as a result of urban encroachment and lifestyle type developments.

That the National General Assembly calls on the Federal Government to implement measures that aim to relieve local government infrastructure funding pressures, including:

• The creation of a dedicated funding program for local government community infrastructure
• A more equitable distribution of infrastructure funding to the states, that takes into account population distribution and growth impacts.

Objective:
ALGA’s National State of the Assets 2015 report and Future Focussed Discussion Paper 2019 include the following findings:

• the gross replacement value of local government infrastructure for all Australian councils is estimated at $438 billion
• $47 billion of assets (11%) are rated as being in poor or very poor condition
• $31 billion of the asset stock (7%) has poor function, requiring upgrading to meet current or emerging local and regional service level targets for safety, compliance, social, environmental and economic performance
• $31 billion of assets (7%) have poor capacity and require augmenting to support growth trends.

Key Arguments:
Infrastructure, and specifically the growing shortfall in infrastructure funding, is consistently rated as one of the highest strategic risks faced by councils.

“... councils are experiencing an ever-widening asset renewal gap, which is likely to become even greater as the impacts of rate capping and pressure to minimise rate increases becomes more evident nationally. A 2014 report by the Victorian Auditor General estimated that the renewal gap for Victorian councils in 2012 was $225.3 million, but that the cumulative renewal gap would grow to $2.3 billion by 2026.” (2017 Australian Local Government Risk Report, Aon Risk Solutions, p.7)

A significant proportion of the key services delivered by councils is supported by infrastructure. Failure to address the asset renewal gap will result in infrastructure that is unsafe, not fit-for-purpose and unable to deliver on its intended use. This will negatively impact on the services that councils are able to provide to their communities and subsequently on the quality of life of those communities. Ageing infrastructure also has the potential to place the community at risk.

The impact of infrastructure that is in poor condition is not limited to local communities. Council infrastructure forms part of a national network that delivers broader social, economic and environmental benefits. Strategic investment in local infrastructure by the Federal Government would support the delivery of national goals relating to growth, productivity and competitiveness.
108
Horsham Rural City, VIC

That the National General Assembly call upon the Federal Government to develop a long-term plan for investment in regional cities as a key to maintaining the liveability of the regions they support, attract business investment and to provide high quality health, education, recreation and cultural facilities.

Objective:
Investment in regional infrastructure is a key to supporting the ‘liveability’ of regional cities to attracting business investment and to providing high quality health, education, recreation and cultural services. Budget restraints and future rates capping, combined with a growing need for infrastructure renewal is placing considerable strain on regional cities.

Key Arguments:
As regional hubs, regional cities support surrounding towns and districts through the provision of education, health, financial, transport and social services, as well as retail, sport and recreation, cultural and tourism amenities and activities. Most regional cities have the capacity to accommodate more people and attract new businesses.

Government investment needs to be focused on creating jobs, increasing business investment, increasing exports from our region and increasing opportunities through innovation and diversification. Additionally, this focus needs to encourage private sector investment and collaboration.

Key focus areas for investment are:
- Jobs and Business Growth to incentivise business growth and employment opportunities
- Population Growth and Liveability to facilitate population growth and enhance liveability
- Transport and Connectivity to improve road and rail infrastructure to enable better connectivity.

Rail, air and road freight and passenger networks between regional cities and state capitals are vital and government investment should look to improve these over the next 10 years.

Enhancement of education opportunities in regional cities is the key to having a well trained professional workforce.

Government investment in maintaining and developing regional TAFE’s and Universities is essential.

To promote the retention of young people and professionals, enhance the “liveability” of our regional cities and assist them to build on their individual “points of attraction”.

Infrastructure requirements have typically been well researched and justified. In Western Victoria the priorities are:
- Western Highway duplication and upgrades
- Improvement in mobile phone coverage
- Standardisation of rail freight to increase freight efficiency, reduce travel time and rail costs and reduce the number of large trucks on the Western Highway
- The further return of regional passenger rail services
- New interconnector in the grid between Victoria and South Australia to build capacity for renewable energy
- A long term investment plan for regional cities, aligned to unique infrastructure needs of each region will enable better planning and leveraging of the local and state government contributions.

109
Mitchell Shire, VIC

That National General Assembly call on the Federal Government to:
1) Increase the Roads to Recovery funding to $800 million per annum
2) Broaden the Bridges Renewal Program criteria.

Objective:
That National General Assembly call on the Federal Government to increase its funding commitment to the Roads to Recovery program to $800 million per annum and broaden the scope of the Bridges Renewal Program criteria to improve
liveability, connectivity and linkages within towns as well as safety in the event of fires, accidents or other unforeseen emergencies.

Key Arguments:
Due to an increase in population growth and industry development across Australian cities and towns, this has resulted in significant pressure on current road networks, with major roads being unable to cope with current traffic and heavy vehicle volumes. As a result of the above communities are increasingly concerned by traffic congestion already experiencing long commute times and frustrations in planning daily life journeys to be able to better participate in work, leisure, and family activities. A commitment, to increased funding for road maintenance and a broader equitable criterion to the Bridges Renewal Program is paramount. This provides the ability for local governments to enhance access, connectivity and safety for local communities and facilitate higher productivity vehicle access.

109.1
City of Wagga Wagga, NSW

That the National General Assembly calls on the Federal Government to restore the 2019/20 to 2023/24 Roads to Recovery funding allocations to at least the equivalent funding level of the Roads to Recovery Program 2014/15-2018/19.

Objective:
This issue contributes to the implantation of ALGA’s Strategic Plan 2017-2020 and its objectives to strengthen Local Government in the areas of financial sustainability and infrastructure. In particular, Strategies 3.1 and 3.3 to ensure a safe, effective, sustainable and adequately funded transport system for all local communities including roads, ports and airports; and securing permanent and doubled funding of the Roads to Recovery program respectively.

The Roads to Recovery Program supports the maintenance of the nation’s local road infrastructure asset, which facilitates greater access for Australians and improved safety, economic and social outcomes

Key Arguments:
Regional NSW has seen unprecedented capital expenditure from State and Federal Government in recent times; however, this provides increased operational costs for regional local governments. Local Governments require ongoing support from State and Federal Governments to maintain assets or risk seeing limited growth in regions as opposed to metropolitan areas. With the total road network in NSW is around 184,859km in length, approximately 80% of these are classified as Local Roads. With cost pressures across all asset classes, inadequate levels of rate pegging and the inability to generate significant sources of alternative income in regional areas, the infrastructure backlog relating to roads in particular continues to grow. Any reduction in current funding levels will be readily evident to communities through deteriorating local road infrastructure, resulting in greater travel times, reduced productivity and a potential increase in fatal and serious injury crashes where the National Road Safety Strategy 2011-2020 target of reducing these by at least 30 per cent is also at risk.

Regional development requires ongoing tri-partisan funding from Federal, State and Local Governments. An inquiry into decentralisation undertaken by the Federal Government highlighted that regional local governments could not thrive without strong investment from Federal and State Governments.

The recently announced Roads to Recovery Program for 2019/20 to 2023/24 while recognising that there had been an increase in 2015/16 predominantly from the fuel excise, resulted in a significant reduction to the current level of Roads to Recovery funding. In the case of the City of Wagga Wagga it was a reduction in funding of $4.9M or 37% less than the current Program. This is another significant impact on the back of the freeze on indexation to the Financial Assistance Grants several years ago, whereby that was not reinstated to the same level as though the freeze had not occurred.

The Roads to Recovery Program provides critical funding in assisting Local Government attempt to meet the challenge of maintaining the extensive local road network. Without appropriate maintenance of the network, regional local governments cannot cater for growing economies nor support growing populations.
That the National General Assembly calls on the Federal Government to continue the Bridge Renewal Program to ensure security of transport networks for industry and connected communities alike.

Objective:
The State of the Assets Report (2015) shows councils own timber bridges with a replacement value of $3.9 billion. Of these bridges, 22 percent are in poor or very poor condition, with many owned by councils which have little capacity to make the necessary improvements. Local government strongly welcomed the much-needed Bridges Renewal Program of $380 million over five years, aimed at helping councils address this very substantial problem, particularly in regard to timber bridges.

Inadequately maintained, particularly poor and very poor road bridges can have serious road safety outcomes and adversely affect Australia’s productivity.

Bridge load restrictions and closures cost national productivity and regional jobs.

The Bridges Renewal Program deserves support from all sides of politics.

In reviewing the outcomes of the Bridges Renewal Program, the Australian National Audit Office has reported favourably on 20 January 2016 that “the clear line of sight between the assessment results and the funding decisions helps to demonstrate equity of decision-making and guard against accusations of political bias. In addition, the ANAO’s analysis of the award of funding did not identify any evident political bias.”

Key Arguments:
Local Government owns and manages around 75 percent of the national road network (by length). The State of the Assets Report (2015) estimates the total replacement cost for these roads and other transport assets such as bridges is about $180 billion.

Maintaining the local road system is one of local Government’s major tasks. In most councils, it is the single largest item of expenditure.

Total annual expenditure on local roads by councils is estimated to be in excess of $7 billion.

However, the State of the Assets Report (2015), commissioned by ALGA, estimates that around 11 percent of local government transport assets with a replacement value of around $20 billion, are in poor or very poor condition, and in need of urgent maintenance and or renewal.

Inadequately maintained, particularly poor and very poor roads can have serious road safety outcomes.

Successive studies commissioned by ALGA, including from PriceWaterhouseCoopers (2006), JRA and Associates (2010, 2013 and 2015) consistently show an infrastructure backlog and an underspend within the Local Government sector of at least $1.2 billion per annum.

The State of the Assets Report (2015) shows councils own timber bridges with a replacement value of $3.9 billion. Of these bridges, 22 percent are in poor or very poor condition, with many owned by councils which have little capacity to make the necessary improvements. Local government strongly welcomed the much-needed Bridges Renewal Program of $380 million over five years, aimed at helping councils address this very substantial problem, particularly in regard to timber bridges.

However, given the magnitude of this infrastructure management task, the Australian Government should make this program permanent to allow greater productivity benefits to be realised.

Bridge load restrictions and closures cost national productivity and regional jobs.

Generally, local government bridges were designed and built decades ago, and are no longer fit for purpose. As a result, vehicle access to parts of the local road network may be more limited as road providers try to balance access with protection of the road assets from vehicle damage. Limited access frequently requires high productivity vehicles to “break down” to smaller configurations at the start or end of the journey, requiring drivers to depart production facilities with only one trailer
attached, drive to suitable assembly point adjacent on approved high productivity road before returning to collect subsequent trailers, and then assemble all in a double or triple configuration.

This inefficient process can also occur at journey’s end. This process negates some of the benefits of higher mass limit reforms.

“The first/last mile challenge needs to be addressed to improve heavy vehicle access to the road network. Road providers need to make targeted investments to remove restrictions to access for high productivity vehicles at key locations.” National Transport Commission, Heavy Vehicle Charging and Investment Project, July 2013.

110
Central Highlands Regional Council, QLD

That the National General Assembly calls on the Minister of Home Affairs to ensure that any new regulatory security requirements imposed by the Federal Government on regional airports that result in significant cost increases, should be offset with funding assistance opportunities to ensure regional communities are not further disadvantaged.

Objective:
Most security-controlled airports in Australia are Local Government owned. Funding shortfalls are recouped from ratepayers and the community (e.g. additional charges on top of airfares).

Federally imposed changes to security requirements have impacts including ongoing staffing costs, building/infrastructure changes, floor space, additional facilities and capabilities. In 2018, enhanced security screening requirements were announced, and the Federal Government made funding available only to purchase new screening machines. Associated costs regarding changes to buildings, ongoing manpower and maintenance costs, floor space lost (or requiring expansion) are not funded.

Moreover, it is a national issue as the Federal Government must impose aviation security under obligations they have with international treaties (Chicago Convention). Aviation security is a Federal responsibility. Unlike the Defence force, international aid, or similar, the Federal Government imposes its responsibilities on individual airports that must then fund the cost of the international responsibility. Committing Australia to ever increasing security is then a mostly cost-less exercise by the Federal Government.

The benefits of aviation is national. The cost of an incident will impact the national economy. Due to passenger numbers, capital cities receive the highest benefit of aviation security, whilst passengers from remote communities pay more for the same level of security.

Key Arguments:
• In 2018 the Office of Transport Security (now part of the Department of Home Affairs) notified airports of additional security requirements to be implemented by 31/12/2020.
• A grant was included in the 2018-2019 Federal budget to assist airports in purchasing some of the new equipment (such as body scanners) needed at some airports.
• Typically, the cost of screening machines as part of delivering the federally required security requirements makes up around only 5% of the annual cost of complying with security requirements. Other costs include manpower, administration, changes to building and infrastructure, additional floor space consumed that in small terminals must be recreated elsewhere, new expensive maintenance regimes etc.
• The Federal grant is clearly inadequate.
• Security at airports are in place to keep the national aviation system safe. Likely terrorist targets are not small prop aircraft with minimal people on board being used as a weapon against an indistinct regional or rural town building. Risk based evidence shows that terrorists want to cause mass panic by hitting well-known and visible ground targets or cause mass loss of life on high capacity jets between capital cities. As such, regional communities carry the cost of keeping the national aviation system safe. Regional communities unfortunately do not have high enough travel numbers to defray the costs imposed.
• The benefits to aviation is national. An adverse event will impact the national economy, local and international tourism sectors amongst others. The Australian Government impose ever increasing security regimes on regional airports because of the national obligations Australia has as a contracting state to the Chicago Convention. As such, aviation security is then a public good and a national responsibility.
• Aviation security is no different to national security, the Australian Federal Police or Defence Force. As a national benefit and a national public good, the cost must be carried federally.
• Money to pay for the Federal shortfall in funding must either be collected from passengers or from rate payers.
• Federal Government should carry the cost of Federal Government responsibilities and Federal Government decisions.

111
Melbourne City, VIC

That the National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:

1) Formally review and rewrite procurement policies for all Australian Government departments to require a level of recyclable content in materials procured, to assist in the creation of domestic markets.
2) Pass new legislation during 2019 that applies strong national product stewardship laws, creating significant disincentives to companies to mass produce or import products (including packaging) that are not economically recyclable.

Objective:
This is a national issue because:
• The regulatory lever for commercial waste minimisation sits primarily at a federal level.
• Government can play a lead role in driving demand for recycled products. This leverage is greater at a national level and with all three levels of government involved.

It therefore should be negotiated at the ALGA National General Assembly because:
• Waste management is a critical national issue for Australia.
• Local government is a key player in solving the current waste challenges.

Key Arguments:
Australia is facing a waste crisis. Volumes of waste keep increasing and the demand and prices for recyclable materials has fallen dramatically in the wake of the decision by China in early 2018 to close their doors to imported recyclable materials. Recently all recyclables from the City of Melbourne (and many other municipalities) were sent to landfill as a result of the inability of recycling contractors to take recyclables. In addition access to landfills is becoming more difficult and the ongoing use of landfills has significant environmental impacts including greenhouse gases and the potential for leakage of toxic chemicals.

Local government is at the ‘end of the line’ in the waste cycle as it is responsible for waste collection and disposal of waste. Little effort is being made to prevent the generation of waste.

The key challenge with waste is that resources are cheap (not properly priced given the impact of resource extraction on the environment) and the disposal of waste is cheap (again the impact on the environment is not fully costed). Effort is therefore required to:
• Prevent the generation of waste.
• Increase the demand for recycled materials.

These motions aim to:
• Prevent waste generation through regulation at the federal level.
• Increase the demand for recycled materials through leveraging the significant purchasing power of government.
That the National General Assembly calls upon the federal government to:

1) Move responsibility for packaging disposal to product manufacturers, suppliers and retailers; and
2) Amend Federal Government procurement process so that always incorporates a mandated percentage of products made from recycled and repurposed material.

Objective:
This motion seeks the NGA’s support for potential federal legislative and/or policy change to assist local governments to meet local community needs whilst reducing demand on waste removal services and addressing to some extent market/packaging industry accountability.

Key Arguments:
Local government sector has responsibility for waste disposal and is increasingly pressured to reduce material going to land fill. Ongoing practice of extensive packaging of products and a lack of leadership in the demand for products made from recycled materials puts pressure on the environment and shifts costs to the community. Promoting responsibility at source and appropriate re-use will have the effect of reducing waste and reducing this pressure on local government, the environment and the community. The resultant reduction in demand for new materials from limited resources and the promotion of a circular economy will aid local job creation while improving sector sustainability.

That the National General Assembly calls upon the Federal Government to:

1) Increase aid to farmers and business affected by the current drought as it intensifies; and
2) That a transparent drought response policy be formalised with learning from the current drought, which includes proactive response as well as reactive.

Objective:
Much of NSW is in the grips of a massively debilitating drought, which is now breaking records in terms of the hottest and driest period recorded. Government and agencies are responding and appear to be building response plans as the drought intensifies, having largely abolished their former approach to drought support.

The need to help is however intensifying with the drought and more needs to be done. Accordingly, the following Motion is suggested for the National General Assembly.

Key Arguments:
Much of NSW is in the grips of a massively debilitating drought, which is now breaking records in terms of the hottest and driest period recorded. Government and agencies are responding and appear to be building response plans as the drought intensifies, having largely abolished their former approach to drought support.

The need to help is however intensifying with the drought and more needs to be done. Accordingly, the following Motion is suggested for the National General Assembly;
**113**

**Forbes Shire Council, NSW**

That the National General Assembly calls on the Federal Government to provide ongoing assistance for drought preparedness in the form of low interest innovation, water infrastructure and drought assistance loans, training and professional development in business management for farmers and continued support for Rural Financial counsellors to work with farmers long term, with the understanding that drought is part of the normal cycle of farming and needs to be planned for.

**Objective:**

Currently 99% of NSW is in drought with Australia as a whole experiencing rainfall deficiency and drought conditions in conjunction with record heat over summer months. Rural areas of Australia are under extreme duress, some areas especially in rural Queensland have been experiencing continuous drought for nearly 7 years. It is clear drought preparedness is a nationwide issue as all areas of Australia face drought at some time and all areas of Australia contribute to vital agricultural production. Federal assistance and planning can help “drought proof” the country and in turn reduce the impact drought has on agricultural production, exports, the economy, people’s lifestyle and the assistance needed at times of crisis.

**Key Arguments:**

- There is a huge need to expand and foster long term investment by farmers in drought infrastructure. The measures that support drought preparedness will not be taken up during drought due to the hardship faced, however in good times these measures are likely to be adopted and best utilized. These long term measures must be available all the time not just at times of crisis.

- The Farm Household Assistance is the most controversial drought support measure available. It is taxable so doesn’t offer farmers long term assistance and the need to repay this when tax thresholds are reached can impact on their ability to recover from drought. The basis of this assistance is in contradiction to some of the most basic farm management recommendations in drought which highlights destocking as one of the first actions to be taken. The process of destocking boosts income which may result in farmers needing to pay tax or have their FHA cancelled.

- Other issues with this type of assistance are in regards to how assets are treated, when assets such as land and livestock are needed for farmers to extract themselves from drought. Only 10% of eligible applicants are receiving this payment due to people not being able to negotiate eligibility criteria and experiencing difficulties with the bureaucratic process.

**114**

**Sunshine Coast Regional Council, QLD**

That the National General Assembly calls on the Federal Government to develop options (in partnership with local governments, state governments, bulk water providers and water retailers) that improve drought resilience across Australia – particularly with regard to the agricultural sector – through more efficient storage, movement and use of all types of water, including recycled water and storm/rain water.

**Objective:**

The aim of the motion is to encourage greater collaboration between all three levels of government to achieve longer-term water security for drought affected agricultural communities by considering options for delivering water to where it is needed most, when it is needed.

Strengthening the ongoing arability of drought affected land will have the flow on effect of generating greater resilience and productivity of the agricultural industry and improved food supply and economic outcomes for the whole nation.

From a local government perspective, a coordinated approach to water security solutions by all tiers of government will support the future viability and prosperity of towns and communities which support – and are supported by – the nation’s agricultural industry.

Whilst rain has fallen in parts across Australia, it remains crucial that the nation’s water security and distribution need to be improved to assist in mitigating the impact of future drought events.
Key Arguments:
The importance of improving water use efficiency and drought resilience across many parts of Australia has never been more apparent.

In its analysis of the 2018 drought, the Australian Bureau of Agriculture and Resource Economics and Sciences noted that rainfall to October 2018 had been “as poor as any period in the last 20 years”. The report further noted that rainfall in New South Wales alone was the third lowest in history. As at 1 August 2018, there were 23 local governments and four part local government areas in Queensland that were drought declared, representing around 60% of the state. The New South Wales government declared 100% of that state in drought that same month.

With the attention of both the Federal and State governments focused on supporting the agricultural sector survive the impacts of prolonged drought and the clear changes that are evident in our weather patterns, it is timely to be encouraging all levels of government and the water utilities to work together on more innovative approaches to moving water – including manufactured and recycled water – to where it is needed most.

Current indicators suggest that approximately 84% of the nation’s recycled water is discharged through ocean outfalls. Given the lack of water security and the impacts this has on the future of the nation’s agricultural sector, a more concerted analysis/effort as to how recycled and other forms of water are effectively transported to agricultural areas for irrigation purposes will provide greater, longer term resilience for this sector.

Many projects and feasibility studies are underway across the country. However, a coordinated approach involving all levels of government and water utilities is required to determine the viability and most cost-effective options to distribute water resources.

To this end, it is considered there is an opportunity to have this proposal encapsulated within the policy and advocacy platform of the Australian Local Government Association through the adoption of this annual conference motion.

115
Lockyer Valley Regional Council, QLD

That the National General Assembly call on the Australian Government to simplify administrative arrangements for Federal drought related funding for local governments to ensure more flexibility and more appropriate time periods for local governments to prepare project applications to assist those people and communities affected by drought.

Objective:
Drought has crippling impacts on communities, families and businesses across Australia. Drought knows no borders and is currently affecting a significant proportion of the nation.

The Lockyer Valley is one of 23 council (and 5 part council) areas in Queensland that have been drought declared. This represents 58.1% of the land area of the state.

Drought conditions are evident across the country. For example the entire state of NSW is affected to some degree by drought conditions and a third of that state was suffering intense drought. Other states are also significantly impacted to varying degrees.

Although drought funding and assistance is currently undertaken or implemented across all 3 levels of government, the national government is the only jurisdiction that can properly address drought policy and coordination across the country.

Councils need to be better supported to deal with drought resilience in their communities. Federal funding to councils through initiatives such as the Drought Communities Program is essential. As the level of government closest to the direct impact of drought, councils need to be involved in developing funding Guidelines that affect the range and timeliness of programs and that create flexibility to meet specific local needs.
Key Arguments:
Drought conditions continue across all States and Territories. The Bureau of Meteorology reported that February rainfall was below average for Australia as a whole despite very high rainfall in North Queensland. February rainfall was the lowest on record for parts of Southern Queensland, New South Wales, Western Australia and the Northern Territory.

The Commonwealth Drought Communities Program is in place to provide funding to eligible local governments for agreed projects. The funding is intended to provide employment for local people, stimulate local spending, use local businesses and provide long term benefits to communities and the agricultural industries on which they depend. The extension of the Program and additional funding was welcomed.

However, at a local government level, access to the funding has proven to be complicated and time consuming and not well-aligned with local needs. The approval process has been implemented in an inflexible manner and the associated guidelines have proven to be unhelpful, partially due to mid-process changes.

