

Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils Annual Report



2014 – 2015

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WSROC vision

Our vision is to be an organisation that provides a strong voice for the residents of Western Sydney on those issues that are crucial for a better quality of life for us all and one that grows opportunities for joint businesses and shared activities for the common benefit of our Member Councils and their residents.



The Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils

The Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils Ltd. (WSROC) represents ten local councils in Western Sydney: Auburn, Bankstown, Blacktown, Blue Mountains, Fairfield, Hawkesbury, Holroyd, Liverpool, Parramatta, and Penrith.

Our role is to identify and develop policy solutions for regional issues which impact on our councils and the residents of Western Sydney.

WSROC works closely with state and federal government agencies and MPs to ensure the needs of Western Sydney are included in policy decisions and delivery of services.

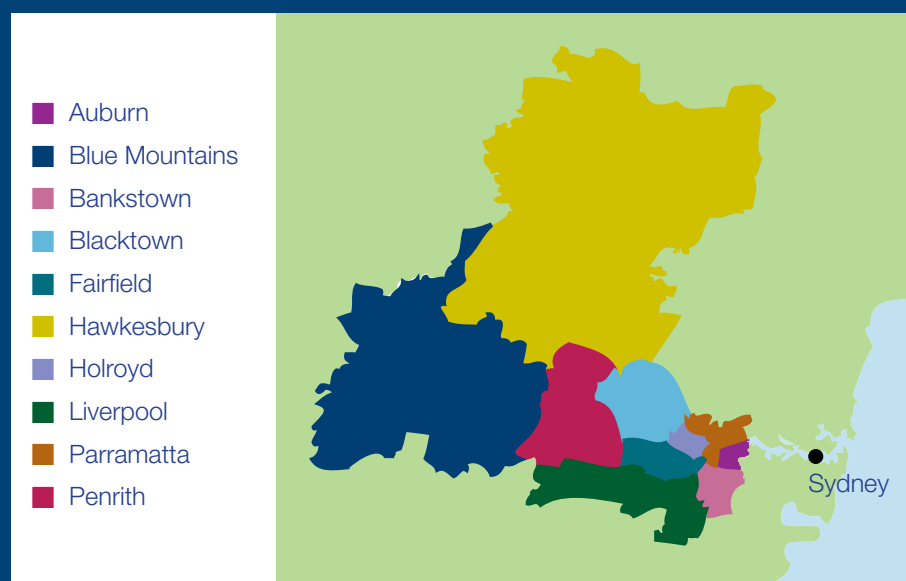
We are a key advisor on issues of regional importance including transport planning, employment growth, population management, sustainability, the arts, land-use planning and development.

WSROC also contributes to national and state policy debates through organising and participating in public forums and stakeholder alliances, and through the media.

In our advocacy role we aim to promote a positive image of our region; highlighting Western Sydney's unique multicultural communities, environmental diversity, its vitality and growth.

We believe in a bipartisan approach to finding solutions, and work closely with a range of other regional stakeholders to form partnerships and alliances to achieve economic, social and environmental outcomes which benefit the whole community.

WSROC also arranges and manages a range of procurement and other joint activities on behalf of its Member Councils, including a number of externally funded projects.



Message from the President



More and more, Western Sydney is becoming a preferred place for families to live, work and play – breaking down the cultural stigma that has historically plagued the region.

Western Sydney has come a long way in a year and so has WSROC.

2014 saw WSROC launch two of its most significant initiatives; the Western Sydney Regional Waste Strategy and the Light Years Ahead street light replacement program, which together have attracted \$8.4 million in grant funding for WSROC's Member Councils.

In addition to funded projects, strong campaigning has resulted in the most Western Sydney-focused budget we have seen in many years.

Just 14 months ago Badgerys Creek was confirmed as the site for the Western Sydney airport, throwing us full-throttle into a myriad of infrastructure, housing and roads projects – transforming paddocks into what could be Australia's greatest aerotropolis.

WSROC has been campaigning for better transport infrastructure for decades, yet it seems that 2014/15 was a transitional year in which many of these long-awaited projects moved firmly onto the state and federal agenda.

WSROC will continue to advocate for improvements to transport infrastructure, with a focus on linking the strategic centres of Bankstown, Blacktown, Liverpool, Parramatta and The Hills along the north-south corridor – improving cross-regional travel and building business opportunities for the West's rapidly growing cities.

More and more, Western Sydney is becoming a preferred place for families to live, work and play – breaking down the cultural stigma that has historically plagued the region.

Our Member Councils have joined us in campaigning for a better quality of life for Western Sydney residents including: local arts and culture, thriving cities, beautiful green spaces, efficient transport links, and specialty employment hubs. I would like to thank each of them for their outstanding work.

WSROC has also invested in its councils with staff development programs such as Advancing Sustainability Leaders. It is great to see future leaders taking the time to equip themselves with knowledge and skills that will serve Western Sydney in years to come.

As we move into 2016, even greater changes are on the horizon for local government.