The Overview of the Guidelines for the Drought Communities Program – Extension states that a broad range of additional drought relief activities would be funded and Councils would be able to select projects that have the biggest impact in their community. This did not prove to be the case in the Lockyer Valley. A number of projects were proposed ranging from a shop-local closed-loop initiative to an invasive weeds reduction program and a bore improvement project. However, some projects were either rejected or modified by the Program managers despite Council’s view that there was compliance with existing Guidelines. Rejection and changes to project scope wasted considerable time and effort by local government officers at a time when communities needed these projects.

It is understood that program managers will be seeking projects that will provide the greatest benefit for communities and there will be a need for an eligibility test. However, it is considered that such Program Guidelines need to be revised to provide greater clarity on just what projects will be eligible. Local government should have input into such Guidelines. Revised Guidelines will save time and effort at the local government level and provide a more efficient and effective drought response.

Similarly, it is recognised that expenditure of the program funding is required quickly to maximise benefits. However, the timelines to apply for, receive and expend the funds are impracticable. For example, one of Council’s projects was submitted on 4 December 2018, was not approved until 10 February 2019 and not funded until after 28 March 2019. Nevertheless, this project is required to be completed by 30 June 2019 with a progress report due by 2 April 2019. Clearly there needs to be a balance between short-term funding programs, well-targeted projects and efficient processing by government departments.

The Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ) has recently made a submission to the Commonwealth and State governments on drought policy. In part, that submission notes that Councils’ feedback is that ‘red tape’ is making access to funding difficult and delaying deployment of initiatives.

116
Mitchell Shire, VIC

That the National General Assembly call on the Federal Government to develop a comprehensive National Housing Strategy.

Objective:
The Federal Government to work closely with the State and Territory Governments and local government to develop a comprehensive National Housing Strategy. The Strategy must focus on the housing continuum and articulate the respective roles of federal, state and local governments and non-government stakeholders.

The Strategy is to identify a range of areas, not limited to:

- Rental and housing affordability
- Cost of liveability
- Housing diversity in rural and regional townships
- Incorporating universal design principles and features to ensure housing better meets the needs of those with a disability and the elderly, ensuring people can truly age in place
- Appropriately located, serviced and supported social housing
- Long term stable funding for the homelessness service system
- Development of innovative models.
Key Arguments:
The current housing system is broken. Unmet housing need is a significant driver of disadvantage. Affordable, appropriate and accessible housing is a necessity to ensuring people are enabled to participate and have a sense of belonging in community life. Every person has the right to an adequate standard of living, which includes the right to adequate housing (ICESCR, article 11). The right to housing is more than simply a right to shelter. It is a right to have somewhere to live that is adequate, accessible and affordable. It is imperative that members of community that are vulnerable - low income, experience family violence, have a disability or are elderly - have access to a safe, appropriate and affordable place to live. A National Housing Strategy needs to be developed to ensure people across the life stages can participate fully in community life and access the same level of liveability.

117
Gladstone Regional Council, QLD

That the National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to consider appropriate initiatives to support employment in regional and rural Australia.

Objective:
Traditionally, employment opportunities in regional areas have differed from those in the capital cities however there has been a shift in regional opportunities with the services industry now more prevalent than was previously the case.

It needs to be noted, nevertheless, that small towns in the smaller regional areas which are more isolated from major metropolitan or regional cities continue to struggle to attract service professionals.

Australia’s unemployment rate of 5.5% is not reflective of what can be seen in regional areas across the country.

Key Arguments:
Despite the changing patterns in employment sectors, unemployment at higher than the national average continues to exist in regional areas across Australia.

The June 2017 census revealed that 32.7% of the Australian population, approximately 8 million people, lived outside the greater capital city areas. Not surprisingly, mining arises as a major employer across regional Australia with healthcare also experiencing an increase although there has been a decline in both manufacturing and agricultural industries in the last decade.

It is acknowledged that traditional roles are declining in rural and regional areas, be it due to rationalisation of industries or the lingering effects of natural disasters.

The strength of Federal initiatives and investment far outweighs advocacy for economic development to create employment opportunities at a purely local level. Promotion of sectors such as tourism will potentially generate economic activity in smaller areas and create new employment opportunities.

118
Penrith City Council, NSW

That the National General Assembly call on the Federal Government to adopt an integrated and sustainable planning framework for the rapid population growth in Australia’s cities and regions including a National Settlement Plan.

Objective:
Rebalancing the spatial structure of our capital cities needs public policy reform and investment that supports dispersing jobs and housing more evenly across the metropolitan area, including bringing new jobs closer to where the population lives. With 1 in 5 Australians calling the fastest growing suburbs home and up to 3 of those 5 residents commuting long distances everyday, this is not sustainable and has significant impacts on liveability and quality of life.
**Key Arguments:**
The Fast Growing Outer Suburbs play an important role supporting the productivity of cities by increasing labour supply and the provision of diverse and affordable housing. The 31 fastest growing suburbs accounted for 35 per cent of Australia’s population growth over the last five years (2011-2016), and continue to grow at 3 per cent per annum, significantly faster that the Australian growth rate (1.7 % p.a. between 2011 and 2016), with almost 1 in 5 Australians now calling the fast growing suburbs home. (Profile iD, 2018).

Aligning jobs growth, transport and social infrastructure to the fastest growing suburbs to create a polycentric city with multiple activity hubs is critical for the continued liveability and productivity of the nation’s capital cities.

With unprecedented growth forecast for our capital cities, we call upon on all levels of government to rebalance the cities spatial structure through evidence based metropolitan planning which integrates land use, transport and social infrastructure.

Importantly, to prevent further isolation of growth communities with poor job and infrastructure access, delivery of the metropolitan plan should adopt a place-based approach to the delivery and sequencing of development and infrastructure.

Furthermore, as continued population and housing growth places pressure on our natural environment through rapid greenfield development, the importance of green space and next generation infrastructure to mitigate urban heat island effect, promote sustainable use of resources, retain biodiversity and create attractive places for people to live is paramount.

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**Shoalhaven City Council, NSW**

That the National General Assembly calls on the NSW Government and Federal Government to ensure the role Local Government plays in the management of assets, infrastructure and communities is adequately addressed in the Beyond Tourism 2020 Steering Committee Report.

**Objective:**
Substantial cross government funding and collaboration initiatives for Local Government came from the previous Tourism 2020 report. It is vital that Local Government have a role to play in the development of strategy at the State and National level to ensure the role they play at a local level is addressed. Challenges and opportunities also need to be accurately explored to ensure mutually beneficial partnerships are created.

**Key Arguments:**
The report identifies several opportunities for growth and the importance of the visitor economy to the country, however, greater consideration into the practical management of visitors into our towns and villages needs to be addressed as a key challenge and opportunity. The role Local Government plays is not adequately addressed, and the following key points need to be addressed as a matter of priority.

It is recommended greater consideration be given to the following:
- Reinforce that Local Government are collectively a major stakeholder in the visitor economy and request that this be reflected in the Beyond 2020 Strategy.
- It is strongly agreed that cross government collaboration is critical for success of the visitor economy long term.
- It is critical Local Government have a voice in any policy making decisions and it is disappointing to see that there was no Local Government Representative on the Beyond 2020 Steering Committee;
- Local Government representation needs to be present on all decision-making processes and policy making decisions going forward.
- The Beyond 2020 Report should formally recognise the importance of Local Government in managing the impacts of the Visitor Economy as a key challenge and opportunity.
- Recognising the role Local Government plays
- As a major investor in assets that directly drive visitation and overnight stays, like entertainment centres, pools, parks, reserves and caravan parks.
- In managing the “on ground” visitor experience, influencing return visitation and quality of customer experience;
- In attracting, directing and approving investment as part of strategic planning
- In marketing and visitor attraction.
120
Hobart Council, TAS

That this National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to extend and increase the funding of the Smart Cities and Suburbs Program.

Objective:
The pace of technological change is increasing and changing the way our communities live, work, play and travel.

The Smart Cities and Suburbs Program supports projects that apply innovative technology-based solutions to urban challenges to improve the liveability, productivity and sustainability of Australian cities, suburbs and towns.

Key Arguments:
The $50 million competitive Smart Cities and Suburbs Program supports projects that apply innovative technology-based solutions to urban challenges. The program encourages local government agencies and bodies to deliver collaborative smart city projects that improve the liveability, productivity and sustainability of Australian cities, suburbs and towns.

Australian cities have long been an important economic and social asset and will be more important than ever in the 21st century. Our cities provide great opportunities for innovation and productivity in the global knowledge-based economy and are recognised as great places to live, work and study.

If the Australian Government is committed to the continual improvement of our cities, the Smart Cities and Suburbs Program must be extended and funding increased.

121
Manningham City Council, VIC

That the National General Assembly call on the Australian Government to support local government to collaborate, be entrepreneurial and embrace innovation through the provision of incubator grants.

Objective:
• In the pursuit of efficiency, local governments across the country are in pursuit of the ‘Smart City’; improving systems, education and embracing technological advancements that benefit our local infrastructure and municipalities.
• Often this is not a ‘set and forget’ exercise. Technology needs resource intensive support to keep abreast of the changing environment and technology.
• The Australian Government are asked to support local government to collaborate, be entrepreneurial and embrace disruption and innovation through the provision of long term incubator and initiative grants to ensure sustainable and outcomes for the local community.

Key Arguments:
Local Governments across the country are embracing the technology revolution ‘Smart City’ improving systems, education and technological advancements to support waste efficient organisations and municipalities.

The local government sector is already looking at a local (municipal based) technology/ networks from private providers to sensors that can measure, for example:
• how full a litter bin is, so that they can be emptied just-in-time, instead of wasting time regularly going around to all of them,
• how full a storm water pit is and when it needs cleaning out,
• real time data entry with field devices deployed to all field staff,
• parking sensors to enable more efficient parking management at activity centres,
• pedestrian travel sensors at key locations to help determine where the demands are, and what would be the best facilities to provide them,
• monitoring stormwater pipe flows to indicate ahead of time when a pipe might be becoming blocked in known hot spots,
• heat mapping to know where to plant more trees,
• real time monitoring of traffic queuing, with flexible traffic management systems
• monitoring open space usage (active and passive rec) to determine levels of need, etc., etc.

Then there is improved corporate system capability to:
• enable more efficient customer interactions with online transactions,
• improved record keeping and single sources of truth for all data, including customer data,
• less paper work and double handling with internal processes,
• improved data capture and modelling of asset conditions for ‘stitch-in-time’ renewal,
• GIS as a central tool to integrate all systems, including customer response systems (e.g. CRM),
• 3D city planning, to enable more intelligent, futuristic planning of precincts, incorporating vehicle and pedestrian interactions and lifestyle planning, etc.

The Australian Government are asked to support local government through the provision of long term incubator and initiative grants to ensure sustainable and outcomes for the local community.
2018

Resolutions
21. (A) Procedural motion
That the item moved by Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council related to Indigenous housing be accepted as an item of Special Urgent Business.

21 (B) Special Urgent Business  Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council, QLD
Carried 173/16
That the National General Assembly calls on the Federal Government to commit to vital long-term funding for housing construction in remote and discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The current failure to do this risks reversing the gains made in these communities to Close the Gap of indigenous disadvantage in Australia. Refusal to provide funding will have catastrophic impacts on the social, educational and health outcomes, including increased mental health issues and family violence in these communities.

ALGA specifically advocated for Indigenous housing through the Federal election document, the pre-budget submission and COAG and as a member of the Joint Council on Closing the Gap. A letter was sent to the Minister for Indigenous Affairs, Senator, the Hon. Nigel Scullion. No response was received.

1 ALGA
That the National General Assembly call on the Commonwealth Government to initiate a timely process for the development and conduct of a national referendum on constitutional recognition of Local Government within 5 years. This process should be cognisant and respectful of indigenous people and not impede any process that recognises indigenous people.

ALGA noted the Resolution and endorsed the sentiment of the resolution in-principle noting that for the reasons outlined above pressing for an early local government referendum would not be wise. The Board remains committed to constitutional recognition and will keep the timing of another local government referendum under consideration with the view of choosing a time when the chances of success can be maximised. The Board included reference to the importance of Constitutional recognition in the 2018 – 19 Federal election campaign document.

1.4 Hunter’s Hill Council, NSW
That the Australian Local Government Association consider advocating for a second question concerning democratic recognition of local government in the Constitution to be put to the Australian people at a referendum asking that a new section 119A be inserted with wording to the effect (or similar effect) that:
Each State shall, and each Territory may, provide for the establishment and continuance of local government bodies directly chosen by the people in accordance with its laws and empowered to administer, and to make by-laws for, their respective areas in accordance with the laws of the State or Territory.

The Parliament of a State or Territory may by Statute dismiss a local government body and provide for the appointment of persons to perform its functions and exercise its powers until such time as a new local government is elected.

ALGA noted the Resolution and also noted the similarity of the proposal to the 1988 Referendum that was resoundingly defeated and agreed at this time not to support the inclusion of a second question in a Referendum.

1.5 City of West Torrens, SA
That the National General Assembly call on the Australian Local Government Association, with involvement in the Council of Australian Governments, to approach the Federal Government to write a new Federal Constitution for the 21st Century.

ALGA noted the Resolution and the ambition of the Resolution and that it may be relevant to a future broader decision about the Federation at COAG and agreed to write to the Prime Minister, The Hon. Malcolm Turnbull and the Attorney General, The Hon. Christian Porter MP on the issue. A letter was received from The Hon. Christian Porter MP and is available online at alga.asn.au, and at the back of this book.
1.6 Frankston City Council, VIC
That the National General Assembly endorses the constitutional acknowledgement of Indigenous Australians as the first peoples of this land. Furthermore, the National General Assembly call on Federal Parliament to allow a national referendum for Australians to make a determination on this matter.

ALGA noted the Resolution and wrote to the Prime Minister, The Hon. Malcolm Turnbull and the Attorney General, The Hon. Christian Porter MP. A letter was received from The Hon. Christian Porter MP and is available online at alga.asn.au, and at the back of this book.

2 Bega Valley Shire Council, NSW
That the National General Assembly advocates on behalf of local government that Financial Assistance Grants should be increased to at least 1% of national taxation revenue at the 2019/2020 budget.

ALGA noted the Resolution and that this matter was included in ALGA’s Federal election document, 2019/20 pre-budget submission and wherever possible in other campaigns. It is the objective of the Fairer Share campaign which involves ALGA, the state and territory associations and all Councils.

3 Yarra City Council, VIC
1) That the National General Assembly, in line with previous NGA resolutions over successive years, continue raising with the Commonwealth through COAG and all other relevant forums:
   a) The need for re-alignment of federal funding arrangements so that the three levels of Government in Australia have a more efficient match between their public responsibilities and their finances;
   b) The need for the Commonwealth to urgently address the rapidly growing infrastructure gap in the States, particularly in regards to rail transport in and between capital and regional cities – with significant funding being immediately provided to metropolitan public transport which will free up road space for cars and freight;
   c) The need for equitable infrastructure funding to States to reduce major discrepancies between the Australian States, e.g. Victoria’s infrastructure funding has been reduced to 8-9% of federal infrastructure funding notwithstanding its population being 25% of the nation which produces 22% of the Australian GDP.
2) That the National General Assembly therefore seeks:
   a) A commitment to a “new agreement of principles” funding discussion across all three levels of government so it is clear who does what based from which taxation stream.
   b) Equitable Commonwealth infrastructure investment in rail and other infrastructure projects (in both metropolitan and regional cities); and
   c) Better communication of the Commonwealth’s infrastructure funding distribution formula.

ALGA wrote to the Prime Minister the Hon. Malcolm Turnbull and the Treasurer, the Hon. Scott Morrison MP. A response was received from the Minister for Regional Services, Sport, Local Government and Decentralisation, the Hon. Bridget McKenzie and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

4 Livingstone Shire Council, QLD
a) That the National General Assembly call on the Australian Local Government Association to lobby State and National Governments to adjust procurement policy and practices to drive local content supply chain opportunities and direct spend, specifically in regional Australia, and particularly where Tier 1 and Tier 2 contractors are engaged to ensure that contracts require local content outcomes that are measurable and accountable to milestone achievements.

b) That Local Government is encouraged to lead by example by updating procurement policy to ensure appropriate weightings for local content are included and outcomes are measured and reported.

ALGA noted the resolution and requested the State and Territory associations convey the Resolution to their respective governments and member councils. ALGA also sent a letter to the Minister for Finance the Hon. Mathias
Cormann. A response was received from the Hon. Mathias Cormann and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

5 City of Wagga Wagga, NSW
That the National General Assembly call on the Federal Government to engage with the States in order for the States to make changes and support legislation procurement frameworks that allow for Local Government to implement a similar Federal Government Indigenous Procurement Policy.

ALGA noted the resolution and wrote to the Prime Minister, the Hon. Malcolm Turnbull MP. No response has been received.

6 Logan City Council, QLD
That the National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to introduce a taxation category recognising social enterprises and develop a National Guideline for Social Procurement in Local Government that provides clear parameters for councils developing social procurement policies within existing legislative frameworks.

ALGA noted the resolution and wrote to the Treasurer, the Hon. Scott Morrison. No response has been received.

7 Bayside City Council, VIC
That the National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:
• Build upon existing initiatives including industry product stewardship schemes, and directives on recyclable packaging, to ensure packaging and products are designed for minimal packaging, re-use, recycling and repair, with the disposal costs included in the purchase or disposal price;
• Ensure the goals and objectives set out in the Australian Packaging Covenant Strategic Plan 2017-2022 are prioritised and achieved as a matter of urgency;
• Financially support regional waste management solutions for advanced alternative waste treatment and processing;
• Ensure government and industry procurement and tenders specify the use of products with recycled content, minimal packaging and repair;
• Develop a national Circular Economy Strategy to develop markets for recyclable products.

ALGA noted the Resolution and addressed this issue in broad terms in ALGA’s election document. A letter was sent to the Minister for the Environment the Hon. Josh Frydenberg MP. A letter was received from the Hon. Melissa Price MP, Minister for the Environment and the Hon. Angus Taylor MP and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book. ALGA have been active members of the working group developing the National Waste Policy and the National Waste Action Plan.

7.3 City of Adelaide, SA
The National General Assembly calls on the Australian government to collaborate with State and Local Governments and the recycling industry sector to investigate alternatives to exporting recyclable waste materials to China, including increased government and public procurement of products with Australian recycled content; investing in local recycling infrastructure that maximises the economic value of recovered materials; and/or changes to packaging regulation.

ALGA noted the Resolution and addressed this issue in broad terms in ALGA’s election document. ALGA also wrote to the Minister for the Environment the Hon. Josh Frydenberg MP. A letter was received from the Hon. Melissa Price MP, Minister for the Environment and the Hon. Angus Taylor MP and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book. ALGA have been active members of the working group developing the National Waste Policy and the National Waste Action Plan.
7.4 City of Adelaide, SA
The National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to develop an Australian Standard for compostable takeaway food and beverage containers and a nationwide labelling standard for recyclable and compostable takeaway food and beverage containers by 2020.

ALGA noted the Resolution and addressed this issue in broad terms in ALGA’s election document. ALGA also wrote to the Minister for the Environment the Hon. Josh Frydenberg MP. A letter was received from the Hon. Melissa Price MP, Minister for the Environment and the Hon. Angus Taylor MP and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book. ALGA have been active members of the working group developing the National Waste Policy and the National Waste Action Plan.

7.5 Macedon Ranges Shire Council, VIC
That the National General Assembly advocate the following:
1) That the Federal Government commence an enquiry into the future of the waste and recycling sector in Australia, to review the current practices of waste to landfill and recyclables being sent overseas which are no longer sustainable or viable.
2) That the Federal Government implement policy settings that support a philosophy that views waste as a resource and resets the waste and recycling industry to move towards establishing a sustainable and viable waste and recycling resource recovery industry.
3) That the Federal Government invest in supporting market development, technologies and the associated local industries in creating and expanding potential end market uses of recovered resources.

ALGA noted the Resolution and addressed this issue in broad terms in ALGA’s election document. ALGA also wrote to the Minister for the Environment the Hon. Josh Frydenberg MP. A letter was received from the Hon. Melissa Price MP, Minister for the Environment and the Hon. Angus Taylor MP and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book. ALGA have been active members of the working group developing the National Waste Policy and the National Waste Action Plan.

8 City of Ryde, NSW
Councils are required by the State and Federal Government to manage terror and security related risks at events and in crowded places. The National General Assembly seeks the following commitment from Federal and State Governments, that:
• The Federal Government funds councils to enact their roles and responsibilities as listed in the new ‘National Counter-Terrorism Plan’ (October 2017).
• The Federal Government funds councils and community groups to implement steps for protecting their sites from terror threats, as listed in ‘Australia’s Strategy for Protecting Crowded Places from Terrorism’ (August 2017).
• When security measures are for not-for-profit community events, the Federal Government has the primary responsibility of funding the design and installation of measures against vehicle attacks as outlined in the ‘Hostile Vehicle Guidelines for Crowded Places’ (2017), and the State Government funds the costs of Traffic Management Plans for traffic control and vehicle risks.
• That the Federal and State Governments will fully fund all terror and security measures for events run by the State and Federal Government and not place this cost impost on Councils.

ALGA noted the resolution and wrote to the Minister for Home Affairs the Hon. Peter Dutton MP. No response has been received.

9 Tenterfield Shire Council, NSW
That the National General Assembly lobby the State Governments to apply local government rates to National Parks, Nature Reserves, State Conservation Areas and State Forests. Any ratings applied should be differential depending on impact and level of use.
ALGA wrote to the CEOs of the State and Territory local government associations referring the resolution for consideration and action as they see fit.

10 Darebin City Council, VIC
That the National General Assembly call on ALGA to:
1) Explore all the potential impacts that the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) agreement may have which could limit the ability of councils to enter into a range of strategies and policies such as environmental initiatives, local procurement, jobs programs and insourcing.
2) Develop an advocacy strategy as required to protect the role of local government now and in the future.
3) Communicate information to all councils on the impacts that TPP may have on their operations.

ALGA wrote to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Hon. Julie Bishop, and copied in the then Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment the Hon. Steven Ciobo MP. A response was received from the Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment, the Hon. Simon Birmingham and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

11 Wyndham City Council, VIC
That the National General Assembly congratulates the ALGA Secretariat for their thorough submission of September 2017 to the National Freight and Supply Chain Priorities Discussion Paper. The Assembly particularly notes recommendations that encourage more collaboration and planning between regional groupings of Councils on regional freight plans for local connector and arterial roads. The NGA therefore requests the Secretariat provide all Councils through their state associations with:
• An assessment of the alignment of the Strategy when it is released this year with its submission, and
• Case studies and options for regional groupings of Councils (metropolitan, rural, regional and a mix thereof) to collaborate and advocate for support from both State and Federal Governments for regional freight plans for local connector and arterial roads.

ALGA noted the Resolution and continues to work with state and territory local government associations regarding the development of the National Freight and Supply Chain Strategy which is yet to be finalised. ALGA wrote to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Transport and Infrastructure the Hon. Michael McCormack MP. A response was received from the Hon. Michael McCormack MP and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

12 Leeton Shire Council, NSW
That the National General Assembly:
1) Requests the Federal Government to expand the traffic safety measure of Tactile Line Treatments (audible warning devices, rumble strips) as a mechanism for inclusion in the current and future National Road Safety Strategies.
2) Advocates for additional funding allocations to be incorporated into future Federal Assistance Grants (FAG) roads component to support the infrastructure costs associated with the inclusion of Tactile Line Treatments or Audible Warning Devices in road construction to improve road safety outcomes within regional communities.