No matter what the outcome of the Fit for the Future reform process, all councils will need to work together becoming even more strategic and regionally-minded. To do otherwise, is to risk the impressive momentum Western Sydney has worked so hard to build.

A lot has happened in a year, but 2015/16 is shaping up to be even more eventful, demanding and rewarding.

I would like to thank our staff, members and partners for their tireless work over the past year and look forward to seeing what we achieve in the next.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Tony Hadchiti'.

Cllr Tony Hadchiti
WSROC President

Chief Executive report



Regionally, Western Sydney is about to become a hive of activity, and as new opportunities emerge from infrastructure, housing and transport upgrades we will no doubt see a shift in the needs of residents.

As acting CEO, I have had only a few short months to appreciate the full scope of WSROC's work.

Despite its 40 year legacy, WSROC remains a lean and nimble organisation that punches well above its weight across a range of policy areas.

Whether addressing big picture issues at the state and federal level, or localised challenges that resonate across many councils, WSROC advocates for what is best for the region as a whole.

This year we said farewell to former CEO Karin Bishop who was pivotal in shaping the organisation we see today.

Karin played an essential role in establishing WSROC as the advocacy powerhouse that it is, as well as securing funding for WSROC's two biggest projects; the Western Sydney Regional Waste Strategy and Light Years Ahead.

This has seen WSROC's staff more than double in the past year.

As we move into 2015/16, WSROC's flexible nature will become an asset as it adapts to a changing landscape.

Regionally, Western Sydney is about to become a hive of activity, and as new opportunities emerge from infrastructure, housing and transport

upgrades we will no doubt see a shift in the needs of residents.

The outcome of the local government reform process will also demand attention from WSROC. Whether councils choose to merge or stand alone, all will need to find ways to become more efficient, strategic and collaborative.

At such a transitional period, a regional approach is needed more than ever and WSROC is well-stationed to assist all levels of government when it comes to policy development, planning and reform.

Thank you to the WSROC staff for their support, as well as the many council officers who collaborate regularly to get regional projects up and running. Without your support WSROC could not function as effectively as it does.

Thank you also to the WSROC Board who have dedicated their time over the past year to deliberate on issues that affect WSROC's 1.6 million residents.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nic Pasternatsky'.

Nic Pasternatsky
Acting CEO

Board of Directors



**PRESIDENT
TONY HADCHITI**

Councillor Tony Hadchiti was elected to Liverpool City Council in September 2008 and joined the WSROC Board in the same month. Cllr Hadchiti was elected President in 2012.



**JUNIOR
VICE PRESIDENT
TIFFANY TREE**

Councillor Tiffany Tree was elected to Hawkesbury City Council in September 2008 and joined the WSROC Board in 2008. Since then Cllr Tree has represented WSROC as both Senior and Junior Vice President.



**SENIOR
VICE PRESIDENT
STEVEN ISSA**

Councillor Steven Issa has been involved in the Parramatta political scene from a very young age. Cllr Issa was elected to Parramatta City Council in 2012, and has served two terms as Deputy Lord Mayor.



**TREASURER
SALIM MEHAJER**

Councillor Salim Mehajer was elected to Auburn City Council in 2012 and joined WSROC in 2014. Cllr Mehajer was elected Deputy Mayor in 2014 and 2015 by his fellow Councillors.