ALGA noted part one of the Resolution, ALGA supports the need for additional funding for such road safety treatments but opposes tying additional FAGs to specific road safety outcomes. ALGA wrote to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Transport and Infrastructure the Hon. Michael McCormack MP. A response was received from the Hon. Michael McCormack MP and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book. ALGA continues to advocate for additional road safety funding through ALGA’s Federal election document, 2019/20 pre-budget submission and wherever possible in other campaigns.

13 Glen Innes Severn Council, NSW
That the National General Assembly expresses its concern regarding the Federal Minister for Roads’ intention to require Roads to Recovery funding to be directed toward safety initiatives, noting that this may not achieve the
desired outcome of a reduction in the road toll, but will divert much needed resources from Council’s already inadequate roads renewal budget.

ALGA noted the resolution and that it is based on a misunderstanding of the position of the previous Minister for Transport and Infrastructure which was to encourage but not require councils to consider road safety outcomes to be achieve with R2R projects. ALGA also noted that it is not credible for ALGA to argue for additional Commonwealth road funding but not take road safety outcomes into consideration.

14 Brisbane City Council, QLD
The National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to ensure organisations capturing data about transport networks, openly share this data with local governments to assist with planning, delivery and operation of transport infrastructure.

ALGA noted the resolution and wrote to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Transport and Infrastructure the Hon. Michael McCormack MP. A response was received from the Hon. Michael McCormack MP and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

15 Brisbane City Council, QLD
The National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to require all state and territory governments to commit to conducting regular, consistent and comprehensive household travel surveys.

ALGA noted the resolution and wrote to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Transport and Infrastructure the Hon. Michael McCormack MP, and referred the resolution to the state and territory associations for their consideration. A response was received from the Hon. Michael McCormack MP and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

16 Isaac Regional Council, QLD
That this National General Assembly strongly condemns pricing exploitation and discrimination by any airline in rural, regional and remote regions, and calls for the Commonwealth Government Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport to address concerns raised by member Councils in its Inquiry into the operation, regulation and funding of air route service delivery to rural, regional and remote communities.

ALGA noted the resolution and wrote to the Deputy Prime Minister, the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure the Hon. Michael McCormack MP and the Chair of the Senate Select Committee. A response was received from the Hon. Michael McCormack MP and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

17 Tamworth Regional Council, NSW
That this National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to guarantee the preservation of landing slots at major metropolitan airports assigned to Regular Public Transport (RPT) Services from regional centres. Further, that the Australian Government provides every assistance to regional airline carriers to overcome the current pilot shortage which is impacting on the frequency of RPT Service schedules to and from regional centres.

ALGA noted the resolution and wrote to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Transport and Infrastructure the Hon. Michael McCormack MP. A response was received from the Hon. Michael McCormack MP and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

18 Randwick City Council, NSW
That the National General Assembly:
1)Notes that each year many hundreds of people nationwide are forced to move from their homes to allow for the construction of public and private infrastructure and other projects including motorways, railways and hospitals,
and that this process causes great distress, emotional and financial hardship, and the irretrievable fracturing of local communities.

2) Notes that the compulsory acquisition process is governed under the following acts: Commonwealth (Lands Acquisition Act 1989), New South Wales (Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991), Tasmania (Land Acquisition Act 1993), Queensland (Acquisition of Land Act 1967), South Australia (Land Acquisition Act 1969), Western Australia (Land Administration Act 1997), Victoria (Land Acquisition Act and Compensation Act 1986).

3) Acknowledges that while some states, including NSW and Victoria, have in recent years reviewed and amended their respective acts, many households who have and still remain in the process of having their homes forcibly acquired, remain distressed and deeply unsatisfied with the both the process and financial compensation they have been offered.

4) Calls on the Federal government to conduct a national review, with public hearings, into land acquisition procedures across all states and territories, and to harmonise all state provisions for compensation of land acquisitions in response to the review.

ALGA noted the resolution and wrote to the Federal Minister for Finance the Hon. Mathias Cormann MP. A response was received from the Hon. Mathias Cormann MP and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

19 Boroondara City Council, VIC
That the National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to adequately resource State and Local Governments to address and rectify the highly dangerous combustible cladding which has been used in construction of high rise residential and public buildings in order to avoid a potential loss of life and property across Australia.

ALGA noted the resolution and wrote to the Federal Minister for Small and Family Business, the Workplace and Deregulation the Hon. Craig Laundy MP. A response was received from the Hon. Karen Andrews MP and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

20 Cessnock City Council, NSW
That the National General Assembly call on the Federal Government to endorse regulation and a licensing scheme for short term holiday letting of properties through businesses like Air BnB and Stayz.

ALGA noted the resolution and wrote to the Federal Minister for Small and Family Business, the Workplace and Deregulation the Hon. Craig Laundy MP. A response was received from the Hon. Karen Andrews MP and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

21 City of Norwood Payneham and St Peters, SA
That the National General Assembly calls on the Australian Local Government Association to investigate options for a more sustainable management of street tree canopies under high voltage power lines in order to assist councils to negotiate with State government legislators and electricity suppliers, so as to minimise the damaging impacts on street trees now being caused by the excessive clearance of tree foliage away from high voltage wires, which takes no account of the health, aesthetic appearance, wildlife habitat and shade-giving values of street trees.

ALGA noted the resolution and referred the resolution to state and territory associations for action as they see fit.

22 Newcastle City Council, NSW
That the National General Assembly:

1) Notes the continued uncertainty surrounding the status of second and third tier Cities, where those Cities can be classified as either as a 'regional' or 'metropolitan'.

2) Calls on the ALGA to write to the Premier of each state, seeking clarification about regional and metropolitan boundaries in that state emphasising the importance of recognising the importance of second and third tier cities to the Australia Economy.
3) Calls on the ALGA to write to the Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull seeking clarification about regional and metropolitan boundaries in Australia, recognising the importance of second and third tier cities to the Australian Economy.

ALGA noted the Resolution and wrote to the Prime Minister the Hon. Malcolm Turnbull MP, and the Minister for Regional Development, the Hon. John McVeigh MP, and the state and territory associations. A response was received from the Hon. Michael McCormack MP and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

23 Central Coast Council, NSW
That the National General Assembly call on the State Governments to return to the councils all waste levy revenues collected to fund their councils’ waste and recycling initiatives.

• For example, in 2016/17 the NSW State Government raised $659m from local councils through their waste levy returning only 18% ($118m) to local communities for waste management initiatives.

• Furthermore, the States undertake a thorough review of the classification of councils for the purpose of raising the levy.

ALGA noted the resolution and addressed this issue in broad terms in the ALGA election document.

24 Blue Mountains City Council, NSW
That this National General Assembly calls on the Commonwealth Government to provide more support to Local Government for the collection and disposal of hazardous wastes.

ALGA noted the resolution and wrote to the Minister for the Environment the Hon. Josh Frydenberg MP. A response was received from the Hon. Melissa Price MP, Minister for the Environment and the Hon. Angus Taylor MP, Minister for Energy and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

25 Tenterfield Shire Council, NSW
That the National General Assembly call for a ban to be placed on wet wipes incorrectly marketed as “flushable toilet wipes” due to their negative impact on sewer lines and sewerage processing facilities.

ALGA noted the Resolution and wrote to the Minister for the Environment the Hon. Josh Frydenberg. A response was received from the Hon. Melissa Price MP, Minister for the Environment and the Hon. Angus Taylor MP, Minister for Energy and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

26 Leeton Shire Council, NSW
That the National General Assembly:
1)Requests the Federal Government to investigate options for the implementation of a National Container Deposit Scheme to ensure consistency of operation in all states and territories.
2)Supports the implementation of a National Container Deposit Scheme to increase recycling of beverage containers.

ALGA noted the Resolution and wrote to the Minister for the Environment the Hon. Josh Frydenberg MP. A response was received from the Hon. Melissa Price MP, Minister for the Environment and the Hon. Angus Taylor MP, Minister for Energy and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book. ALGA have been active members of the working group developing the National Waste Policy and the National Waste Action Plan.

27 Wentworth Shire Council, NSW
That the National General Assembly lobby the Federal Minister and Shadow Minister to institute a National Water Registry, to monitor and report on all rainfall, surface and ground water storage, evaporation and capacity or
movement, including flow rate and interstate or inter-valley trade, extraction, unaccounted activity, licences and allocation in real-time, and inform the public in relation to foreign ownership of water assets and infrastructure.

ALGA noted the Resolution and wrote to the Minister for the Agriculture and Water Resources the Hon David Littleproud MP. A response was received and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

28 Wentworth Shire Council, NSW
That the National General Assembly calls on the Federal Government to create a National Water Ombudsman with Federal jurisdiction to inquire, arbitrate, enforce, impose punitive measures and oversee amendments to State water legislation.

ALGA noted the Resolution and wrote to the Minister for the Agriculture and Water Resources the Hon David Littleproud MP. A response was received and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

29 Alexandrina Council, SA
That the National General Assembly:
1) Notes the importance of fit-for-purpose water availability for regional prosperity;
2) Calls on all levels of government to recommit to full and timely implementation of the Basin Plan; and
3) Calls for a formal role for local government in Basin Plan decision making via a permanent seat at the Murray-Darling Basin Ministerial Council.

ALGA noted the Resolution and wrote to the Minister for the Agriculture and Water Resources the Hon David Littleproud MP. A response was received and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

30 Broken Hill City Council, NSW
That the National General Assembly of Local Government 2018 call upon the Federal Government to strengthen the role of the Murray Darling Basin Authority with regard to enforcement of compliance regarding water retention and extraction limits to guarantee that agreed flows are allowed to pass downstream for the length of the Barwon/Darling river.

ALGA noted the Resolution and wrote to the Minister for the Agriculture and Water Resources the Hon David Littleproud MP. A response was received and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

31 Lockyer Valley Regional Council, QLD
That the National General Assembly call on the Australian Government to replenish the National Water Infrastructure Development Fund to ensure sufficient funds are available to both assess the feasibility of projects and to deliver this critical water infrastructure.

ALGA noted the Resolution and wrote to the Minister for the Agriculture and Water Resources the Hon David Littleproud MP. No response was received.

32 Liverpool City Council, NSW
That the National General Assembly advocates that Councils show commitment to energy efficiency, solar and other renewable technologies by:
• Seeking all available avenues of funding, including State and Federal governments, to reduce energy use across existing and future Council assets through the use of solar and other renewable energy sources;
• Ensuring all future development, consider, the impact on existing renewable energy production by ensuring any shadowing assessments take into account the impact on neighbouring building’s solar panels; and
• Advocating robust renewable energy targets, along the lines of those in the ACT.
ALGA noted the resolution and referred the resolution to state and territory local government associations for action as they see fit.

33 Break O'Day Council, TAS
That the National General Assembly lobby for the establishment of a national Natural Resource Management Program which is focussed on the delivery of on-ground land management activities which protect and restore the environment and result in improved environmental outcomes through greater community engagement and participation.

ALGA noted the resolution and wrote to the Minister for the Environment the Hon. Josh Frydenberg MP. A response was received from the Hon. Melissa Price MP, Minister for the Environment and the Hon. Angus Taylor MP, Minister for Energy and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

34 Lockyer Valley Regional Council, QLD
That the National General Assembly call on the Australian Government to ensure that in any reform of the National Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA), the Australian Government will continue to fund up to 75% of the assistance available to individuals and communities and to not consider cost shifting to States and/or Local Governments.

ALGA noted the Resolution and wrote to the Minister for Law Enforcement and Cyber Security the Hon. Angus Taylor MP. A response was received from the Hon. Linda Reynolds, Assistant Minister for Home Affairs and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

35 Lockyer Valley Regional Council, QLD
That the National General Assembly call on the Australian Government to revise the NDRRA Guidelines to consider parks and recreational facilities as essential public assets for the purposes of Category B assistance.

ALGA noted the Resolution and wrote to the Minister for Law Enforcement and Cyber Security the Hon. Angus Taylor MP. A response was received from the Hon. Linda Reynolds, Assistant Minister for Home Affairs and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

36 North Burnett Regional Council, QLD
That this National General Assembly call on the Australian Government to maintain Water and Sewerage essential public infrastructure and recreational areas funding in the 2018 Disaster Relief Funding Arrangements (DRFA).

ALGA noted the Resolution and wrote to the Minister for Law Enforcement and Cyber Security the Hon. Angus Taylor MP. A response was received from the Hon. Linda Reynolds, Assistant Minister for Home Affairs and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

37 Shoalhaven City Council, NSW
That the National General Assembly call on the Federal Government to provide funding to ensure that Local Government information technology is strong, secure, affordable and resilient.

ALGA noted the Resolution and wrote to the Minister for Law Enforcement and Cyber Security the Hon. Angus Taylor MP. No response was received.

37.1 City of Adelaide, SA
The National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to work with the local government sector to develop and implement a National Information Security Management Framework.
ALGA noted the Resolution and wrote to the Minister for Law Enforcement and Cyber Security the Hon. Angus Taylor MP. No response was received.

38  Central Highlands Regional Council, QLD
That the National General Assembly engage with the Federal Government to establish National Data Collection Standards to enable the more efficient and effective reporting of local government data and to ensure that comparisons can be made on the same data assumptions across all States and Local Governments.

ALGA noted the resolution and wrote to the Treasurer, the Hon. Scott Morrison MP, in the context of his responsibilities for the Australian Bureau of Statistics. No response was received.

38.1  City of Adelaide, SA
The National General Assembly calls on the Australian Local Government Association to coordinate with interested local government parties to develop a national information management framework, with a focus on harmonisation of standards and structure across the local government sector.

ALGA referred the resolution to the Chief Executives of the state and territory associations for their consideration.

39  West Wimmera Shire Council, VIC
1) That the National General Assembly call on the Australian Local Government Association to write to the Minister for Communications, to convey the ongoing discontent with telecommunications blackspots and erratic internet services in Rural Australia.
2) That the correspondence clearly state that the lack of telecommunications and internet service is acting as an inhibitor to economic development, growth in existing business, the provision of modern education programs and creates difficulties for emergency service management during emergency events.
3) That the Federal Government fund the closing of the telecommunications gap that exists between rural and urban residents.

ALGA noted the resolution and made a submission to the Regional Telecommunications Independent Review. ALGA also wrote to the Minister for Communications, the Hon. Mitch Fifield MP. A response was received from the Hon. Mitch Fifield MP and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

39.1  Frankston City Council, VIC
That the National General Assembly expresses concern with the continued delay in the rollout of the National Broadband Network (NBN). Concern is to be raised regarding outstanding locations without NBN connection/coverage. Moreover, concern relating to the reliability of connected services – where substandard performance in some locations has been well documented – must also be expressed.

ALGA referred the resolution to the Minister for Communications, the Hon. Mitch Fifield MP. A response was received from the Hon. Mitch Fifield MP and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

39.2  East Gippsland Shire Council, VIC
That the National General Assembly advocate to the Australian Government in respect to the importance of ensuring that all communities have timely access to effective mobile phone services and reiterate the importance of acting promptly on recommendations made by Infrastructure Australia and the Productivity Commission to:
• Review the current Mobile Black Spot Funding Program prior to announcing any further funding rounds;
• Revise the current Telecommunications Universal Service Obligation to reflect changes to the telecommunications needs of communities by creating a new baseline for universal access to mobile voice and data requirements; and
• Focus appropriate resources to ensure that a baseline of service can be provided in non-commercially viable areas and to special service users in regional and remote areas.

ALGA referred the resolution to the Minister for Communications, the Hon. Mitch Fifield MP. A response was received from the Hon. Mitch Fifield MP and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

40 Macedon Ranges Shire Council, VIC
That the National General Assembly advocate the following:
1) That the Federal Government demand and require greater coordination in the planning and location of infrastructure required for NBN and telecommunications by requiring all carriers ensure that planned new infrastructure applications are supported by an integrated approach for black spot locations covering NBN and all telecommunications carriers.
2) That the Codes of Practice for Telecommunications Facilities be reviewed and updated reflecting advancement in technology, alternatives to towers and requiring that all carriers demonstrate the merit of any new tower proposal having regard to an integrated strategic placement and merited multi co-location ability for any new tower. Alternatives to towers should also be proposed in any new tower application.

ALGA wrote to the Minister for Communications, the Hon. Mitch Fifield MP. A response was received and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book. ALGA continues to advocate for improvements to the Codes of Practice for Telecommunications Facilities via a range of avenues.

41 North Burnett Regional Council, QLD
That this National General Assembly calls on the Commonwealth to develop a 3-5 year strategic and asset management plan to ensure the delivery of equitable TV services allowing Australian Local Governments to withdraw from being a self-help re-transmission of television services provider for rural, remote communities and small regional communities.

No action was taken as this Motion was withdrawn.

42 Manningham City Council, VIC
The National General Assembly call on the Australian Government to commit to action and resources to address the growing problem of housing affordability in Australia, impacting significantly on infrastructure and essential service provision. Specifically the NGA calls for:

a) An economically sustainable approach under the National Affordable Housing Agreement to deliver significant assistance to states and territories to support people on low to moderate incomes with limited housing options to secure appropriate public/social housing or affordable housing.

b) Research into new models for facilitating financing and investment of affordable housing development, including developer collaborations with industry and philanthropic organisations and use of government land to build local housing that is affordable, well-located, diverse and well designed;

c) Working collaboratively with the States to develop a comprehensive, long term set of integrated policy measures to address housing affordability to align with migration and population changes.

d) Additional funding or incentives to address severe shortage of affordable and appropriate housing options available to key workers including nurses, teachers and police across the States and Territories.

ALGA wrote to the then Minister for Social Services, the Hon. Dan Tehan MP and the Treasurer, the Hon. Scott Morrison MP. A response was received from the Hon. Paul Fletcher, Minister for Families and Social Services and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.
42.2 Latrobe City Council, VIC
That the National General Assembly calls upon all State Governments requesting relevant Ministers:
• Instructs the relevant Departments to cease relocating housing clients with complex and challenging needs (drug and alcohol addiction) from urban and metropolitan communities to rural and regional areas, in particular Latrobe City.
• Or immediately increases funding to rural and regional support sectors in the areas of family violence, mental health and drug and alcohol addiction services in recognition of the impact of ice on these communities.
• Coordinate a targeted community based approach to minimise the harmful effects of ice on rural and regional communities.
• Establish new initiatives to support and strengthen local communities at risk.

ALGA referred the resolution to state and territory associations for consideration and action as they see fit.

42.3 Mitchell Shire Council, VIC
That National General Assembly call on the Federal Government to lead a national discussion through the Coalition of Australian Government (COAG) to develop affordable housing standards that include measures for sustainability.

ALGA wrote to the Federal Treasurer, the Hon. Scott Morrison MP. No response was received.

42.5 Victoria Daly Regional Council, NT
That this National General Assembly calls on the Federal Government to make provision for housing for councils in remote areas that:
• Are performing services such as aged care, child care, Centrelink, night patrol and sport and recreation which are funded by the Federal Government;
• Do not have access to social or private housing; and
• Are having to find funds to construct new housing and as well as pay for essential services infrastructure to connect to it to accommodate employees.

ALGA wrote to the Prime Minister the Hon. Malcolm Turnbull MP and Minister for Indigenous Affairs senator the Hon. Nigel Scullion. A response was received from the Hon. Paul Fletcher, Minister for Families and Social Services and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

43 Hobsons Bay City Council, VIC
That the National General Assembly advocate to the Federal Government to require State and Territory Governments to include an inclusionary requirement for the delivery of affordable housing (including social housing) within residential developments.

ALGA wrote to the Federal Treasurer the Hon Scott Morrison MP, and to state associations to consider progressing the issue at state level as they see fit. No response was received from the Hon Scott Morrison MP.

44 Frankston City Council, VIC
Given the establishment of the Federal Ministry for Cities and Built Environment in 2015, and the long absence of federal funding for urbanised and regional cities, the National General Assembly formally advocates for the availability of federal funds for urban and regional cities designated as ‘activity centres’.

ALGA wrote to the Minister for Urban Infrastructure and Cities the Hon. Paul Fletcher MP. No response was received.
45 **Bega Valley Shire Council, NSW**
That the National General Assembly advocate to the Federal Government through the Minister for Regional Development, that a decentralisation policy will assist regional and rural areas in terms of population growth, investment and job creation.

ALGA wrote to the *Minister for Regional Development, Territories and Local Government* the Hon. Dr John McVeigh MP. A response was received from the *Minister for Regional Services, Sport, Local Government and Decentralisation*, the Hon. Bridget McKenzie and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

45.1 **Gwydir Shire Council, NSW**
That the National General Assembly calls upon the Federal Government to develop programs, that facilitate and encourage the relocation of both urban residents and newly arrived migrants to regional and rural areas, through constructive engagement with local authorities that creates investment outcomes that produce the increased potential for employment and economic prosperity in these communities.

ALGA wrote to the *Minister for Regional Development, Territories and Local Government* the Hon. Dr John McVeigh MP. A response was received from the *Minister for Regional Services, Sport, Local Government and Decentralisation*, the Hon. Bridget McKenzie and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book. This issue is now being considered through the COAG Treasurer’s Forum on Population of which ALGA is a member.

46 **Isaac Regional Council, QLD**
That this National General Assembly calls on the Commonwealth Government to demonstrate commitment to and fully implement Recommendation 2 of the 2013 Inquiry by the Commonwealth Government House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Australia titled “Cancer of the bush or salvation for our cities? Fly-in, fly-out and drive-in, drive-out workforce practices in Regional Australia” as follows: “The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth Government, in consultation with state and territory governments, review allocation of funding for communities that receive fly-in, fly-out/drive-in, drive-out workforces so that funding is based on both resident and service populations.”

ALGA wrote to the *Minister for Regional Development, Territories and Local Government* the Hon. Dr John McVeigh MP. A response was received from the *Minister for Regional Services, Sport, Local Government and Decentralisation*, the Hon. Bridget McKenzie and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

47 **Central Highlands Regional Council, QLD**
That the National General Assembly seek dialogue with the Commonwealth, States and Territories through COAG or another appropriate forum to explore the development of a national framework for addressing the emerging issue of native title compensation and the implications for all levels of government including:

a) Local government implications in relation to compensation for “invalid future acts”;
b) Any compensation flow through for “valid future acts”;
c) The need to set off compensation liability against the price charged to local governments purchasing State/Territory land; and

d) Local government involvement in alternative compensation settlement outcomes.

ALGA wrote to the *Attorney General* the Hon. Christian Porter MP, and the *Minister for Regional Development, Territories and Local Government* the Hon. Dr John McVeigh MP. A response was received from the Hon. Christian Porter MP and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

47.1 **Gwydir Shire Council, NSW**
That the National General Assembly seek a review of the existing Federal Native Title provisions relating to the approval processes required regarding public infrastructure projects in order to develop a timely resolution process that does not unreasonably delay important projects.
ALGA wrote to the Attorney General the Hon. Christian Porter MP, and the Minister for Regional Development, Territories and Local Government the Hon. Dr John McVeigh MP. A response was received from the Hon. Christian Porter MP and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

48 Logan City Council, QLD
That the National General Assembly call on the Federal Government to undertake extensive consultation with local governments, the community sector, medical experts and other relevant stakeholders prior to proposing further income management measures, such as drug testing and trials for cashless debit cards for welfare recipients.

ALGA wrote to the then Minister for Social Services, the Hon. Dan Tehan MP. A response was received from the Minister for Families and Social Services, the Hon. Paul Fletcher MP and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

49 Break O'Day Council, TAS
That the National General Assembly call for a review of the national guidelines to AS1428 – Access for Design and Mobility relating to Disability Access in building design be undertaken to address the changing needs from powered wheelchair usage.

ALGA referred the resolution to the Minister for Small and Family Business, The Workplace and Deregulation the Hon. Craig Laundy MP. A response was received from the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology the Hon. Karen Andrews MP and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

50 Darebin City Council, VIC
That the National General Assembly seek funding from federal government to produce a report on the profile of Local Government similar to the existing “State of Public Service” report.

ALGA wrote to the then Minister for Regional Development, Territories and Local Government the Hon. Dr John McVeigh MP. A response was received from the Minister for Regional Services, Sport, Local Government and Decentralisation, the Hon. Bridget McKenzie and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

51 Frankston City Council, VIC
That the National General Assembly call on Federal Parliament to hasten the release of aged care funding packages to eligible clients to enable them to access appropriate services for their complex needs.

ALGA wrote to the Minister for Aged Care the Hon Ken Wyatt AM. A response was received and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

52 Darebin City Council, VIC
That the National General Assembly:

1) Writes to the Prime Minister, leader of the opposition, leaders of minor parties and independent members of parliament requesting that bulk funding from the Commonwealth for aged care services be maintained for local councils that want to continue delivering quality aged and home care services to their vulnerable and ageing communities.

2) Advocates for an analysis of impact on the gender pay gap of the introduction of My Aged Care, and the shift in service delivery away from local government.

ALGA referred the resolution to state and territory associations for their consideration.
52.1 Central Highlands Regional Council, QLD
That the National General Assembly call on the Federal Government to engage with Local Government to collaboratively develop relevant models of aged care for rural and remote communities.

ALGA referred the resolution to the Minister for Aged Care the Hon Ken Wyatt AM. A response was received, and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

52.2 Boroondara City Council, VIC
That the National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to provide clear detail and timing of the next stage of the aged care reforms and their impact on local government Commonwealth Home Support Programme providers.

ALGA referred the resolution to the Minister for Aged Care the Hon Ken Wyatt AM. A response was received, and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

53 Wyndham City Council, VIC
The NGA join with State and Territory Governments to call on the Federal Government to provide adequate and permanent funding to help educate our youngest children, especially their share of 15 hours of kindergarten.

ALGA wrote to the Minister for Education and Training Senator, the Hon Simon Birmingham. A response was received from David Hardy, Acting Branch Head at the Department of Education and Training, and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

54 Mitchell Shire Council, VIC
That the National General Assembly call on the Federal Government to increase funding into mental health services and supporting mental health infrastructure, to reduce the rising mental health issues in growth and rural areas.

ALGA wrote to the Minister for Rural Health Senator, the Hon Bridget McKenzie. A response was received, and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

55 Hay Shire Council, NSW
That the National General Assembly call for the Federal Health Minister urgently to form a joint task force representing Local, State and Federal spheres of government, to formulate model financial packages for the engagement of doctors in rural towns, and contribute to those financial packages. In addition, call for the Federal Health Minister to ensure that safeguards are in place to prevent GP practices from appropriating patients’ medical records and making a profit out of transferring them to incoming practitioners, and to advise councils on best practice legal agreements to secure the services needed and secure the patients’ records.

ALGA wrote to the Minister for Rural Health Senator, the Hon Bridget McKenzie. A response was received, and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

56 Southern Downs Regional Council, QLD
Southern Downs Regional Council is seeking to obtain equity in funding for regional local governments that experience high levels of seasonal workers that are not reflected in the ABS data, and as a result do not reflect the real pressures placed on community, economic and social infrastructure, Council request that consideration be given to the following:
1) The date of the Census, currently conducted in August every 5 years, in the future held in February to reflect the seasonal population; or
2) That a weighting be placed on regions that experience seasonal population changes that are not reflected in the Census data.
3) That any such weighting be reflected in the level of financial assistance grants provided to local government authorities.

ALGA wrote to the then Minister for Regional Development, Territories and Local Government the Hon. Dr John McVeigh MP. A response was received from the Minister for Regional Services, Sport, Local Government and Decentralisation, the Hon. Bridget McKenzie and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

57 Wingecarribee Shire Council, NSW
1) That the National General Assembly call to advocate for inclusion of issues surrounding exploitation of children, women and animals as a consideration in Council’s Procurement Policies.
2) That where goods and services are proven to have a negative social or environmental impact or exploits Indigenous Cultures, children, women or animals or negative social impact due to manufacture or production, that these be avoided.

ALGA referred the issue to state and territory associations to action as they see fit.

58 Tenterfield Shire Council, NSW
That the National General Assembly call on the Federal Government to stop further bank closures in small rural towns, in particular those towns that only have one bank, and further Council calls on the Federal Government to establish a bank to fill in the gaps where banks have closed, especially in those small rural towns where bank customers have to travel great distances to another town to access banks.

ALGA referred the resolution to the then Minister for Regional Development, Territories and Local Government the Hon. Dr John McVeigh MP. A response was received from the Minister for Regional Services, Sport, Local Government and Decentralisation, the Hon. Bridget McKenzie and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

59 Moonee Valley City Council, VIC
That the National General Assembly advocates for change in local government bee management practices and encourages other Councils to commit to becoming bee-friendly states by:
• Investigating opportunities for Shared Services or consultancy between Councils to embed policies around bee management and advocacy; and
• Seeking funding through relevant Government Grants; and
• Providing food resources in the form of large floral plantings, reduce or cease pesticide use and preserve or provide nesting space.

ALGA wrote to the Minister for Agriculture the Hon. David Littleproud MP. A response was received and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

60 Bega Valley Shire Council, NSW
That the National General Assembly advocate to the Federal Government, through the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure and also the Minister for Regional Development, for appropriate funding for the National Transport Network and that a review of significant transport corridors in all States and Territories be undertaken.

ALGA wrote to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, the Hon Michael McCormack and the Minister for Regional Development, Territories and Local Government the Hon. Dr John McVeigh. A response was received from Deputy Prime Minister, the Hon. Michael McCormack and the Minister for Regional Services, Sport, Local Government and Decentralisation, the Hon. Bridget McKenzie and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.
60.1 Shoalhaven City Council, NSW
That the National General Assembly call on the Federal Government to officially recognise the Princes Highway as a Highway of National Importance as a major freight and tourist route.

ALGA wrote to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, the Hon Michael McCormack. A response was received and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

61 Blue Mountains City Council, NSW
That this National General Assembly calls on the Commonwealth Government to support State and Territory freight and port plans, including Draft NSW Freight and Port Plan, to provide a broad framework proposed to deliver improved network efficiencies, capacity and sustainability for the network.

ALGA wrote to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, the Hon Michael McCormack. A response was received and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

62 Tenterfield Shire Council, NSW
That the National General Assembly ask the Federal Government to fund a feasibility study and a full and comprehensive ecological assessment is undertaken to determine which of the streams along the Great Dividing Range are suitable for the generation of hydro electricity/pump hydro and if feasible, allocate funds in the next budget for this work.

ALGA wrote to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, the Hon Michael McCormack. A response was received and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

63 Shoalhaven City Council, NSW
That the National General Assembly calls for new National Codes of Accounting Practice for Councils and set standards to achieve auditable information as indicators for Infrastructure Assets.

ALGA referred the resolution to state and territory associations for consideration.

64 Moreland City Council, VIC
In light of the burden placed on local governments across Australia to respond to the needs and challenges of people living in poverty and homeless, that the National General Assembly calls on Federal Government to raise the Newstart Allowance to the level of the Henderson Poverty Line to increase the wellbeing and life chances of many in our community.

ALGA wrote to the then Minister for Social Services the Hon. Dan Tehan MP. A response was received from the Minister for Families and Social Services, the Hon. Paul Fletcher MP, and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

65 Griffith City Council, NSW
The National General Assembly encourages all options be explored by Federal and State governments to put downward pressure on retail electricity and gas charges.

ALGA wrote to the then Minister for Environment and Energy the Hon Josh Frydenberg MP. A response was received from the Hon. Melissa Price MP, Minister for the Environment and the Hon. Angus Taylor MP, Minister for Energy and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.
66 Hume City Council, VIC
That the National General Assembly writes to the Australian Leisure and Hospitality Group (ALH Group) and Woolworths to determine:

a) Whether it has engaged in the unconscionable conduct alleged in the House of Representatives on 28 February 2018 by Mr Andrew Wilkie MP,

b) Whether it monitors and probes customers who use its Australian venues for personal information, and if so:

c) Whether it compiles, stores and/or distributes the private personal information of these customers to other venues; and

d) Referring to regular gamblers, whether it directs staff at its Australian venues to “be there as much as possible...do whatever you have to do to keep them in the room”.

ALGA wrote to ALH Group. No response was received.

67 Leeton Shire Council, NSW
That the National General Assembly:

1) Requests the Federal Government to address the procedural and staffing issues affecting citizenship applications and process all applications from refugees within a reasonable time, as required by law.

2) Strongly urge the Federal Government to allocate sufficient resources to clear the existing backlog of citizenship applications.

ALGA referred the resolution to the Minister for Home Affairs the Hon. Peter Dutton MP. No response was received.

68 Wentworth Shire Council, NSW
That this National General Assembly requests both the Federal Government and Opposition immediately enact legislation banning all overseas political donations to individuals or parties and disclose, for public scrutiny, all such offers received from overseas agencies, or representatives thereof, along with the identity of such contact.

ALGA wrote to the Prime Minister the Hon. Malcolm Turnbull MP. No response was received.

69 Darebin City Council, VIC
That the Australian Local Government Association establishes a Multicultural Advisory Committee to provide strategic and policy advice to the ALGA Board on national immigration, settlement and multicultural issues that impacts on local governments across Australia.

ALGA noted the Resolution and has agreed it does not have the resources to establish such an Advisory Committee and that the Board’s advice on these matters will continue to be provided by state and territory associations.

70 Isaac Regional Council, QLD
That this National General Assembly acknowledges the passing of the Strong and Sustainable Resource Communities Act by the Queensland State Government in 2018 and calls on the Federal Government to bring the Commonwealth Government’s policies and laws in line with the Queensland State Government’s anti-discrimination laws.

ALGA wrote to the Minister for Regional Development, Territories and Local Government the Hon. Dr John McVeigh MP. A response was received from the Hon. Christian Porter, Attorney General and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

71 North Burnett Regional Council, QLD
That this National General Assembly continue to lobby policy reform with State Government via COAG that local governments still suffer greatly from significant devolution of responsibilities from the state governments with little
or no additional funding. Being the government closest to the people, it is becoming more and more difficult to provide sustainable services into the future and the constant population erosion from bush to city.

No action was taken as this motion was withdrawn.

72 Wyndham City Council, VIC
That National General Assembly notes previous NGA resolutions calling on the Federal Government to fund key Public Transport Projects. The NGA notes two key recent developments that add impetus to these NGA resolutions, namely:
• The release by Infrastructure Australia and other state-based infrastructure bodies’ priorities, including public transport projects;
• Submissions to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Infrastructure, Transport and Cities’ Inquiry into the Australian Government’s role in the development of cities.
NGA therefore write to the Prime Minister, Minister for Transport, Opposition Leader and relevant Ministers as well as the House of Representatives Standing Committee to reconfirm NGA resolutions that the Federal Government fund key Public Transport Projects, and highlight the increasingly unsustainable growth of Australia’s cities and the lack of connections of rural regions and towns which could both be improved through significant Federal Government funding of public transport projects.

ALGA wrote to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Transport the Hon. Michael McCormack MP. A response was received from and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

73 Penrith City Council, NSW
That the National General Assembly call on ALGA to advocate for a change to the Australia Building Standards to increase the minimum height of balustrades.

ALGA wrote to the Hon Craig Laundy MP, Minister for Small and Family Business, the Workplace and Deregulation. A response was received from the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology the Hon. Karen Andrews MP and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

74 Eurobodalla Shire Council, NSW
That the National General Assembly call on all local governments to give preference to financial institutions that do not invest in, or finance, the fossil fuel industry where council’s investment is compliant with its Investment Policy and the investment rate of interest is equivalent to other similar investments that may be on offer to council at the time of investment.

ALGA Comment
No action was taken as this motion was lost.

75 Brisbane City Council, QLD
The National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government, to ensure adequate and equitable funding for local government, to deliver and maintain transport infrastructure.

ALGA wrote to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Transport the Hon. Michael McCormack MP. A response was received and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

76 Hume City Council, VIC
That the National General Assembly calls upon the Federal and State Governments to ensure adequate road infrastructure is provided to growth areas, particularly on our metropolitan fringes, to support Local Councils in the delivery of the duplication of growth area roads to ensure safe and timely passage of vehicles.
ALGA wrote to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Transport the Hon. Michael McCormack MP. A response was received and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

77 Blacktown City Council, NSW
That the National General Assembly calls on the Commonwealth and State Governments to take action to establish detailed rail and road upgrade plans for high growth areas of Australia. This will provide the infrastructure needed to support plans for a significant increase in population in these areas over the next 20 years.

ALGA wrote to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Transport the Hon. Michael McCormack MP. A response was received and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

77.1 Blacktown City Council, NSW
That the National General Assembly calls for the Commonwealth and State Governments to take action to establish and fund the provision of transport infrastructure to meet Australia’s growing need for efficient and sustainable movement of freight. This to include detailed rail and road upgrade plans to meet the growing need for infrastructure required to support increased freight delivery over the next 20 years.

ALGA wrote to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Transport the Hon. Michael McCormack MP. A response was received and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

78 Blue Mountains City Council, NSW
That this National General Assembly calls on the Commonwealth Government to support the key objectives of Cycling and Walking Australia and New Zealand in the national interest to implement strategies and actions that will rapidly improve the conditions for, and the uptake of walking and cycling on transport and recreation networks across Australia and New Zealand.

ALGA wrote to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Transport the Hon. Michael McCormack MP. A response was received and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

79 City of Adelaide, SA
The National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to explore alternative funding models to offset the lost income from the take-up of high-efficiency/non-combustible powered vehicles (electric, hydrogen).

ALGA wrote to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Transport the Hon. Michael McCormack MP. A response was received and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

80 Penrith City Council, NSW
That the National General Assembly call on the Australian Government to commit to co-design with state and local governments an urban reform agenda framed around the 9 findings and the 15 recommendations of Infrastructure Australia’s Future Cities paper.

ALGA wrote to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Transport the Hon. Michael McCormack MP. A response was received and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

80.1 Mitchell Shire Council, VIC
That the National General Assembly call on the Federal Government to increase funding for enabling infrastructure in growth areas, and recognise the need for infrastructure to be established in a timely manner to services for new communities to prevent the corresponding issues that occur as a result from lack of timely access. That this issue be placed on the COAG agenda given the need for all of Federal, State and local governments to work together.
ALGA wrote to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Transport the Hon. Michael McCormack MP and the Minister for Urban Infrastructure and Cities the Hon. Paul Fletcher MP. A response was received from the Hon. Michael McCormack MP and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

81 Logan City Council, QLD
That the National General Assembly call on the Federal Government to develop a transparent, competitive process and a set criteria for selecting future City Deals.

ALGA wrote to the Minister for Urban Infrastructure and Cities the Hon. Paul Fletcher MP. No response was received.

82 East Gippsland Shire Council, VIC
That the National General Assembly call on the Australian Government to support initiatives by councils, working with local businesses and communities, to develop and implement local and regional Climate Change Adaptation Plans, thereby improving the sustainability and resilience of local communities and regions.

ALGA wrote to the Minister for Environment the Hon. Josh Frydenberg MP. A response was received from the Hon. Melissa Price MP, Minister for the Environment and the Hon. Angus Taylor MP, Minister for Energy and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

83 Blacktown City Council, NSW
That the National General Assembly calls for the Commonwealth and State Governments to provide climate change funding to assist local government and communities to implement emission reduction projects.

ALGA referred the resolution to the Minister for Environment the Hon. Josh Frydenberg MP. A response was received from the Hon. Melissa Price MP, Minister for the Environment and the Hon. Angus Taylor MP, Minister for Energy and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

84 Central Highlands Regional Council, QLD
That the National General Assembly lobby for a national, unified and community-minded approach to the solution and management of Flying Foxes.

ALGA referred the resolution to the Minister for Environment the Hon. Josh Frydenberg MP. A response was received from the Hon. Melissa Price MP, Minister for the Environment and the Hon. Angus Taylor MP, Minister for Energy and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

85 Blue Mountains City Council, NSW
That the National General Assembly calls on the Commonwealth Government to develop partnerships with Local Government recognizing Innovation and Digital Transformation – Smart Communities is a necessary next step for Local Government to achieve significant efficiency and effectiveness in the provision of services to communities.

ALGA wrote to the Minister for Urban Infrastructure and Cities the Hon. Paul Fletcher MP. No response was received. The issue was broadly picked up in ALGAs Federal Election document and pre-budget submission.

86 City of Adelaide, SA
The National General Assembly calls on the Australian Local Government Association to investigate the benefits of developing a unified view of customers across the local government sector in order to support the transformation to Smart Cities.

ALGA wrote to the Minister for Urban Infrastructure and Cities the Hon. Paul Fletcher MP. No response was received.
87 Orange City Council, NSW

That the National General Assembly call on the Department of Industry, Innovation and Science to develop a program with a suggested title of ‘Smart Cities Partnership’ to provide councils with expert advice and resources to support their development in line with the Government’s Digital Economic Strategy.

ALGA referred the resolution to the Minister for Jobs and Innovation Senator the Hon. Michaelia Cash. A response was received from the Hon. Alan Tudge MP, Minister for Cities, Urban Infrastructure and Population, and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

88 Blue Mountains City Council, NSW

That this National General Assembly calls on the Commonwealth Government to provide all government agencies with licence to reproduce copyright-protected material for the purpose of complying with state and federal statute, in accordance with Recommendation 15-4 of the Australian Law Reform Commission Report on ‘Copyright and the Digital Economy’.

ALGA wrote to the Attorney General the Hon. Christian Porter MP. A response was received and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

89 Shoalhaven City Council, NSW

That the National General Assembly call for a review of Regional Development Organisations to ensure geographical alignment with Local Government Joint Association or Regional Organisation boundaries.

ALGA wrote to the then Minister for Regional Development, Territories and Local Government the Hon. Dr John McVeigh MP. A response was received from the Hon. Michael McCormack MP and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

90 Moreland City Council, VIC

That the National General Assembly calls on the Federal Government to commit to recurrent funding of Universal Access to 15 hours of kindergarten.

ALGA wrote to the Minister for Education and Training, Senator the Hon. Simon Birmingham. A response was received from David Hardy, Acting Branch Head at the Department of Education and Training, and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.

91 Randwick City Council, NSW

That the National General Assembly request that ALGA write to the Prime Minister, the Hon. Malcolm Turnbull, the Leader of the Opposition, the Hon. Bill Shorten, the Leader of The Australian Greens, Senator Richard Di Natale, the Minister for Women, the Hon. Kelly O’Dwyer, and the Minister for Social Services, the Hon. Dan Tehan, calling for the following measures to be taken to support women and children affected by domestic violence:

- A substantial increase in direct funding for specialist services and crisis accommodation providers;
- Funding for affordable long-term accommodation;
- A substantial increase in direct funding of legal services; and
- Transparent reporting of all spending on domestic and family violence programs.

ALGA wrote to the Prime Minister, the Hon. Malcolm Turnbull, the Leader of the Opposition, the Hon. Bill Shorten, the Leader of The Australian Greens, Senator Richard Di Natale, the Minister for Women, the Hon. Kelly O’Dwyer MP, and the Minister for Social Services, the Hon. Dan Tehan MP. A response was received from the Hon. Paul Fletcher MP, Minister for Families and Social Services, and can be found at alga.asn.au and at the back of this book.
2018
Ministerial Correspondence
Thank you for your letter of 2 August 2018 to Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash, the then Minister for Jobs and Innovation, regarding the National General Assembly of Local Government. Your letter was forwarded to me as I am the Minister responsible for the matter you raised. I apologise for the delay in replying.

With regard to the development of a ‘Smart Cities Partnership’ program, you may be aware the Australian Government is delivering a number of initiatives to help local governments build smart city capability and to take advantage of opportunities presented by the evolution of the digital economy.

The $50 million Smart Cities and Suburbs Program (the Program) is a key aspect of the Government’s cities agenda and supports local governments to deliver innovative smart city projects that improve the liveability, productivity and sustainability of cities and towns across Australia. The Program encourages collaboration and partnerships, with local governments required to partner with industry, research, and private sector organisations, to develop solutions to local problems.

Round One of the Program was highly competitive, with 176 applications received. 49 projects were successful and benefited from $27.7 million of Government funding. These projects are underway and due to be completed by 30 June 2019. Round Two of the Program was open for applications between 2 May 2018 and 2 July 2018. Applications are currently under assessment, with successful projects to be announced in late 2018. Further information can be found at www.infrastructure.gov.au.

To help local governments build capability in developing and executing smart city projects, the Government, in partnership with the Australian Smart Communities Association, developed the “Future Ready” webinar series. The webinars focused on co-learning to grow smart city capability, exploring smart city case studies from global leaders, sharing tips and tricks of digital success, investigating new business models and citizen-centric design. The series can be found at www.australiansmartcommunities.org.au/future-ready.
The Government has also developed an online Smart Cities Collaboration Platform to enable smart city projects and ideas to be shared, and support capacity building in local government. Projects that have received Government funding through the Program will use the platform to share information about their projects. Independently funded projects are also able to use the platform for this purpose. We are investigating options to further develop the capability of the Platform by adding for example, a resource library and calendar of smart city events and forums. The platform can be found at https://infrastructure.gov.au/cities-smart-cities/collaboration-platform/.

I welcome your continued engagement on issues relating to smart cities.

Thank you for bringing your concerns to my attention and I trust this is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

[Signature]

Alan Tudge

16/10/2018
Dear Mayor

Thank you for your correspondence of 2 August 2018 to the then Minister for Regional Development, Territories and Local Government, the Hon Dr John McVeigh MP, seeking a response to the resolutions passed by the National General Assembly of Local Government. Your letter has been forwarded to me as the Minister for the matter you raised. My sincere apologies for the delay in responding.

The Liberal National Government continues to support local government and understands the important contribution local government makes in providing the essential services and infrastructure communities need to thrive.

Responses to the resolutions you referred, as well as Resolution 3 sent to the Treasurer, the Hon Josh Frydenberg MP, are enclosed. The Deputy Prime Minister, the Hon Michael McCormack MP, has responded to Resolutions 22, 60 and 89. The Attorney General, the Hon Christian Porter MP, has responded to Resolutions 47 and 70.

Thank you for bringing your concerns to my attention and I trust this is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

[Signature]

Bridget McKenzie

Enc
RESPONSES FROM AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT AGENCIES TO 2018 NATIONAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT RESOLUTIONS

Resolution Number: 3
That the National General Assembly, in line with previous NGA resolutions over successive years, continue raising with the Commonwealth through COAG and all other relevant forums:
• The need for re-alignment of federal funding arrangements so that the three levels of Government in Australia have a more efficient match between their public responsibilities and their finances
• The need for the Commonwealth to urgently address the rapidly growing infrastructure gap in the States, particularly in regards to rail transport in and between capital and regional cities – with significant funding being immediately provided to metropolitan public transport which will free up road space for cars and freight
• The need for equitable infrastructure funding to States to reduce major discrepancies between the Australian States, e.g. Victoria’s infrastructure funding has been reduced to 8-9% of federal infrastructure funding notwithstanding its population being 25% of the nation which produces 22% of the Australian GDP.

That the National General Assembly therefore seeks:
• A commitment to a “new agreement of principles” funding discussion across all three levels of Government so it is clear who does what based from which taxation stream
• Equitable Commonwealth infrastructure investment in rail and other infrastructure projects (in both metropolitan and regional cities)
• Better communication of the Commonwealth’s infrastructure funding distribution formula.

Response

The Australian Government is investing over $75 billion in transport infrastructure over the coming decade across urban and regional Australia.

This funding is provided through a range of programs, with various objectives, such as safety (Black Spot program) or local road maintenance (Roads to Recovery). However, the bulk of the investment is directed to supporting nationally significant infrastructure projects; projects that shape our cities and provide access for our regions, and drive national productivity growth.

This includes the announcement of a $24.5 billion commitment to a new Pipeline of major project and new initiatives in the 2018-19 Budget. The Pipeline includes programs and projects across all jurisdictions, and of varying scale and scope. These investments form a coherent plan for Australia’s transport infrastructure future.

As our population grows, efficient rail networks are crucial to shaping Australia’s future productivity and prosperity. This is why the Government is strategically investing over $19.2 billion towards rail infrastructure from 2018-19 to build a modern transport system that will reduce congestion on our roads and connect our metropolitan and regional communities to jobs and services and affordable housing.
These investments are designed to improve productivity and make our cities and regions more efficient and livable by alleviating congestion, reducing travel times and improving service reliability and performance.

A key component of the Government’s investment strategy is the $5 billion commitment to the Melbourne Airport Rail Link, which is a transformational project that will provide a fast and reliable service to passengers and commuters travelling between Melbourne Airport and the Melbourne CBD.

A rail link to the airport is critical to the effective future functioning of Melbourne’s transport system and its future development as an integrated international city. Airport rail links in Sydney and Brisbane demonstrate their importance to cities and economies.

The Government is also exploring the opportunities for faster passenger rail links between our major cities and our regions. In the 2017-18 Budget, the Government committed to faster passenger rail connections to such areas through a $20 million Faster Rail Prospectus to support the development of business cases.

Faster rail connections can make rail a more attractive choice for commuters travelling into the city from surrounding regions. Faster rail connections also help link communities and build social cohesion.

On 9 March 2018, following a detailed competitive assessment process in line with criteria outlined in the Faster Rail Prospectus, the Government committed funding to the development of business cases for connections between Sydney and Newcastle in New South Wales, Melbourne and Greater Shepparton in Victoria, and Brisbane to the regions of Moreton Bay and the Sunshine Coast in Queensland.

Decisions on Commonwealth investment is prioritised based on the economic and social benefits that will be delivered and considers the independent advice provided by Infrastructure Australia through its development and maintenance of the Infrastructure Priority List. Government takes a mode neutral approach when assessing optimum transport solutions to address network deficiencies.

As such, there is no specific formula for distributing funding to specific modes of transport, or across jurisdictions or levels of government.

Resolution Number: 45

That the National General Assembly advocate to the Federal Government through the Minister for Regional Development, that a decentralisation policy will assist regional and rural areas in terms of population growth, investment and job creation.

Response

The Australian Government is committed to ensuring the benefits of national economic growth are not restricted to our major cities. Decentralisation of Government jobs outside of Canberra, central Sydney and Melbourne provides benefits to regional communities through the creation of local jobs, local economic diversification, and stimulation of regional economic growth. In the long term, it can also help improve government service delivery through closer proximity to citizens and stakeholders.
The Government is committed to a practical, planned decentralisation agenda. Since 2013, the Government has implemented a number of decentralisation initiatives. In May 2018, the Government announced the relocation of 98 positions from a range of agencies as part of the Decentralisation Agenda.

In November 2018 the Government announced up to 50 positions would be created through new or relocated positions at the Australian Maritime Safety Authority, which will include a regional headquarters of Coffs Harbour. AMSA jobs.

In The Government will continue to identify options for further decentralisation throughout 2018-19.

Resolution Number: 45.1

That the National General Assembly calls upon the Federal Government to develop programs, that facilitate and encourage the relocation of both urban residents and newly arrived migrants to regional and rural areas, through constructive engagement with local authorities that creates investment outcomes that produce the increased potential for employment and economic prosperity in these communities.

Response

Well-targeted migration in regional areas, particularly those experiencing or at risk of population decline, can have a significant positive impact on these areas.

Regional development is a multi-faceted issue involving a range of stakeholders across government, industry and local communities. Migration can boost economic activity by alleviating regional skills shortages and by having more people purchasing local goods and services. Successful migration, however, requires local support and must complement other programs that are focused on supporting regional communities.

The Department of Home Affairs regularly engages with the Department of Infrastructure, Regional Development and Cities, as well as with state and territory governments, on how Australia’s migration policies can best support regional Australia.

Resolution Number: 46

That this National General Assembly calls on the Commonwealth Government to demonstrate commitment to and to fully implement Recommendation 2 of the 2013 Inquiry by the Commonwealth Government House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Australia titled "Cancer of the bush or salvation for our cities? Fly-in, fly-out and drive-in, drive-out workforce practices in Regional Australia" as follows: "The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth Government, in consultation with state and territory governments, review allocation of funding for communities that receive fly-in, fly-out/drive-in, drive-out workforces so that funding is based on both resident and service populations."
Response

The Australian Government provides more than $2.4 billion in untied funding to state and territory governments annually under the Financial Assistance Grant program. This helps 546 local governing bodies deliver infrastructure, health, recreation, environmental and employment projects. Distribution of funding to councils in each state and the Northern Territory is undertaken by the grants commissions in each jurisdiction. As this funding is untied, the council will have the ability to allocate based on their priorities and local needs.

The 2018-19 Budget included a number of announcements that will directly benefit local governments in regional Australia, including the Building Better Regions Fund, and the Stronger Communities Program to help improve economic and social infrastructure.

The Budget continues to fund programs that deliver for regional Australia, such as $1 billion Community Development Grants Program, $612.2 million National Stronger Regions Fund, $272.3 million Regional Jobs and Investment Packages, and $34.5 million Drought Communities Program.

Resolution Number: 50

That the National General Assembly seek funding from federal government to produce a report on the profile of Local Government similar to the existing "State of Public Service" report.

Response

The Australian Government respects the constitutional allocation of responsibilities under which state governments are responsible for the operation of local government. As such, each state has its own reporting requirements for, and on, local governments. A number of states already release reports on the profile and performance of their respective local government sectors. While the Government welcomes initiatives for standardised reporting on local governments across jurisdictions, it is up to the states to lead and fund such an initiative.

Section 44(1) of the Public Service Act 1999 requires the Australian Public Service Commissioner to provide a report on the state of the Australian Public Service over the preceding year to Parliament. No such Commonwealth legislative requirement exists for reporting on local governments.

Resolution Number: 56

Southern Downs Regional Council is seeking to obtain equity in funding for regional local governments that experience high levels of seasonal workers that are not reflected in the ABS data, and as a result do not reflect the real pressures placed on community, economic and social infrastructure, Council request that consideration be given to the following:

1. The date of the Census, currently conducted in August every 5 years, in the future held in February to reflect the seasonal population; or
2. That a weighting be placed on regions that experience seasonal population changes that are not reflected in the Census data.
3. That any such weighting be reflected in the level of financial assistance grants provided to local government authorities.
Response

Conducting the Census in August is intended to provide the most reliable reflection of the population. The August date:

a. avoids the wet season, and ensures that as much of the country as possible is accessible;

b. is not close to holiday periods, when travel is increased and maximises the number of people at home on Census night; and

c. enables an effective baseline to establish long-term data trends, as for the reasons listed above, Census night over the last thirty years has been held in August.

Moving the 2021 Census to any other date would have significant impacts on the overall coverage, quality and consistency of the Census.

Resolution Number: 58

That the National General Assembly call on the Federal Government to stop further bank closures in small rural towns, in particular those towns that only have one bank, and further Council calls on the Federal Government to establish a bank to fill in the gaps where banks have closed, especially in those small rural towns where bank customers have to travel great distances to another town to access banks.

Response

Over recent years there has been a steady decline in the number of bank branches in regional areas. It is acknowledged that this is a concerning trend, particularly for older people or those with disabilities.

Closing a branch is ultimately a commercial decision for a bank and the Government does not have any power to intervene in these decisions.

The banking industry has adopted measures to reduce the customer impact of branch closures. Signatories to the Australian Banking Association (ABA) Code of Banking Practice (the Code) have agreed to follow a specific protocol for branch closures. The Protocol, where applicable, provides a guideline for minimum standards of service delivery when closing a branch including customer notification, consultation, and account management. More information about the Code and Protocol can be found on the ABA website at: www.ausbanking.org.au.

In addition, while not a perfect substitute, banks have been working with Australia Post through Bank@Post to offer deposit, withdrawal and payment services for customers at over 3,500 Australia Post branches in order to minimise the disruption of branch closures.

Resolution Number: 60

That the National General Assembly advocate to the Federal Government, through the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure and also the Minister for Regional Development, for appropriate funding for the National Transport Network and that a review of significant transport corridors in all States and Territories be undertaken.
Response

The Australian Government remains committed to investing in key transport corridors across both regional and urban Australia.

The Government has committed over $75 billion over the next 10 years towards transport infrastructure. This investment covers a range of priorities, including delivering nation-shaping transport projects, such as the Melbourne to Brisbane Inland Rail, as well as providing ongoing funding to state and local governments to maintain their road networks.

In the 2016-17 Budget, the Government committed an ongoing annual Commonwealth funding allocation of $400 million for the Roads to Recovery Program and $350 million for maintenance of the National Land Transport Network (NLTN).

As announced by the former Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, the Hon Darren Chester MP in late 2017, a review of the NLTN is currently underway with the Department of Infrastructure, Regional Development and Cities working with the state and territory agencies on potential updates or amendments to the NLTN. All proposals are being assessed against the requirements of the National Land Transport Act 2014, prior to consideration by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Transport later this year.
Dear Mayor

Thank you for your correspondence of 2 August 2018 regarding the issues discussed at the National General Assembly of Local Government in June 2018.

The request for the Federal Health Minister to formulate a joint taskforce representing local, state and Federal spheres of government, to formulate model financial packages for the engagement of doctors in rural towns, and contribute to those financial packages is acknowledged.

The Coalition Government funds the Rural Workforce Agencies in each state and the Northern Territory around $86 million (GST inclusive) over three years to June 2020 to deliver the Rural Health Workforce Support Activity (RWA Program). Under the RWA Program, Rural Workforce Agencies deliver a range of activities aimed at improving the access, quality and sustainability of the rural health workforce. This includes providing assistance to communities that experience difficulties attracting and retaining health professionals into regional, rural and remote areas. Rural Workforce Agencies work with local practices, communities and other organisations to ensure that rural Australia is served by a skilled, well-supported health workforce.

A key element of the RWA Program is the establishment of Health Workforce Stakeholder Groups in each jurisdiction which include representation from key rural health workforce stakeholders. This includes Regional Training Organisations, Primary Health Networks, Rural Health Outreach Fund-holders, Specialist Training Pathway Providers, Rural Clinical Schools, Regional Training Hubs, state Health Departments, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Peak Bodies. Health Workforce Stakeholder Groups help ensure that Rural Workforce Agency activities are prioritised according to need, and complement, rather than duplicate, other organisations’ efforts.

In the 2018-19 Budget, the Coalition Government announced the Stronger Rural Health Strategy, a carefully calibrated suite of measures to address each stage of medical workforce supply - teaching, training and retention. It is a historic 10-year plan to meet current and future health workforce challenges and it supports the largest overhaul of Australia’s health workforce in decades.
The Strategy will deliver a comprehensive package of reforms in a $550 million investment over five years from 2017-18. The Strategy will provide all Australians with the right mix of qualified health professionals in the right place, at the right time to deliver high quality health care. It includes a range of incentives, targeted funding and bonding arrangements to meet head-on the challenge of redistributing the workforce across regional, rural and remote Australia, beyond the cities and metropolitan areas.

As part of the 2018-19 Budget, the Government announced an additional $84.1 million in funding over four years to the Royal Flying Doctor Service, which commenced 1 July 2018. This funding will increase the availability of dental services beyond March 2019, deliver new mental health services from 1 January 2019 and continue traditional services to rural and remote Australia.

Of this additional funding, approximately $20 million will be provided for the Royal Flying Doctor Service to deliver mental health services in rural and remote Australia. This will allow those in most need to have access to mental health professionals where the technology for telehealth may not be available, or is costly.

I would like to thank you and the Australian Local Government Association for the important work done in local communities.

Yours sincerely,

Bridget McKenzie
Thank you for your letter of 2 August 2018 regarding resolutions made by the National General Assembly of Local Government, and seeking my advice and comment on a number of those resolutions. I appreciate the time you have taken to bring these matters to my attention, and regret the delay in responding.

Consistent with longstanding practice, it would not be appropriate for me to provide legal advice on the resolutions referred to in your letter.

However, I have set out below some general information that might be of assistance to you and the Australian Local Government Association. This general information addresses each of the resolutions you have raised in your letter.

I understand you also wrote to the former Minister for Regional Development, Territories and Local Government, the Hon Dr John McVeigh MP, seeking a response to Resolution 70 carried by the National General Assembly, regarding anti-discrimination legislation. My comments below also address that resolution, as the issues it raises fall within my portfolio responsibilities.

Resolution 1.5

The Australian Government is not currently considering writing a new federal constitution. Section 128 of the existing Constitution requires that any constitutional amendment be approved by voters at a national referendum. In order to be effective, a proposed amendment of the Constitution must be approved by a majority of voters overall and by majorities in a majority of States (that is, in four of the six States). In practice, this means that only proposals with very widespread support succeed at a referendum.

Resolution 1.6

The Australian Government remains committed to recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Constitution. Recognition would acknowledge our shared history and the value we place on our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage.
The Joint Select Committee on Constitutional Recognition Relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples was established in March 2018. The Committee has been tasked with recommending options for constitutional change which meet the expectations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and which will secure cross-parliamentary support and the support of the Australian people. You might be interested in the Committee's interim report, which can be found at: https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Joint/Constitutional_Recognition_2018/ConstRecognition/Interim_Report.

Resolution 47

Native title compensation is an emerging issue that will have implications for all levels of Government, including local Governments. However, this is a new and complex area of the law. Issues such as the quantum of compensation and liability for compensation have not been judicially determined at this stage.

Further guidance will be provided by the High Court when it hands down judgment in the Timber Creek native title compensation claim, which was heard on 4-6 September 2018. The Timber Creek claim is the first judicial consideration of the principles governing compensation for the extinguishment or impairment of native title under the Native Title Act 1993, including quantum. Guidance from the High Court will be important to facilitate future compensation negotiations, and will permit the Commonwealth, States and Territories, local Governments and future act proponents to better estimate and manage their native title compensation liability. Once it is handed down, the Australian Government will consider the High Court’s judgment and its implications.

Resolution 47.1

The Australian Government is also developing a package of native title reforms to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the native title system for all parties. The reforms are focused on improving claims resolution, agreement-making concerning the use of native title land, and measures to promote the autonomy of native title groups to make decisions about their land and resolve internal disputes. Following a process of consultation on an options paper released in November 2017, there will be further consultation on exposure draft legislation in coming weeks.

Resolution 70

Under Australia’s Federal system of Government, the Commonwealth, States and Territories each administer their own anti-discrimination laws and related policies and programs. There are many examples of differences between State, Territory and Commonwealth anti-discrimination laws. Achieving consistency between these laws, in and of itself, is not a sufficient basis to amend Commonwealth anti-discrimination legislation to protect against discrimination by large resource projects against residents of nearby regional communities.

The Australian Government considers Commonwealth anti-discrimination law is not the most appropriate mechanism to address concerns about the employment of locals in regional communities. This is best dealt with by individual State or Territory Governments, as appropriate.
Further comments regarding relevant Queensland laws

Anti-discrimination provisions in the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991* (Qld) and the *Strong and Sustainable Resource Communities Act 2017* (Qld) (SSRC Act) make it an offence for large resource projects to discriminate against locals in the future recruitment of workers. This applies to all projects and communities on the published list of large resource projects from the commencement of the SSRC Act.

The amendments to the Anti-Discrimination Act and the introduction of the SSRC Act were brought in to prevent the use of a 100% fly-in-fly-out workforce where there is a nearby regional community from which local residents can be employed. Where a person feels that they have been discriminated against during a recruitment or termination process because they are a resident of a nearby regional community, the person may lodge a complaint with the Queensland Anti-Discrimination Commission.

Resolution 88

The Australian Government is considering reform options to the *Copyright Act 1968* to enable expanded uses of copyright material by Commonwealth, State and Local Governments. A consultation process was undertaken from March to July 2018 on these possible changes, including allowing uses by governments to comply with statutory requirements. The Australian Government is currently considering the issues raised in submissions to this consultation. Further details about the consultation are available at: [https://www.communications.gov.au/have-your-say/copyright-modernisation-consultation](https://www.communications.gov.au/have-your-say/copyright-modernisation-consultation).

Thank you for bringing these resolutions of the National General Assembly to my attention. I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

The Hon Christian Porter MP
Attorney-General
Dear Mayor O'Loughlin,

Thank you for your letter of 8 August 2018 to Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham, regarding the resolutions carried at the National Government Assembly of Local Government (NGA) held in June 2018. The issues you have raised now fall under the portfolio responsibilities of the Hon Dan Tehan MP, Minister for Education. I have been asked to reply on the Minister’s behalf.

With regard to Resolutions 53 and 90, the Australian Government remains committed to ensuring that future preschool policy is as effective as possible. As mentioned in Senator Birmingham’s last letter to you on 24 October 2017, the Government’s priority is ensuring that all children are participating, not just enrolling, and fully benefiting from the 600 hours of preschool on offer.

As you would be aware, earlier this year, the Government announced a further $440 million for preschool for 2019 to continue Commonwealth support for 15 hours of quality preschool a week for every child in the year before school. This support provides all governments with time to work collaboratively to address issues in the sector and develop future arrangements.

Ultimately, achieving the strongest possible early learning sector over the coming years—for all Australian children—will require a collaborative approach across all levels of government. The Government is committed to working with states and territories to ensure there is a robust and fair system in place that supports Australian children to have the best start in life.

Thank you for bringing the recent NGA resolutions to the Government’s attention, and I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely,

David Hardy
Acting Branch Manager
Assessment and Early Learning Branch

30 August 2018
Dear Mr O'Loughlin

Thank you for your letter of 2 August 2018 regarding the outcomes of the recent National General Assembly of Local Government meeting.

I appreciate the views of local government and the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) on protecting the health of the Murray Darling Basin. The Australian Government is committed to implementing the Murray-Darling Basin Plan (Basin Plan) in a way that ensures the best possible outcomes for Basin communities and the environment. That is why, I will continue to work with my Basin state counterparts to get on with the job of implementing the Basin Plan.

I offer the following comments in response to the National General Assembly of Local Governments resolutions which relate to water resources and other matters that fall within my portfolio.

Resolution 27 regarding the development of a National Water Registry
Under the provisions of the Water Act 2007 (Water Act), the Bureau of Meteorology (Bureau) is required to collect, hold, manage, interpret and disseminate Australia's water information. The information you seek in a National Water Registry such as current water availability, water forecasting, water resource assessments and water market information is consistent with the type of water information the Bureau collects and publishes on its website. I would encourage your members to take advantage of this valuable water planning resource.

Resolution 28 – creation of a National Water Ombudsman.
On 7 May 2018 the government announced its intention to establish a Northern Basin Commissioner (the Commissioner) as part of the package of commitments agreed with the Federal Opposition in return for their support for Basin Plan amendments arising from the Sustainable Diversion Limit adjustment mechanism and the Northern Basin Review.

On 24 August 2018, I appointed the former Australian Federal Police Commissioner, Mr Mick Keelty AO APM, to the role. The Commissioner will play an important role in providing independent assurance that key reforms and initiatives in the northern Murray-Darling Basin, including the outcomes of the Northern Basin Review and the Basin Compliance Compact (Compliance Compact) are delivered. The Commissioner will also audit and report on Northern Basin matters including knowledge and information requirements, engagement with Indigenous communities, and protection of environmental flows and implementation of water use compliance commitments.

Resolution 29 - local government representation on the Murray-Darling Basin Ministerial Council
The Murray-Darling Basin Ministerial Council (the Ministerial Council) has recently considered similar representation by the Murray Darling Association (MDA) for local government membership on the Council.
The Council is established under the Water Act 2007 (the Water Act) and the Murray–Darling Basin Agreement (the Agreement) (Schedule 1 of the Act). The Agreement prescribes that the Council consists of the Minister responsible for water from each of the Basin state governments who is appointed by the respective state governments. As it currently stands, the business of the Council involves Basin governments which have a direct stake in River Murray system assets, natural resource management programs, financial contributions, state water shares and Basin Plan implementation. For these reasons, and consistent with the views of other Basin jurisdictions, I consider that representation by local government on the Council is not appropriate.

There is, however, scope for local government expertise to sit on the Basin Community Committee (BCC), which is established under the Water Act (2007) to provide advice to the Murray-Darling Basin Authority (MDBA). Indeed local government is currently represented on the BCC by the Chair of the MDA. Noting that the Chair of the BCC is invited to attend meetings of the Ministerial Council, Basin jurisdictions place considerable value on the BCC’s advice and input, including reports from the BCC Chair to each Council meeting.

Resolution 30 – Strengthening the compliance and enforcement role of the Murray-Darling Basin Authority

The government takes allegations of water theft very seriously. On 25 November 2017, the MDBA and the Independent Panel released their comprehensive Basin-wide findings and recommendations on compliance matters across the Murray–Darling Basin. In response to the issues that had been identified by these and other reports, the Compliance Compact was developed.

The Compliance Compact sets out the specific plans of every Basin government for delivering a consistent and transparent approach to metering, compliance and enforcement. Details of the Compact can be found on the MDBA website. The draft Compact will be provided to the Council of Australian Governments for consideration in December 2018. All Basin governments agreed to the Compliance Compact on 8 June 2018.

Resolution 59 – changes to local government bee management practices

I appreciate the ALGA request for the department to investigate the potential to develop partnerships with interested councils to achieve sustainable bee management practices in local areas. I am advised that these issues are best pursued through state government agriculture agencies, in consultation with relevant industry body – in this case the Australian Honey Bee Industry Council.

As the National Water Infrastructure Development Fund (the Fund) falls within the responsibilities of the Infrastructure, Regional Development and Cities portfolio I recommend you raise Resolution 31 with the Deputy Prime Minister. I would note however, that on 19 August the Government announced a $72 million special drought round under the Fund that will be of interest to many of your members

Thank you for bringing your concerns to the government’s attention.

Yours sincerely

DAVID LITTLEPROUD MP
The Hon Karen Andrews MP
Minister for Industry, Science and Technology

Mayor David O'Loughlin
President
Australian Local Government Association
8 Giels Court
DEAKIN ACT 2600

Dear Mayor O'Loughlin

Thank you for your letters of 2 August 2018 to the former Minister for Jobs and Innovation, Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash, and the former Minister for Small and Family Business, the Workplace and Deregulation, the Hon Craig Laundy MP, seeking comment on the National General Assembly of Local Government’s resolutions in respect of building regulations. Your letters have been referred to me as the new Minister for Industry, Science and Technology.

Before addressing the specific Resolutions, I affirm that the Australian Government recognises the importance of building safety and has been working collaboratively with state and territory governments, through the Building Ministers’ Forum (BMF) to assure the Australian community that our buildings are safe.

In that context I would like to highlight the recent decision of the BMF, relating to the ‘Building Confidence – Improving the effectiveness of compliance and enforcement systems for the building and construction industry across Australia’ report, prepared by Professor Peter Shergold and Ms Bronwyn Weir. On 10 August 2018, BMF Ministers directed the development of a paper that sets out an implementation plan for reform based on the recommendations of the report. Recommendation 5 of the report is particularly relevant to your organisation, in that it encourages greater collaboration and a more effective partnership between parties with regulatory responsibility for buildings, including state and local governments. The full report is available at www.industry.gov.au.

In relation to Resolution 19, as you are aware, state and territory governments have responsibility for regulating building and construction activities in their respective jurisdictions. Issues of funding for rectification work are also a matter for state and territory governments. This is being actively discussed by the BMF, and I note that several jurisdictions have taken steps to address these issues. For instance, the Victorian Government has recently proposed the introduction of a mechanism to provide for low-interest loans for cladding rectification work.

In relation to Resolution 20, I understand that there are concerns about unregulated short-term accommodation, such as Airbnb and Stayz. However, this is primarily a post-occupancy building management issue, and is therefore a planning control matter within the responsibility of state and territory governments.

I would be grateful if you could clarify the intent of the National General Assembly’s Resolution 49, before I provide a formal response.
If the resolution is referring to the Guideline on the Application of the Premises Standards, you should note that the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) developed and issued the Guideline to assist persons and organisations to understand their rights and comply with their responsibilities under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (DDA). I also note the Guideline is not legally binding.

Alternatively, if the resolution refers to the *Disability (Access to Premises – Buildings) Standards 2010* (the Premises Standards), made under the DDA, I can advise that the Government completed a review of the Premises Standards in April 2016.

As you may be aware, my department has established an Expert Advisory Group (EAG) to provide technical advice and guidance on issues raised by the review of the Premises Standards. I am advised that Mr Rolph Vos was invited to join the EAG, given his role as the ALGA representative on Australian Building Codes Board (ABCB).

The adequacy of the existing wheelchair dimensions prescribed by AS 1428.1 was an issue identified in the review of the Premises Standards, and the EAG intends to consider this issue in consultation with Standards Australia’s technical committee (ME-064). As such, I would encourage ALGA to pursue this resolution through the EAG.

In relation to Resolution 73, I can advise that the ABCB is in the process of investigating the adequacy of balustrade heights in the National Construction Code.

In relation to Resolution 87, the matters you raise relating to Smart Cities sit within the portfolio responsibilities of the Minister for Cities, Urban Infrastructure and Population, the Hon Alan Tudge MP. I have forwarded a copy of your letter and this response to him for consideration.

As you have noted, the Government’s Digital Economy Strategy is expected to be released later this year. It will provide the framework for an ongoing, open conversation about our digital future, which builds on our investments and work to date.

New technologies provide the ability to revolutionise city planning and make cities more prosperous and sustainable. Real time data and smart technology will lead to better utilisation of infrastructure and better benchmarking of city performance. The Strategy is being developed with regard to the Smart Cities Plan to support more productive, accessible and liveable cities.

I would welcome your continuing engagement on issues relating to the digital economy and in particular how they relate to your members.

Thank you again for your continued interest in these important issues.

Yours sincerely

Karen Andrews

11/9/2018
Dear Mayor

Thank you for your correspondence of 2 August 2018 regarding the actions sought by the National General Assembly of Local Government (NGA) in relation to aged care. I have responded to the NGA’s resolutions arising from its June 2018 meeting, in turn, below.

Resolution 51 to ‘hasten the release of aged care funding packages’
As part of the 2018-19 Budget, the Australian Government announced an increase in funding for aged care of $5 billion over five years. This includes an additional 14,000 home care packages over the next four years, on top of the extra 6,000 announced in September 2017, for people with high level needs. This will mean that by 2021-22, more than 74,000 high level packages will be available nationally, an increase of over 80 per cent compared to 2017-18 levels. Whilst a person’s wait time will continue to be determined by the time of approval and priority for care, on a national level this additional injection of packages will flow through to consumers at all levels shortly.

Resolution 52.1 to ‘collaboratively develop relevant models of aged care for rural and remote communities’
The Government understands that aged care service providers in rural and remote Australia face greater challenges in delivering care. In recognition of these challenges, the Government has invested resources towards supporting consumers and service providers in these regions through innovations to programs, such as the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flexible Aged Care Program and the Multi-Purpose Services Program. The Government provides financial support through a viability supplement and one-off innovation and capital grants through the Dementia and Aged Care Services Fund. The Government also provides professional support services to eligible aged care providers to build capacity and improve the quality of aged care services provided to consumers.
In recognition that further support is needed, in the 2018-19 Budget the Government announced a commitment of $40 million for capital investment in regional, rural and remote aged care services. I would like to assure you that, as aged care reform continues, the Government will give thorough consideration to the impacts on rural and remote providers and how the unique challenges and issues faced in these regions are appropriately taken into account. Continued access to quality aged care in rural and remote Australia remains a high priority of the Government.

Resolution 52.2 to ‘provide clear detail and timing on the next stage of the aged care reforms and their impact on local government Commonwealth Home Support Programme providers’

Funding agreements for the Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) have been extended to 30 June 2020 to provide certainty of funding for service providers. At this stage no decisions have been made about future program or funding arrangements for the CHSP beyond 30 June 2020.

It is important that we work together to design and deliver the best possible aged care system for senior Australians.

Thank you for raising these matters.

Yours sincerely

The Hon KEN WYATT AM, MP
Minister for Aged Care
Minister for Indigenous Health

24 AUG 2018
Thank you for your correspondence of 2 August 2018 concerning certain resolutions of the National General Assembly of Local Government held in June 2018. Your correspondence has been referred to me as the Assistant Minister for Home Affairs as the matter falls within my portfolio responsibilities.

The Australian Government recognises the importance of minimising risks to Australian communities from natural disasters, and building safer and more resilient communities for when disasters occur. We are committed to ensuring communities are supported following a disaster, and that we work closely with the states and territories to ensure the recovery arrangements facilitate this support.

In terms of Resolution 34, the level of Commonwealth assistance that is calculated by assessing a state’s eligible financial year expenditure against a thresholds based system remains unchanged in the new Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements 2018 that will commence nationally on 1 November 2018.

Regarding Resolution 35, Category B of the current Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA) Determination 2017 and the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements 2018 enables jurisdictions to rebuild essential public assets that have been damaged by an eligible disaster. Parks and recreational facilities are not generally considered to be essential public assets under Category B as they do not constitute integral infrastructure for the normal functioning of a community.

However, this does not preclude a jurisdiction from seeking the agreement of the Government for a particular asset to be deemed eligible under Category B, or for such assets to be rebuilt under Category C where the impacts of an eligible disaster on affected communities warrant additional assistance.
In relation to Resolution 36, on 1 July 2017, the Government introduced the NDRRA Determination 2017. The NDRRA addressed concerns raised at the state level by providing clarity and guidance on the interpretation of certain eligible measures and definitions, and also addressed administrative inconsistencies identified in the NDRRA Determination 2012 Version 2. The revisions included providing clarity and guidance on the NDRRA Determination 2012 Version 2 definition of an eligible undertaking by defining what constitutes a nominal charge well below the cost of production.

It is important to remember when assessing the eligible undertaking requirements that a state or local government agency may not automatically be an eligible undertaking for the purposes of the NDRRA. The assessment is based on how the state or local government agency operates the essential public asset. This process is applied by all states when determining whether disaster damaged assets are eligible under the NDRRA.

I note your concerns regarding Resolution 37 and 37.1. Please note that these matters fall under the portfolio responsibilities of the Prime Minister, the Hon Scott Morrison MP, and the Attorney-General, the Hon Christian Porter MP, respectively.

Thank you for raising this matter.

Yours sincerely

LINDA REYNOLDS

26/9/2018
Dear Mayor O'Loughlin

Thank you for your letter dated 2 August 2018 regarding two National General Assembly of Local Government resolutions (four and 18), which are relevant to my portfolio.

Resolution four proposes that the Commonwealth adjust procurement policy practices to drive local content supply chain opportunities, specifically in regional areas, and ensure that contracts require local content outcomes that are measurable and accountable where Tier 1 and Tier 2 contractors are engaged.

The Commonwealth Procurement Rules (CPRs) form the basic rule set for all Commonwealth procurement activities. The CPRs incorporate the government procurement commitments from Australia’s international trade obligations, which ensure that Australian businesses have access to the Government procurement markets of a number of other countries.

Reflecting our international obligations, the CPRs stress non-discriminatory procurement processes and require that all potential suppliers to government be treated equally, regardless of their size, degree of foreign affiliation or ownership, location, or the origin of their goods or services.

However, there are a range of existing policies in place that support local content and opportunities for Australian businesses, including the Indigenous Procurement Policy and the Australian Industry Participation policies and programs. These policies and programs facilitate the identification of opportunities for local and regional suppliers as well as developing the capability of Australian industry.
The CPRs also facilitate Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) involvement in a number of ways, such as encouraging procuring officials to apply procurement practices that do not unfairly discriminate against SMEs and provide opportunities for them to compete. In addition, the CPRs incorporate a commitment to source at least 10 per cent of procurement by value from SMEs, which is routinely exceeded.

In addition, on 1 March 2017 the CPRs were amended to require Commonwealth agencies to consider the Australian economic benefit when assessing value for money in construction procurements valued above $7.5 million and all other procurements over $4 million. The economic benefit will vary depending on the nature of the procurement, including what information and criteria is relevant to the individual procurement process, but can include: building, leasing or procuring infrastructure that supports Australian communities; providing skills and training that benefit Australian communities; and using SMEs in delivering goods and services, such as a subcontractor or a supplier.

Resolution 18 refers to a national review into land acquisition procedures across all states and territories, and to harmonise state provisions for compensation of land acquisitions. As you are aware, state and territory land acquisitions are governed by the relevant laws and policies of the state or territory in which they occur and do not fall within the Commonwealth’s jurisdiction.

The principle legislative basis of the Commonwealth’s power to acquire property, including interests in land, is section 51(xxxi) of the Constitution, which empowers the Commonwealth to make laws with respect to the acquisition of property ‘on just terms’ for any public purpose in respect of which the Federal Parliament has power to make laws. Accordingly, the Lands Acquisition Act 1989 (Cwlth) (LAA) is designed to ensure that Commonwealth land acquisitions – whether by agreement or compulsory process – only occur for an authorised purpose and on just terms. This is an important distinction to state and territory land acquisition legislation that is not subject to a similar limitation.

The Government remains committed to ensuring that Commonwealth legislation is fit for purpose and meets the needs of its citizens. To this end the Government welcomes feedback on its Acts and in particular opportunities to better align provisions across state, territory and Commonwealth land acquisition legislation where appropriate.

I have copied this letter to Senator the Hon Bridget McKenzie, Minister for Local Government and Decentralisation.

Kind regards

Mathias Cormann
Minister for Finance

October 2018
Thank you for your letter to the former Minister for the Environment and Energy, the Hon Josh Frydenberg MP concerning the recent National General Assembly. The matters raised in your resolutions cross over both environment and energy issues, which are our respective responsibilities as Minister for the Environment and Minister for Energy.

We acknowledge the important role of the National General Assembly in highlighting local issues at a national level and providing opportunities for all levels of government, industry and the broader community to address these issues in a coordinated way. In response to the resolutions identified in your letter, we have enclosed responses to those that relate to the Environment and Energy Portfolio and we would like to thank the councils for submitting these resolutions.

We would also like to note that Resolution 47.1 refers to a review of the Native Title Act 1993 (Commonwealth) which does not directly pertain to the Environment and Energy Portfolio. We understand that this resolution has been referred to the Attorney-General's Department by the Australian Local Government Association Secretariat and that a response to this resolution will be provided by the Attorney-General, the Hon Christian Porter MP.

Thank you for raising these issues.

Yours sincerely,

MELISSA PRICE  
Minister for the Environment

ANGUS TAYLOR  
Minister for Energy
Resolution 7
That the National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to:

: Build upon existing initiatives including industry product stewardship schemes, and directives on recyclable packaging, to ensure packaging and products are designed for minimal packaging, re-use, recycling and repair, with the disposal costs included in the purchase or disposal price;
: Ensure the goals and objectives set out in the Australian Packaging Covenant Strategic Plan 2017-2022 are prioritised and achieved as a matter of urgency;
: Financially support regional waste management solutions for advanced alternative waste treatment and processing;
: Ensure government and industry procurement and tenders specify the use of products with recycled content, minimal packaging and repair;
: Develop a national Circular Economy Strategy to develop markets for recyclable products.

On 27 April 2018, Australia’s Environment Ministers announced a range of measures to set a sustainable path for Australia’s waste, including by:

- endorsing a target of 100 per cent of Australian packaging being recyclable, compostable or reusable by 2025 or earlier
- endorsing the development of targets for use of recycled content in packaging
- encouraging waste reduction strategies through greater consumer awareness, education, and with industry leadership
- working together on expanding and developing Australia’s recycling industry
- advocating for the use of recycled materials in the goods that government and industry buy
- exploring opportunities to advance waste to energy and waste to biofuels projects.

Ministers also agreed to bring forward an update of the 2009 National Waste Policy: Less Waste, More Resources by the end of 2018 which will include circular economy principles. The Australian Local Government Association participated as an observer at the Meetings of the Environment Ministers and the preceding Senior Officials meetings that led to these resolutions. The full statement made by Environment Ministers can be viewed on the Department of the Environment and Energy’s website.

Since the announcement, the Department of the Environment and Energy has been working closely with industry, states and territories and the Australian Local Government Association to deliver on these commitments.

Resolution 7.3
The National General Assembly calls on the Australian government to collaborate with State and Local Governments and the recycling industry sector to investigate alternatives to exporting recyclable waste materials to China, including increased government and public procurement of products with Australian recycled content; investing in local recycling infrastructure that maximises the economic value of recovered materials; and/or changes to packaging regulation.

Australia is one of over 100 countries affected by China’s new restrictions, affecting around 1.3 million tonnes of our recyclable waste. This accounts for four per cent of Australia’s recyclable waste, but 35 per cent of recyclable plastics and 30 per cent of recyclable paper and cardboard.
Solving the 1.3 million tonnes of recyclable waste is an urgent and important issue which requires a coordinated approach from supply right through to demand. It is also an opportunity for Australia to develop its capabilities and capacity in recycling through effective cooperation and collaboration among the three levels of government.

On 27 April 2018, Australia’s Environment Ministers agreed to a suite of measures, including supply and demand measures that will improve how Australia manages waste and recycling. Ministers also agreed to bring forward an update of the 2009 National Waste Policy: Less Waste, More Resources by the end of 2018 which will include circular economy principles. The Australian Local Government Association participated as an observer at the Meetings of the Environment Ministers and the preceding Senior Officials meetings that led to this resolution. The full statement made by Environment Ministers can be viewed on the Department of the Environment and Energy’s website.

Resolution 7.4
The National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to develop an Australian Standard for compostable takeaway food and beverage containers and a nationwide labelling standard for recyclable and compostable takeaway food and beverage containers by 2020.

On 27 April 2018, Australia’s Environment Ministers agreed to the ambitious target that 100 per cent of Australian packaging be recyclable, compostable or reusable by 2025 or earlier to cut down on the amount of waste we produce. The 100 per cent target will be delivered by the Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation, working with its 950 member companies. The Australian Local Government Association participated as an observer at the Meetings of the Environment Ministers and the preceding Senior Officials meetings that led to this resolution.

This builds on other initiatives currently underway to improve the information provided to consumers and businesses about what packaging can be recycled or composted.

Resolution 7.5
That the National General Assembly advocate the following:
1) That the Federal Government commence an enquiry into the future of the waste and recycling sector in Australia, to review the current practices of waste to landfill and recyclables being sent overseas which are no longer sustainable or viable.
2) That the Federal Government implement policy settings that support a philosophy that views waste as a resource and resets the waste and recycling industry to move towards establishing a sustainable and viable waste and recycling resource recovery industry.
3) That the Federal Government invest in supporting market development, technologies and the associated local industries in creating and expanding potential end market uses of recovered resources.

The update of the National Waste Policy will set a framework for waste and recycling in Australia. The new policy will be underpinned by circular economy principles which value waste as a resource. By applying the principles of a circular economy, we can support better and repeated use of our resources, and continue the move away from a linear concept of ‘make, use and dispose’.

A recent Senate inquiry into waste and recycling in Australia, including the necessary infrastructure, has just concluded and heard from a wide range of stakeholders. The Australian Government is currently considering the recommendations of the inquiry.
Resolution 24

*That this National General Assembly calls on the Commonwealth Government to provide more support to Local Government for the collection and disposal of hazardous wastes.*

The Australian Government supports the state, territory and local governments in their role as primary regulators and managers of hazardous waste, including those hazardous wastes coming from households. The focus of Australian Government action on hazardous wastes is ensuring our international obligations, such as under the Basel and Stockholm Conventions are met, including through administering our national legislation on hazardous waste movement and providing national data and reporting.

Resolution 25

*That the National General Assembly call for a ban be placed on wet wipes incorrectly marketed as "flushable toilet wipes" due to their negative impact on sewer lines and sewerage processing facilities.*

The update of the National Waste Policy will consider work to identify, prioritise and respond in a nationally-coordinated way to problematic products, particularly those that are single-use and go on to have negative consequences for our environment.

Resolution 26

*That the National General Assembly:*

1) *Requests the Federal Government to investigate options for the implementation of a National Container Deposit Scheme to ensure consistency of operation in all states and territories.*

2) *Supports the implementation of a National Container Deposit Scheme to increase recycling of beverage containers.*

The Department of the Environment and Energy’s current focus on packaging is working with the Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation to implement the new national targets announced by Australian Environment Ministers on 27 April 2018 – that 100 per cent of Australian packaging recyclable, compostable or reusable by 2025 or earlier, including food and beverage containers.

Six states and territories have introduced or committed to container deposit schemes, to stop beverage containers getting into the environment. South Australia, the Northern Territory, the Australian Capital Territory and New South Wales already have a scheme in place. Queensland and Western Australia will roll out schemes on 1 November 2018 and in 2020 respectively. Tasmania committed funds for 2017-18 to enable consideration of an appropriate model framework to establish a scheme.

The Australian Government continues to encourage states and territories to consider approaches for reducing litter that align with their waste management objectives and, which together, ensure national coverage as in the case of Container Deposit Schemes.
Resolution 33
That the National General Assembly lobby for the establishment of a national Natural Resource Management Program which is focussed on the delivery of on-ground land management activities which protect and restore the environment and result in improved environmental outcomes through greater community engagement and participation.

The Australian Government is investing more than $1 billion in the next phase of the National Landcare Program, which is a key part of its commitment to natural resource management. The investment will be delivered by the Department of the Environment and Energy and the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources and will include a range of measures to protect Australia's biodiversity, and support natural resource management and sustainable agriculture.

Regional Land Partnerships is the largest sub-program under the National Landcare Program, worth $450 million over five years from 2018-19 to 2022-23, and will deliver national Landcare priorities at a regional and local level. Community engagement is a key theme of the Regional Land Partnerships Program, with at least 20 per cent of project budgets supporting small, on-ground projects that are delivered by, or directly engage with the local Landcare community. Indigenous involvement is also a key theme with at least four per cent of a Service Provider’s workforce and/or subcontractors required to be Indigenous.

Resolution 65
The National General Assembly encourages all options be explored by Federal and State governments to put downward pressure on retail electricity and gas charges.

The Australian Government understands the effect rising energy costs have on individuals, families and businesses. While the Government has a national leadership role in energy policy, state and territory governments retain primary responsibility for the delivery of energy services.

In light of concerns around recent electricity price increases on the east coast, the Government has taken decisive action to reduce energy prices. This includes:

- responding to the recommendations of the Australian Consumer and Competition Commission (ACCC) Retail Electricity Pricing Inquiry Report. For instance, the Government will implement the ACCC recommendation for a default electricity market offer and associated reforms to improve the transparency of retail pricing and to empower consumers in the retail market.

- the Australian Government has also directed the ACCC to continue to monitor prices, profits and margins in the National Electricity Market, with an initial report due March 2019.
  - This reporting mechanism will ensure that retailers don’t respond to the introduction of the default offer by increasing prices for customers.

- abolishing the ability of energy networks to appeal the decisions of the Australian Energy Regulator – a critical reform as networks have previously used the appeals mechanism to add $6.5 billion on to consumers’ electricity bills

- ensuring that spot LNG is offered to the Australian domestic gas market prior to selling to overseas customers with the introduction of new regulations in the gas sector to give. In addition, new rules have been also introduced to govern the transportation of gas to increase efficiency and liquidity in the gas market. The changes are already exerting downward pressure on gas prices.
Resolution 82
That the National General Assembly call on the Australian Government to support initiatives by councils, working with local businesses and communities, to develop and implement local and regional Climate Change Adaptation Plans, thereby improving the sustainability and resilience of local communities and regions.

The 2015 National Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy sets out the different and complementary roles governments, businesses and the community play for adaptation to climate change. State, territory and local governments play a major role in the direct management of climate related risks, while the Australian Government has a major role in the provision of supporting climate science information.

The Australian Government supports initiatives by local government to develop and implement climate change adaptation plans. For example, the Australian Government funded CoastAdapt, a tool which gives local governments an accessible means of identifying, assessing and responding to climate risks in the coastal zone. CoastAdapt can be accessed at: coastadapt.com.au.

The Australian Government funded national climate change projections are a comprehensive set of climate projections developed for Australia. These are available on the Climate Change in Australia website (climatechangeinaustralia.gov.au) released by CSIRO and the Bureau of Meteorology in early 2015. The climate change projections use up to 40 global climate models and are presented for eight regions of Australia. The website includes 14 interactive tools, including a Regional Climate Explorer tool, a tool which presents statements of projected change for each region, through to a projections data download facility, the Climate Futures Tool.

The Australian Government is developing a National Climate Science Strategy, expected to be completed this year, to guide future investment in climate science.

Resolution 83
That the National General Assembly calls for the Commonwealth and State Governments to provide climate change funding to assist local government and communities to implement emission reduction projects.

Emissions Reduction Fund
The Australian Government has allocated $2.55 billion to the Emissions Reduction Fund. Businesses, local councils, state governments, land managers and others can earn Australian carbon credit units (ACCUs) through the Fund by running projects to reduce emissions. The Fund provides a broad range of opportunities to reduce emissions across the economy. Over 700 projects have been registered under many eligible activities, including energy efficiency, waste management, revegetation, livestock management and savanna fire management.

Clean Energy Finance Corporation: Opportunities for Local Government
Australian local councils can invest in a range of clean energy technologies to help reduce energy costs and lower emissions, drawing on tailored Clean Energy Finance Corporation (CEFC) finance options. Through the Local Government Finance Program the CEFC provides flexible and competitive fixed-rate, long-term finance for councils, targeting major investment projects with the potential to make a significant difference to a council’s energy consumption. CEFC loans are tailored to each council’s needs. The CEFC will work with each council to develop a fit for purpose debt structure to support the council’s investment plans.
Key elements of the CEFC Local Government Finance Program include:

- finance for eligible projects across renewable energy, energy efficiency and low emissions technologies
- finance can be drawn over three years
- ability for multiple councils to enter into joint financing agreements for eligible shared projects
- access to competitive fixed-rate longer-dated senior debt, up to 10 years
- a straightforward approval process with simple loan documentation.

**Australian Renewable Energy Agency**

The Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA) provides grant funding to projects that help develop and commercialise innovative renewable energy technologies and business models. While ARENA typically funds companies and researchers undertaking innovative projects, local government and communities are an essential part of project success. For example, a local community might act as a testbed for an innovative business model testing how distributed energy can support affordable and reliable electricity supply.

**Resolution 84**

*That the National General Assembly lobby for a national, unified and community-minded approach to the solution and management of Flying Foxes.*

The Department of the Environment and Energy works with State, Territory and Local Governments on flying-fox management, and recognises the substantial effort and investment being made across the levels of government. Flying-fox management was discussed by Environment Ministers and the Australian Local Government Association at the most recent Meeting of Environment Ministers on 27 April 2018. Environment Ministers agreed to collaborate on the management of flying foxes which included approving a response to the House of Representatives Inquiry into the Management of Flying-Foxes in the Eastern States, ahead of the next Meeting of Environment Ministers in December 2018. This response will provide a valuable step toward a collaborative approach to flying-fox management.
Dear Mayor O’Loughlin,

Thank you for your letter of 2 August 2018 regarding infrastructure, transport and regional development-related resolutions from the 2018 National General Assembly of Local Government (NGA).

Local governments have a significant role in maintaining and operating transport infrastructure and the Australian Government recognises the contribution of the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) and its members in bringing to the Government’s attention, issues affecting local councils and the community at large.

The Government’s response to resolutions you referred to me is enclosed. I have also responded to NGA’s regional development-related resolutions: number 22 and number 89, which were previously sent my colleague the Hon Dr John McVeigh MP, the former Minister for Regional Development, Territories and Local Government.

Thank you for bringing your concerns to my attention and I trust this is of assistance.

Yours sincerely,

Michael McCormack

Enc
RESONSES RELATED TO INFRASTRUCTURE, TRANSPORT AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT RESOLUTIONS

Resolution 11: That the National General Assembly congratulates the ALGA Secretariat for their thorough submission of September 2017 to the National Freight and Supply Chain Priorities Discussion Paper. The Assembly particularly notes recommendations that encourage more collaboration and planning between regional groupings of Councils on regional freight plans for local connector and arterial roads. The NGA therefore requests the Secretariat provide all Councils through their state associations with:

- An assessment of the alignment of the Strategy when it is released this year with its submission, and
- Case studies and options for regional groupings of Councils (metropolitan, rural, regional and a mix thereof) to collaborate and advocate for support from both State and Federal Governments for regional freight plans for local connector and arterial roads.

The Australian Government acknowledges the ALGA’s active engagement and contribution to the Inquiry into National Freight and Supply Chain Priorities. Findings from the Inquiry are being fed into the development of the National Freight and Supply Chain Strategy (Strategy) and National Action Plan (NAP). The Strategy and NAP are being developed through a cross-jurisdictional working group and are scheduled for consideration by the Transport and Infrastructure Council in May 2019.

The ALGA is a valued member of this working group and on-going engagement with the ALGA, and local governments more generally, will be critical for the Strategy and NAP’s development and delivery.

Resolution 12: That the National General Assembly:

1) Requests the Federal Government to expand the traffic safety measure of Tactile Line Treatments (audible warning devices, rumble strips) as a mechanism for inclusion in the current and future National Road Safety Strategies.

2) Advocates for additional funding allocations to be incorporated into future Federal Assistance Grants (FAG) roads component to support the infrastructure costs associated with the inclusion of Tactile Line Treatments or Audible Warning Devices in road construction to improve road safety outcomes within regional communities.

In May 2018, the Transport and Infrastructure Council endorsed a new National Road Safety Action Plan for 2018-2020, the final three years of the current National Road Safety Strategy.

The Action Plan supports increased implementation of audio-tactile line markings (“rumble strips”), along with other mass action treatments on state and local roads with the highest risk of fatality and serious injury. This work forms part of Action 2: Target infrastructure funding towards safety-focused initiatives to reduce trauma on regional roads. It is open to state and territory governments to include audio-tactile line markings as part of Infrastructure Investment Program project funding proposals.

The Australian Government provides $2.4 billion annually under the Financial Assistance Grant program to state and territory governments to support equitable levels of local government services across Australia. The grant is untied in the hands of local governments allowing funding to be allocated to local priorities, including road safety projects.
Each year, this important funding is increased in line with Consumer Price Index and population changes.

**Resolution 13:** That the National General Assembly expresses its concern regarding the Federal Minister for Roads' intention to require Roads to Recovery funding to be directed toward safety initiatives, noting that this may not achieve the desired outcome of a reduction in the road toll, but will divert much needed resources from Council's already inadequate roads renewal budget.

The former Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, the Hon Darren Chester MP, issued the Statement of Expectations for the Roads to Recovery Program on 7 November 2017.

The Statement of Expectations encourages councils to give greater priority to road safety projects under the program but does not "require Roads to Recovery funding to be directed toward safety initiatives". The Statement of Expectations does not change the Roads to Recovery funding conditions and it does not seek to limit the discretion councils have to choose Roads to Recovery projects according to local priorities.

**Resolution 14:** The National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to ensure organisations capturing data about transport networks, openly share this data with local governments to assist with planning, delivery and operation of transport infrastructure.

The Australian Government recognises that robust data analysis is critical in investment decision-making and supports an increase in open data sources. Noting that the majority of data is held by state and territory governments, the Commonwealth is working with jurisdictions to improve public access to data.

Key initiatives include the implementation of the Australian Government's response to the Productivity Commission Data Availability and Use Inquiry, and development of national, state and territory open data portals. Through the Australian Transport Data Action Network, the Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics (BITRE) and state and territory transport agencies are monitoring open data initiatives and aiming to develop a common core set of National datasets and consistent data standards.

**Resolution 15:** The National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to require all state and territory governments to commit to conducting regular, consistent and comprehensive household travel surveys.

The ABS have identified household travel surveys as an Essential Statistical Asset, with state and territory transport departments as the appropriate data custodians. The National Infrastructure Data Collection and Dissemination Plan also identifies Household Travel Surveys as a key data source for understanding infrastructure-use. The Australian Transport Data Action Network is working to improve consistency of Household Travel Surveys.
Resolution 16: That this National General Assembly strongly condemns pricing exploitation and discrimination by any airline in rural, regional and remote regions, and calls for the Commonwealth Government Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport to address concerns raised by member Councils in its Inquiry into the operation, regulation and funding of air route service delivery to rural, regional and remote communities.

The Australian Government recognises the importance of affordable airfares for regional Australia, and looks forward to the findings of the inquiry into ‘The Operation, Regulation and Funding of Air Route Service Delivery to Rural, Regional and Remote Communities’ currently being progressed by the Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport. A range of Government Agencies, including the Department of Infrastructure, Regional Development and Cities, have provided a submission to the Inquiry.

Resolution 17: That this National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to guarantee the preservation of landing slots at major metropolitan airports assigned to Regular Public Transport (RPT) Services from regional centres. Further, that the Australian Government provides every assistance to regional airline carriers to overcome the current pilot shortage, which is impacting on the frequency of RPT Service schedules to and from regional centres.

The Australian Government remains committed to preserving access for regional communities to major metropolitan centres.

Sydney Kingsford Smith Airport has the only regulated demand management scheme in Australia. As part of this scheme, regional access provisions ensure access to Sydney Airport for regional airlines supporting communities within NSW. This is achieved by quarantining certain slot series used to provide regional services (known as ‘permanent regional service series’). To support continued access to Sydney Airport, price notifications for aeronautical services and facilities provided by Sydney Airport to regional air services are made public under Part VIIA of the Competition and Consumer Act 2010.

A Treasurer’s declaration for price increases to aeronautical services and facilities for regional services (including capping any price increases) also supports regional access. Any changes to the scheme would require legislative amendment and bipartisan support. The Government has publicly stated there are no plans to amend regional aircraft access arrangements to Sydney (Kingsford-Smith) Airport.

The current growth in global demand for airline services, including by Australian airlines and other airlines in the Asia-Pacific region, is creating strong demand for suitably qualified and experienced pilots, as well as other aviation professionals. The Government welcomes the contribution already being made by the Australian aviation industry in support of training and retention of aviation professionals in Australia.

On 27 July 2018, the Report of the Expert Panel on Aviation Skills and Training was released. The Report was prepared by industry stakeholders, with secretariat support from the Department of Infrastructure, Regional Development and Cities. The Report has made a number of recommendations that will be considered by industry and government stakeholders.
Resolution 22: That the National General Assembly notes the continued uncertainty surrounding the status of second and third tier Cities, where those Cities can be classified as either as a 'regional' or 'metropolitan'. The NGA calls on the ALGA to write to the federal Government seeking clarification about regional and metropolitan boundaries in Australia, recognising the importance of second and third tier cities to the Australian Economy.

The Australian Government recognises the importance of all regional cities as they play a vital role in providing services and boosting local economies. Larger regional cities in particular act as service and employment hubs for their regional neighbours. The Government is focusing on growing our regional economies, creating new and better paying jobs and giving families the opportunity to keep living and working in our regional communities. This year’s Regional Australia Budget statement details our significant new and ongoing investments for regional Australia across health, education and training, agriculture and water resources – including over 100 new initiatives.

Moreover, the Government is considering options on how to best adopt the “City Deal” approach in regional centres, to complement our current investment in regional Australia. Similar to the existing City Deals, Regional Deals will bring together all levels of government to capitalise on economic opportunities for a region to make the most of its strengths to foster economic development. The Government will release more information about its approach to Regional Deals in the near future.

Resolution 60: That the National General Assembly advocate to the Federal Government, through the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure and also the Minister for Regional Development, for appropriate funding for the National Transport Network and that a review of significant transport corridors in all States and Territories be undertaken.

The Australian Government has committed over $75 billion over the next 10 years towards transport infrastructure. This investment covers a range of priorities, including delivering nation-shaping transport projects such as the Melbourne to Brisbane Inland Rail to ensure the long-term productivity and sustainability of our transport network, and providing ongoing funding to local and state governments to maintain national, state and local road networks.

The Government has also provided long-term surety for funding to support maintenance of the road networks. Through the 2016-17 Budget, the Government committed an ongoing annual Commonwealth funding allocation of $400 million for the Roads to Recovery Program and $350 million per annum for maintenance of the National Land Transport Network (NLTN).

As announced by the former Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, the Hon Darren Chester MP in late 2017, a review of the NLTN is currently underway with the Department of Infrastructure, Regional Development and Cities working with the state and territory agencies on potential updates or amendments to the NLTN. All proposals are being assessed against the requirements of the National Land Transport Act 2014, prior to consideration by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development later this year.
Resolution 60.1: That the National General Assembly call on the Federal Government to officially recognise the Princes Highway as a Highway of National Importance as a major freight and tourist route.

The National Land Transport Network (NLTN) supports the construction and maintenance of nationally significant economic links, especially major freight routes and roads connecting capital cities and major economic centres. The NLTN includes the Princes Freeway and Highway from Melbourne to Sale and Melbourne to Colac. The addition of further sections of the Princes Highway on the NTLN will be considered as part of the broader network review.

In recognition of the important role of the Princes Highway in supporting communities and growing our economy, the Government is developing a Princes Highway Corridor Strategy in partnership with the New South Wales, Victorian and South Australian governments. The Strategy will identify and prioritise transport infrastructure investment over the short, medium and long term across the entire length of the Princes Highway.

Once complete, the strategy will inform the investment decisions of both federal and state governments. This may include funding for the Princes Highway under the $3.5 billion Roads of Strategic Importance initiative, once governance arrangements are settled later this year and if determined a priority by Government.

Resolution 61: That this National General Assembly calls on the Commonwealth Government to support State and Territory freight and port plans, including Draft NSW Freight and Port Plan, to provide a broad framework proposed to deliver improved network efficiencies, capacity and sustainability for the network.

The Australian Government is developing a National Freight and Supply Chain Strategy with jurisdictions, including the ALGA, through the Transport and Infrastructure Council.

The Strategy will provide a national umbrella to support the delivery of individual jurisdictional freight plans, such as the NSW Freight and Port Plan. Working closely with industry, it will also help to position the freight system to work across state and territory borders to enable the efficient delivery of goods wherever they are required across Australia.

Resolution 62: That the National General Assembly ask the Federal Government to fund a feasibility study and a full and comprehensive ecological assessment undertaken to determine which of the streams along the Great Dividing Range are suitable for the generation of hydro-electricity/pump hydro and if feasible, allocate funds in the next budget for this work.

This Resolution relates to the Portfolio responsibilities of the Hon Angus Taylor MP, Minister for Energy. However, I note hydropower is the most advanced and mature renewable energy technology and continues to be the largest contributor to renewable energy in Australia. As more renewable energy—mainly in the form of solar and wind power—enters Australia’s electricity grid, the need for energy storage solutions is growing.

Pumped hydro energy storage (PHES) is a mature and cost-effective storage solution with the capacity to store power for long periods, even across seasons. One of the key roles of PHES is to manage the variability of renewable energy, allowing supply to match demand. PHES can provide grid stabilisation services (e.g. inertia, voltage and frequency control) and help to address peak demand as the percentage of renewable generation increases.
This flexibility makes PHES a valuable player in the National Electricity Market (NEM).

Development of PHES aligns with recommendations from the Independent Review into the Future Security of the National Electricity Market. Responding to a recommendation from this Review, the Australian Energy Market Operator released an Integrated System Plan in June 2018 to facilitate the efficient development and connection of renewable energy zones.

The Australian Government through the Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA) and the Clean Energy Finance Corporation (CEFC) continues to support a range of large-scale energy storage projects. It is recommended proponents contact ARENA for advice on a project’s suitability and help determine the fit of the proposal with ARENA’s programs and funding priorities at proposals@arena.gov.au or 1800 804 847.

Australian councils can invest in a range of clean energy technologies to help reduce energy costs and lower emissions, drawing on tailored CEFC finance options. CEFC investment decisions are made on a commercial basis, in line with the requirements set out in its Investment Mandate. Should a proponent wish to engage with the CEFC, please contact: localgovernment@cefc.com.au

Resolution 72: That National General Assembly notes previous NGA resolutions calling on the Federal Government to fund key Public Transport Projects. The NGA notes two key recent developments that add impetus to these NGA resolutions, namely:

• The release by Infrastructure Australia and other state-based infrastructure bodies’ priorities, including public transport projects;
• Submissions to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Infrastructure, Transport and Cities’ Inquiry into the Australian Government’s role in the development of cities.

NGA therefore write to the Prime Minister, Minister for Transport, Opposition Leader and relevant Ministers as well as the House of Representatives Standing Committee to reconfirm NGA resolutions that the Federal Government fund key Public Transport Projects, and highlight the increasingly unsustainable growth of Australia’s cities and the lack of connections of rural regions and towns which could both be improved through significant Federal Government funding of public transport projects.

The Australian Government recognises that as our cities and regional centres grow, it becomes increasingly important to help people move around our cities, and between our cities and their surrounding regional areas, quickly and efficiently.

That is why the Government is investing nearly $19.2 billion towards rail infrastructure from 2018-19, with almost $9.4 billion allocated towards passenger rail projects. The $10 billion National Rail Program has been established to invest in public transport projects to help make our cities more liveable and efficient as they grow, and support our efforts to decentralise our economy and grow regional Australia.
In the 2018-19 Budget, the Government announced a number of significant investments in public transport projects including:

- $5 billion for the long-awaited Melbourne Airport Rail Link;
- $1.1 billion for further components of METRONET in Western Australia; and
- $300 million for Brisbane Metro.

The Government has also made a commitment to investigate faster rail connections between our cities and surrounding regional areas. Following a detailed competitive assessment process, the Government announced on 9 March 2018 that it would provide matching funding of up to $20 million to three successful proponents for the development of faster rail business cases as follows:

- the NSW Government’s proposal for Sydney to Newcastle;
- Consolidated Land and Rail Australia’s (CLARA) proposal for Melbourne to Greater Shepparton; and
- the North Coast Connect Consortium’s proposal for Brisbane and the regions of Moreton Bay and the Sunshine Coast.

The Government will work closely with successful proponents to progress the business cases, which are expected to take between 12 to 18 months to complete. Once the business case for each proposal is completed, the Government will review the outcomes in detail and explore opportunities to take forward the projects in partnership with state governments and the private sector.

Resolution 75: The National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government, to ensure adequate and equitable funding for local government, to deliver and maintain transport infrastructure.

The Australian Government supports the ongoing maintenance and upgrade of Australia’s road network in recognition that a safe, sustainable national transport system enhances Australia’s productivity and economic growth, facilitates inter-jurisdictional travel and trade and underpins the social and economic lives of communities Australia-wide.

The Government is providing over $2.4 billion in untied funding under the Financial Assistance Grant program in 2018-19 to state and territory governments to support equitable levels of local government services across Australia. This includes the early payment of over $1.2 billion of the 2018-19 funding the Government paid to all states and territories in June 2018, which was immediately distributed to councils. The program helps councils deliver infrastructure, health, recreation, environmental employment and road projects.

In 2016-17 Budget, the Government committed to continuing annual allocations for the Roads to Recovery Program ($400 million), the Black Spot Program ($60 million), the Bridges Renewal Program ($60 million) and the Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Program ($40 million) indefinitely. These sub-programs provide funding directly to local governments to help fund local roads.

The Government also provides $350 million annually for maintenance on the National Land Transport Network.
**Resolution 76:** That the National General Assembly calls upon the Federal and State Governments to ensure adequate road infrastructure is provided to growth areas, particularly on our metropolitan fringes, to support Local Councils in the delivery of the duplication of growth area roads to ensure safe and timely passage of vehicles.

The Australian Government’s infrastructure investment and cities agenda is an important policy tool to achieve our national economic policy objectives. Cities are changing, with population growth occurring in fringe areas, shifts in employment locations, and a demand for smaller blocks of land, more apartments and townhouses, as well as an increase in density and infills. This has significant implications for our infrastructure.

The Government is responding to these changes so that cities remain liveable and productive:
- strong focus on public transport and particularly rail;
- support for better integration of urban planning and transport planning; and
- the use of City Deals as a policy tool to drive these outcomes.

The Australian Government has committed $75 billion towards transport infrastructure over the next decade to better connect people to jobs and communities, and improve business access to domestic and global markets. This includes $1.75 billion for NorthEast Link in Melbourne to complete the orbital metropolitan road connection support commuters from growth areas in Melbourne’s north.

The Government is also working cooperatively with the New South Wales government on the planning and design of Western Sydney Rail, with $50 million committed to develop a business case to plan for connections between future growth areas and employment opportunities in the region. This project, together with the construction of the Western Sydney Airport, is re-shaping Sydney.

**Resolution 77:** That the National General Assembly calls for the Commonwealth and State Governments to take action to establish detailed rail and road upgrade plans for high growth areas of Australia. This will provide the infrastructure needed to support plans for a significant increase in population in these areas over the next 20 years.

**Resolution 77.1:** That the National General Assembly calls for the Commonwealth and State Governments to take action to establish and fund the provision of transport infrastructure to meet Australia’s growing need for efficient and sustainable movement of freight. This is to include detailed rail and road upgrade plans to meet the growing need for infrastructure required to support increased freight delivery over the next 20 years.

Through the 2018-19 Budget, the Australian Government committed to taking a longer-term view of infrastructure investment needs in response to population grown and increasing freight demand. The 10-year Pipeline of nationally significant projects is a forward-looking list of the Government’s transport priorities to give industry and communities certainty around investments over the medium term.

The Government considered a range of evidence when developing the Pipeline, including Infrastructure Australia’s Infrastructure Priority List (which lists priorities over the near (0-5) to future (more than 15 years) term), state transport plans and network modelling that forecasts population and freight growth.
The Government also requires that Infrastructure Australia undertake its Australian Infrastructure Audits to identify future infrastructure challenges and to develop the Australian Infrastructure Plan. Infrastructure Australia takes a strategic approach to assessing infrastructure needs by examining the drivers of future infrastructure demand, particularly population and economic growth. The next Audit is due by 30 June 2019.

To support planning and business case development for the next phase of Government investment to address future challenges, the Government also established the $250 million Major Project Business Case Fund. This will ensure that the Government can continue to actively work with jurisdictions to develop the infrastructure required to meet Australia’s growing needs.

The Commonwealth, state and territory transport Ministers working as the Transport and Infrastructure Council have developed a National Rail Vision and Work Program that aims to enhance Australia’s productivity, competitiveness and liveability through collaboration between governments and industry on rail reform to:

- integrate rail with other transport modes to enhance the transport network’s functionality;
- improve rail’s efficiency, capacity and environmental performance;
- access sustainable funding and delivery models;
- capitalise on new technologies; and
- improve rail safety.

The Government’s current freight network funding priorities include over $430 million committed to improve the movement of freight in Sydney and Melbourne through completing duplication of the freight line to Port Botany, capacity enhancement on the Southern Sydney Freight line and for the development of a port rail container shuttle network in Melbourne.

**Resolution 78:** That this National General Assembly calls on the Commonwealth Government to support the key objectives of Cycling and Walking Australia and New Zealand in the national interest to implement strategies and actions that will rapidly improve the conditions for, and the uptake of walking and cycling on transport and recreation networks across Australia and New Zealand.

The Australian Government’s view is that states and territories, and local government, are largely responsible for, and best placed to set rules and standards and provide the infrastructure to support active transport.

States and territories have formed Cycling and Walking Australia and New Zealand (CWANZ) as a fresh approach to promoting investment in cycling and walking across all levels of government, improving national consistency and harmonisation and applying innovation and learning. The Australian Government is an observer on CWANZ.

The Government’s support for active transport is primarily through the inclusion of new cycling and pedestrian infrastructure as part of a project funded under the Land Transport Infrastructure Projects National Partnership Agreements. Details of particular projects are outlined in the document ‘Strengthening Australia’s cities and regions’, which outlines the Government’s priorities for infrastructure investment through the 10 year pipeline.
In addition, the City Deal framework, as highlighted in the Smart Cities Plan, has scope to encourage active transport if identified as a priority in discussions with other levels of government and the community.

**Resolution 79:** The National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to explore alternative funding models to offset the lost income from the take-up of high-efficiency/non-combustible powered vehicles (electric, hydrogen).

The Australian Government is working with other levels of government to develop a more sustainable approach to the provision of roads.

It is sensible for government to consider whether current governance, tax and institutional arrangements for the funding and provision of roads will be equitable and sustainable in the long term. This is increasingly important as new and emerging technologies, such as automated and electric vehicles, are rapidly changing the way we travel, move goods and plan our transport networks and cities.

Under existing arrangements, the amount people pay in registration fees and other road related taxes and charges does not reflect how often they drive on roads or the road services they receive. Further, drivers of highly fuel-efficient vehicles pay less in fuel excise to drive the same journeys as those with older, less fuel-efficient vehicles.

The Commonwealth, state and territory governments have agreed to investigate road pricing for light vehicles. Before making any decisions on light vehicle reform, governments would need certainty that the benefits from a broader use of road pricing would exceed the costs. There is currently a focus on heavy vehicle road pricing as the first stage of this work program. This work is proceeding in partnership with state and territory governments, supported by complementary trials involving heavy vehicle operators and industry.

No decision has been taken by governments to implement road pricing for light vehicles. Full market reform would likely take 10 to 15 years.

**Resolution 80:** That the National General Assembly call on the Australian Government to commit to co-design with state and local governments an urban reform agenda framed around the 9 findings and the 15 recommendations of Infrastructure Australia’s Future Cities paper.

The Australian Government noted the Infrastructure Australia report and its key finding that unplanned growth will deliver the worst outcomes for Australia’s cities.

Cities are a priority for the Government and the Smart Cities Plan released in April 2016 sets out the Government’s urban policy agenda. The Plan sets out a vision for productive and liveable cities that encourage innovation, support growth and create jobs.

City Deals are the key mechanism for implementing the Plan. They are long-term agreements involving all three levels of government that seek to align planning, investment and governance to accelerate local growth and job creation, stimulate urban renewal and drive economic reform. Since the Plan was announced, the Government has signed City Deals for Townsville, Launceston and Western Sydney. City Deals for Darwin, Hobart, Geelong and Perth are in development.
Resolution 80.1: That the National General Assembly call on the Federal Government to increase funding for enabling infrastructure in growth areas, and recognise the need for infrastructure to be established in a timely manner to services for new communities to prevent the corresponding issues that occur as a result from lack of timely access. That this issue be placed on the COAG agenda given the need for all of Federal, State and local governments to work together.

With Australia's population growth, intense urbanisation, and dispersed regional communities: there will always be a need for the Australian Government to invest in infrastructure that increases the capacity of the network to address congestion, and ensures freight routes operate efficiently.

As such, the Government is continuing its significant investment in transport infrastructure—committing over $75 billion to transport projects over the next 10 years across urban and regional Australia under its rolling investment program. The Government will continue to assess priority investments annually, including investments to support urban growth.

The Government recognises that as our cities and regional centres grow, it becomes increasingly important to help people move around our cities, and between our cities and their surrounding regional areas, quickly and efficiently. For example, the Government has made a commitment to investigate faster rail connections between our cities and surrounding regional areas.

Resolution 89: That the National General Assembly call for a review of Regional Development Organisations to ensure geographical alignment with Local Government Joint Association of Regional Organisation boundaries.

A review of this nature would result in the need for the Regional Development Australia (RDA) program's funding models to be reviewed and may potentially lead to changes to committee membership. Boundary changes were considered as part of the Australian Government's response to the 2016 independent review of the RDA program and it was decided not to make any changes at this time.

With regard to the rollout of Joint Organisation of Councils (JOC) in NSW, not all the local government areas are electing to join a JOC, so that would need to be considered when considering potentially realigning RDA regions to match JOC regions.

In the absence of an overarching review of boundaries, if there were specific concerns, these can be considered on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the current process for boundary changes available on www.rda.gov.au.
Dear Mayor O’Loughlin

ALGA resolutions - National General Assembly of Local Government

Thank you for your letter of 2 August 2018 on behalf of the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) about the ALGA resolutions supported by the National General Assembly of Local Government in relation to telecommunications matters.

Resolution 39

The Australian Government recognises the benefit that modern telecommunication services can bring to regional, rural and remote Australia. Australia’s expansive land mass and low population density make it challenging to deliver broadband services quickly and cost-effectively. NBN Co Limited (NBN Co) is charged with making National Broadband Network (NBN) services available to all Australian households as quickly and effectively as possible, and is building and operating the network on a commercial basis at arm’s length from Government.

In planning the NBN, NBN Co has had to weigh up the time it would take to deliver fixed line and fixed wireless broadband services against the cost-effectiveness of alternative delivery methods. Satellites are the most effective technology to deliver fast broadband to difficult-to-serve premises. NBN Co’s satellites are some of the most technologically advanced satellites available, and bring a step-change in the broadband experience compared to services previously available in regional and remote Australia. Through the Sky Muster service, nbn can now offer an improved broadband service, with wholesale download speeds of up to 25 megabits per second (Mbps) and upload speeds of up to 5 Mbps.

Benefits are already flowing from the NBN rollout. The research commissioned by nbn on the social and economic impact of the network rollout found that access to the NBN helped drive an estimated $1.2 billion in additional economic activity in Australia in 2017 and this is expected to increase to $10.4 billion per year from 2021. In regional areas, access to the NBN is estimated to have helped drive $450 million in additional Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in regional Australia in the 2017 financial year and this is forecast to increase to up to $5.3 billion in additional GDP from 2021. In addition to this, access to the NBN is also forecast to help create up to 20,000 new jobs and 5,400 new businesses in regional areas by 2021.
With almost two-thirds of Australian homes now able to connect to the NBN network, more Australians, regardless of age or postcode, have the opportunity to continue to learn online. This will open up many opportunities, especially for people located in regional areas.

A significant increase in online education is estimated to boost the Australian economy by up to $1.7 billion in 2021, due to the impact of access to the NBN network on workers’ productivity.

Following the development of the distance education satellite product in 2016, the Department is continuing to work with NBN Co to improve access to and use of the education service. Today 743 students across the country are benefitting from the Sky Muster distance education product.

Emergency services, remote schools and health facilities are also able to access special NBN ‘Public Interest Premises’ packages to help them do their vital work for rural and remote communities.

Communications provided for emergency responders is the responsibility of each State and Territory and they utilise a variety of radiocommunications systems and are generally not reliant on mobile phone coverage to provide their emergency response.

The Australian Government has committed funding to improving telecommunications access across Australia. In addition to providing NBN fixed line broadband services to 2.5 million premises, the Government is investing around $2.1 billion in capital expenditure on NBN Co’s fixed wireless network, and approximately $1.9 billion on NBN Co’s satellite network. The Government is also contributing $220 million towards the Mobile Black Spot Program, which is generating an investment of $680 million towards improving mobile coverage.

You may be interested to know that NBN Co’s fixed wireless and satellite networks are not commercially viable in their own right, and are supported through a cross-subsidy from customers on NBN Co’s fixed line network. In 2016, the Department of Communications and the Arts released a report on the total financial losses expected to be made by the fixed wireless and satellite networks, estimated to be approximately $9.8 billion from the start of construction to 2039-40. In addition, it found that each satellite service receives a subsidy of around $110 a month, while each fixed wireless service receives a subsidy of around $105 a month. More information about these subsidies is available at https://www.communications.gov.au/publications/nbn-non-commercial-services-funding-options-final-report-march-2016

Resolution 39.1

The NBN remains on track to be completed by 2020 and 99 per cent of the country is either in design, under construction or complete. Over 61 per cent of all premises across Australia can now order services and by March 2018 over two-thirds of previously identified underserved premises were ready for service.

Consumer experience on the NBN has improved over the last year. During July 2018, 93 per cent of homes and businesses had their equipment installed right the first time, increasing from 87 per cent in July 2017. In the same period, an average of only 0.9 per 100 homes and businesses experienced a fault on the NBN, reducing from 1.0 in July 2017. Of those faults experienced, 91 per cent were resolved with phone and internet providers within the agreed time frames – compared to 77 per cent in July 2017.
The ACCC’s Measuring Broadband Australia Report (MBA) provides Australian consumers with accurate and independent information about broadband speeds. Consistent with the first report from March, the second report of the MBA program, released in July 2018, showed that in 70 per cent of tests undertaken, download speeds of above 90 per cent of maximum plan speeds were being achieved.

Overall end-user satisfaction has increased by 12 per cent to reach 6.7 in July, representing end-users’ satisfaction with their entire broadband experience delivered by NBN Co and RSPs.

The NBN network is also not ‘set and forget’ infrastructure. NBN Co has ongoing work underway to continue developing network services over time.

Resolution 39.2

The Australian Government is committed to addressing mobile phone black spots in regional Australia and protecting regional telecommunications needs through Universal Service Obligation arrangements. In April 2018 the Government announced the outcomes of the Priority Locations round (round 3) of the program, and on 10 June 2018 announced a commitment of $25 million for a fourth round of the program. Round 4 will see a further increase in coverage, with a focus on driving improved outcomes for regional businesses and residents, tourism, health, education and emergency services.

The Government is committed to delivering on round 4 with all stakeholders, including the ALGA, and will target more regional and remote black spot locations. There will be an approach to market following stakeholder consultation in 2018 to deliver on this commitment.

With regard to the Telecommunications Universal Service Obligation, on 20 December 2017, the Government announced its plans to work to implement a new Universal Service Guarantee or USG. The USG will ensure that all Australians have access to both voice and broadband services, regardless of where they live, reflecting changing consumer preferences and technologies.

The Government is taking a ‘belt and braces’ approach to protecting the telecommunications needs of people in regional Australia. Existing USO arrangements will remain, unless (and until) new stronger safeguards are put in place and there are clear alternatives to the USO and other appropriate safeguards.

The Government will be providing an update on the implementation of the USG later in 2018, following targeted consultation with industry stakeholders and representatives of regional and remote Australia. Further information on this work can be found at: https://www.communications.gov.au/what-we-do/phone/phone-services/universal-service-obligation.

The Government is establishing the Regional Broadband Scheme to ensure there are transparent and sustainable funding arrangements in place to provide essential broadband services to regional and remote Australia.
NBN Co is continuing to explore options that will allow broadband retailers to meet the needs of customers in regional areas. For example, the company already has work underway to develop specialised products to support education, health and business applications over the Sky Muster satellite service.

Resolution 40

Telecommunications carriers have statutory rights of access to each other’s towers, and the sites on which those towers are located. Such rights are commonly used. Optus has stated that 65 per cent of its own towers have other carriers’ equipment co-located on them, and also that the majority of the towers it uses are other providers’ towers. Carriers also access towers owned by non-carriers, such as utilities, government agencies and commercial tower providers.

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) is currently investigating whether ‘co-build’ arrangements for carriers could be improved. Such arrangements could include up-front negotiation and agreement between carriers on sharing towers and the costs of installing them. The ACCC has called for submissions as part of its review of the Facilities Access Code. Submissions are due with the ACCC by 30 September 2018.

Telecommunications carriers have some powers and immunities under Schedule 3 to the Telecommunications Act 1997 (the Act) to undertake inspections and to install and maintain facilities. These powers primarily relate to low-impact facilities which are specified in the Telecommunications (Low-impact Facilities) Determination 2018. In addition to the conditions in the Act, the Telecommunications Code of Practice 2018 (Code of Practice) sets out further obligations on carriers. The powers and immunities regime does not apply to free-standing towers. The installation of free-standing towers is subject to approval under state, territory and local government planning laws.

I am aware that the ALGA made a submission to the 2018 Regional Telecommunications Review, which will be considered by the Regional Telecommunications Independent Committee. These submissions will be considered by the Committee as they formulate recommendations for their report, which they will deliver to the Minister for Regional Services, Sport, Local Government and Decentralisation on 30 September 2018.

Thank you for bringing these matters to my attention. I trust this information will be of assistance.

Yours sincerely,

MITCH FIFFIELD

18/9/18
Dear Mayor O'Loughlin

Thank you for your letters of 2 August 2018 to the former Minister for Social Services, the Hon Dan Tehan MP, concerning the resolutions at the National General Assembly of Local Government (NGA) from the 17-20 June 2018. I am responding to you as the matters raised by the NGA now fall within my portfolio responsibilities.

The Australian Government recognises the matters raised by the NGA, and supported by the Australian Local Government Association Board (ALGA Board), affect many Australians. This is why we have put in place a comprehensive plan to address housing affordability.

I am pleased to provide detailed responses addressing each resolution in the enclosed table. I note you have also written to the former Treasurer, the Hon Scott Morrison MP, regarding resolution 42. I understand the Treasurer, the Hon Josh Frydenberg MP, will write to you separately.

Thank you again for taking the time to raise these important matters with me.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Fletcher

Enc.

21/9/2018
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| Resolution 42 | The National General Assembly call on the Australian Government to commit to action and resources to address the growing problem of housing affordability in Australia, impacting significantly on infrastructure and essential service provision. Specifically the NGA calls for:  
- An economically sustainable approach under the National Affordable Housing Agreement to deliver significant assistance to states and territories to support people on low to moderate incomes with limited housing options to secure appropriate public/social housing or affordable housing.  
- Research into new models for facilitating financing and investment of affordable housing development, including developer collaborations with industry and philanthropic organisations and use of government land to build local housing that is affordable, well-located, diverse and well designed  
- Working collaboratively with the States to develop a comprehensive, long term set of integrated policy measures to address housing affordability to align with migration and population changes.  

Additional funding or incentives to address severe shortage of affordable and appropriate housing options available to key workers including nurses, teachers and police across the States and Territories. | The Government recognises access to secure and affordable housing has significant economic and social benefits. It can improve education and health outcomes, increase workforce participation and reduce welfare dependency.  

The delivery of homelessness services however is primarily a state and territory responsibility. Equally, the supply of affordable housing largely rests with state and territory governments. The planning, construction, allocation and rents of public and community housing are the responsibility of state and territory governments and community housing providers.  

As announced in the 2017-18 Budget, this Government has a comprehensive housing affordability plan (the plan) to improve housing affordability and housing outcomes for all Australians. The Australian Government is unlocking supply, creating the right incentives and improving outcomes for those most in need through its plan.  

This plan includes:  
- Providing $1.5 billion annually through the new National Housing and Homelessness Agreement (NHHA) to states and territories  
- A $1 billion National Housing Infrastructure Facility to help unlock new housing supply including social housing  
- Increasing the Capital Gains Tax discount to 60 per cent for affordable housing investors (estimated cost of $15 million for 2017-21)  
- The First Home Super Saver Scheme to help Australians buy their first home (estimated cost of $250 million for 2017-21)  
- A $6 million investment to support the Homes for Homes initiative, which aims to raise funds for social and affordable housing  
- Providing $10 million over ten years to develop social impact investments that help young people at risk of homelessness.  

The Government is committed to implementing an automatic rent deduction scheme for social housing welfare recipients. The Automatic Rent Deduction Scheme will help tenants remain in their homes, reduce their risk of eviction due to arrears and secure social housing providers' incomes. Together these measures will increase the supply of affordable housing, including affordable rental housing.  

The Government spends around $4.5 billion annually in Commonwealth Rent Assistance which assists around 1.3 million individuals and families meet their rental costs.  

The Government is also providing $5.5 million over three years from 2018-19 to fund the National Housing Research Program of the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute. The program provides an evidence base to support the development of future housing, urban development and homelessness policies. |
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| Resolution 42.5 | The Government has published the Australian Government Property Register where all Australians are able to propose alternative uses for Commonwealth land and has updated the Commonwealth Property Disposal Policy to now require affordable housing initiatives to be considered in the disposal of all Commonwealth land that is suitable for housing. In particular, it suggests working with state, territory and local governments to encourage planning measures that will promote an appropriate proportion of affordable housing at sites where residential development is feasible. The Government is also actively contributing to the supply of housing by disposing of land that is suitable for residential housing and no longer required. For example, in Melbourne, the Government will divest 127 hectares of surplus Defence land in Marlborough that is located 10 kilometres from the Central Business District. For further information about the measures under the Government's comprehensive housing affordability plan refer to the Budget 2017-18 at <https://www.budget.gov.au/2017-18/content/glossies/factsheets/download/F5_Combined_Housing_Affordability.pdf>.
| The response noted for Resolution 42 applies to this resolution. |

**Resolution 48**

That the National General Assembly call on the Federal Government to undertake extensive consultation with local governments, the community sector, medical experts and other relevant stakeholders prior to proposing further income management measures, such as drug testing and trials for cashless debit cards for welfare recipients.

**Cashless Debit Card**

The Government undertook extensive consultations before introducing the Cashless Debit Card (CDC) program into trial sites. Consultations were held with community leaders, affected welfare recipients, state and local governments, industry, merchants and welfare groups. The Government recognises that consultation is critical.

An evaluation of the CDC will also be undertaken to collect further evidence of the ongoing and longer term impacts of the CDC in current trial sites. This will inform any future extension or design changes to the program.
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<td><strong>Resolution 64</strong></td>
<td>In light of the burden placed on local governments across Australia to respond to the needs and challenges of people living in poverty and homeless, that the National General Assembly calls on the Federal Government to raise the Newstart Allowance to the level of the Henderson Poverty Line to increase the wellbeing and life chances of many in our community.</td>
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**Drug testing trial**

The Government is committed to working with stakeholders to get the best outcomes from the drug testing trial. Since it was announced in the 2017-18 Budget, the Government has engaged 170 stakeholders at more than 60 forums and meetings around Australia including trial sites.

Feedback from stakeholders and industry experts has been taken into consideration when refining the policy and implementation arrangements for the trial. For example, evidence and submissions provided to the Senate Committee Inquiries, informed the design of the $10 million dedicated Treatment Fund for the trial.

The Government will continue to engage with stakeholders and industry experts, including from the drug and alcohol treatment sector and the local communities, to finalise arrangements for the trial. Local reference groups in each trial site will be formed prior to the trial’s commencement to ensure local input and expertise is incorporated into the trial as it is rolled out.

A comprehensive evaluation will run in parallel with the trial. Each step of the evaluation will be informed by local stakeholder engagement, starting with the design of the evaluation strategy before the trial commences.

The Australian social security system aims to support the basic living standards of all Australians and increase their social and economic participation.

Working age allowance payments such as Newstart Allowance are designed to provide a safety net for people who require financial assistance, while maintaining incentives for people to join or return to the workforce where they are able. A higher rate is payable to single recipients with dependent children and to single recipients aged 60 years and over after nine continuous months on payment.

Newstart Allowance is indexed twice a year in March and September, in line with movements in the cost of living as measured by the Consumer Price Index.

Supplementary payments such as Family Tax Benefit and Commonwealth Rent Assistance are available where recipients have additional costs, such as those associated with raising children or renting in the private market. Other supplementary benefits that may be payable depending on the recipient’s circumstances include Pharmaceutical Allowance, Carer Allowance, Remote Area Allowance, Telephone Allowance, Mobility Allowance as well as a concession card.

Income support recipients can receive a range of additional benefits and concessions that increase their economic security, including:
- subsidised prescription medicines under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme
- subsidised health care and related products
Resolution 91

That the National General Assembly request that NGA write to the Prime Minister, the Hon. Malcolm Turnbull, the Leader of the Opposition, the Hon. Bill Shorten, the Leader of The Australian Greens, Senator Richard Di Natale, the Minister for Women, the Hon. Kelly O'Dwyer, and the Minister for Social Services, the Hon. Dan Tehan, calling for the following measures to be taken to support women and children affected by domestic violence:

- A substantial increase in direct funding for specialist services and crisis accommodation providers;
- Funding for affordable long-term accommodation;
- A substantial increase in direct funding of legal services; and
- Transparent reporting of all spending on domestic and family violence programs.

For those having a difficult time financially, Centrelink has social workers who can assist in a number of ways. They can provide information or referral to free financial counselling services to people experiencing financial difficulty, such as having large outstanding bills and generally having trouble making ends meet.

Social security payments operate in conjunction with taxation concessions, productivity initiatives, employment services and labour market strategies, as part of an integrated package to support workforce participation objectives. The Government provides a range of employment programs and incentives to help people find employment, including through the Government's employment services called jobactive and Disability Employment Services. Assistance includes help with looking for work, writing resumes, preparing for interviews, referrals to jobs and targeted training that is suited to the needs of local employers. In the 2017-18 Budget, the Government announced measures to support some of the most vulnerable people in our society. These measures will focus on helping more Indigenous Australians, disadvantaged parents of young children, and older Australians into jobs.

The Government is committed to keeping women and their children safe from violence. The Government is currently implementing the Third Action Plan (2016-2019) of the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022 (the National Plan) in partnership with state and territory governments. Since the release of the National Plan, the Government has invested over $700 million to reduce domestic, family and sexual violence.

Under the Third Action Plan, the Government is investing: $20 million in primary prevention and early intervention initiatives; $15 million in frontline services to respond to violence experienced by women and their children; $30 million in frontline legal assistance and family law services; $25 million in Indigenous family violence; and $10 million in responding to sexual violence and research.

A substantial increase in direct funding for specialist services and crisis accommodation providers and; funding for affordable long-term accommodation

Under the National Plan, the Government has responsibility for delivering some support and services through family law, including legal assistance, and the social security system. Primary responsibility for delivering services for women who have experienced violence lies with state and territory governments. To support the existing service system, the Government funds complementary national support services such as 1800RESPECT and DV-Alert.

Under the National Housing and Homelessness Agreement (NHHA), states and territories are required to publish housing and homelessness strategies addressing the housing priority policy areas, priority homelessness cohorts, and commitment to improved data collection and reporting.
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<tr>
<td>Women and children affected by family and domestic violence are a priority</td>
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<td>also applies to this resolution.</td>
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<td><strong>A substantial increase in direct funding of legal services</strong></td>
<td>Providing assistance to victims of domestic violence is a priority for the Australian Government and for the legal assistance sector. More information on the status of legal assistance funding can be found at <a href="http://www.ag.gov.au">www.ag.gov.au</a>.</td>
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<td>**On 9 May 2017, the Government announced the first comprehensive review</td>
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<td>being led by the Attorney-General's Department.</td>
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<td>**Transparent reporting of all spending on domestic and family violence</td>
<td>The Department of Social Services (the Department) Corporate Plan is the principal planning document. It is an important tool in ensuring that the Department is open and transparent in managing its responsibilities. This includes the proper use and management of public resources, consistent with the requirements of the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013. Each year, results from both the Department's Corporate Plan and Portfolio Budget Statements are reported in the Department's Annual Report, under Part 2-Annual Performance Statement. These publications are available on the Department’s website at <a href="http://www.dss.gov.au">www.dss.gov.au</a>.</td>
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<td>programs**</td>
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Our Ref: MClS-006729

Cr David O’Loughlin
President
Australian Local Government Association
8 Geils Court
DEAKIN ACT 2600

Dear David,

Thank you for your letters of 2 August 2018 to the then Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment, the Hon Steven Ciobo MP, and the then Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Hon Julie Bishop MP, regarding a resolution on trade supported unanimously by the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) Board. I am responding on behalf of the Australian Government as these issues now fall within my portfolio responsibility.

I appreciate the opportunity to comment on the National General Assembly of Local Government (NGA) call for the Government to protect the role of local government now and in the future under the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP-11).

With its membership representing 13.5 per cent of the global economy and with the elimination of 98 per cent of tariffs in the TPP-11 region, this Agreement represents a landmark deal for trade in our region. The Government is working to bring it into force as soon as possible so Australian exporters can begin to take advantage of the material gains contained in the Agreement.

Nothing in the TPP-11 would limit the ability of local councils to enter into a range of strategies and policies such as environmental initiatives, procurement, jobs programs or insourcing. The TPP-11 will complement existing efforts to address issues such as trade-related environmental challenges. I encourage any councils with specific concerns to contact TPP@dfat.gov.au for further advice.

I welcome the interest of the ALGA in the TPP-11 and note the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has engaged with the ALGA during the negotiations of the original TPP. I look forward to continuing to work with your association as we progress Australia’s ambitious trade agenda.

Yours sincerely,

Simon Birmingham
28 SEP 2018