**GEORGE CAMPBELL
AUBURN
CITY COUNCIL**



**ALLAN WINTERBOTTOM
BANKSTOWN
CITY COUNCIL**



**MARK HOLMES
BLACKTOWN
CITY COUNCIL**



**MICK FELL
BLUE MOUNTAINS
CITY COUNCIL**



**FRANK CARBONE
MAYOR
FAIRFIELD
CITY COUNCIL**



**GREG CUMMINGS
MAYOR
HOLROYD CITY
COUNCIL**



**GUS BALLOOT
LIVERPOOL
CITY COUNCIL**



**BEN GOLDFINCH
PENRITH
CITY COUNCIL**



**LINDA DOWNEY
MAYOR
BANKSTOWN
CITY COUNCIL**



**JACQUELINE DONALDSON
BLACKTOWN
CITY COUNCIL**



**DANIEL MYLES
BLUE MOUNTAINS
CITY COUNCIL**



**GEORGE BARCHA
FAIRFIELD
CITY COUNCIL**



**MICHAEL CREED
HAWKESBURY
CITY COUNCIL**



**NASR KAFROUNI
HOLROYD
CITY COUNCIL**



**SCOTT LLOYD
LORD MAYOR
PARRAMATTA
CITY COUNCIL**



**JIM AITKEN
PENRITH
CITY COUNCIL**

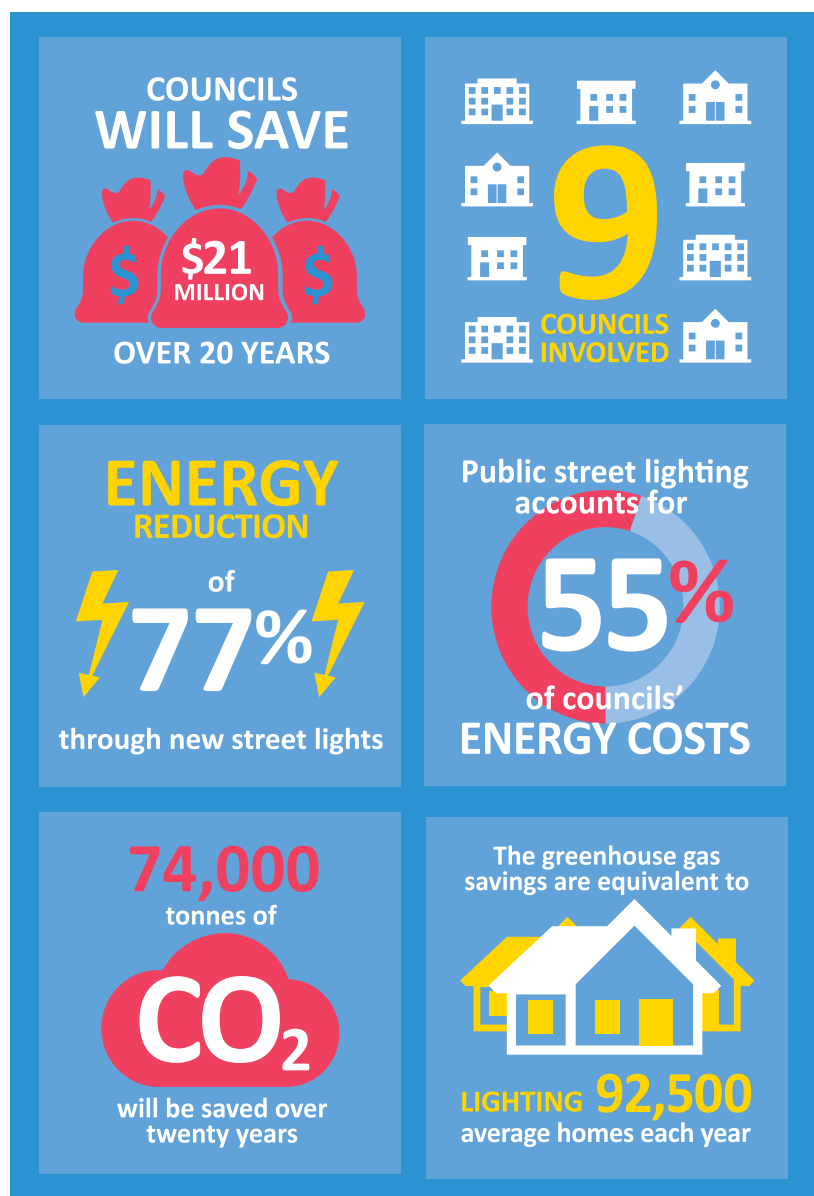
Funded programs and initiatives

2014 – 2015



Light Years Ahead

Creating a more sustainable Western Sydney



The Light Years Ahead project replaces approximately 13,000 mercury vapour street lights with LED lights in nine Western Sydney councils – Blacktown, Blue Mountains, Fairfield, Hawkesbury, Hills Shire, Holroyd, Liverpool, Parramatta and Penrith.

The project targets old, high-emitting street lights, replacing them with new energy efficient alternatives resulting in major savings for councils and the environment.

Light Years Ahead is the largest street lighting project currently underway in NSW and it demonstrates the scale of ongoing collaboration between councils in the Western Sydney region – important to note at a time when councils are asked to be leaner than ever.

Since the project's inception, a cross-council reference group has influenced the roll out design, and other decisions on behalf of councils. The members include engineers, traffic managers, environmental project officers and other staff responsible for street lighting infrastructure.

Light Years Ahead also includes a strong community information and media campaign. The project will be represented at community events

"I congratulate WSROC and all those involved on their collaborative and cohesive approach, and on the initiative shown in bringing this amazing project together."

– Louise Markus, Federal Member for Macquarie,
address to Federal Parliament, June 1, 2015.



PHOTO: JAY/LA

Mayors, MPs and WSROC President at the official launch event, Penrith City Council. Left to right: Cllr Kim Ford (Mayor of Hawkesbury), Fiona Scott MP (Federal Member for Lindsay), Cllr Tony Hadchiti (WSROC President), Cllr Greg Cummings (Mayor of Holroyd), Louise Markus MP (Federal Member for Macquarie), Karen Andrews MP (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Industry and Science) and Cllr Ross Fowler OAM (Mayor of Penrith).

and festivals across all council areas to inform residents about the Light Years Ahead program, and help them find ways to save money on their own energy bills.

The project commenced in June 2014 with project design, mapping and negotiations. The lighting roll out started in May 2015 following an official launch at Penrith City Council. The roll out is expected to be completed in March 2016, with the project wrapped up in May 2016.

This project received \$5.3 million in funding from the Australian Government, with a co-contribution of \$2.6 million by the participating councils and WSROC.

Over 20 years' Light Years Ahead will save approximately:

- 74,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions;
- \$21 million in energy costs, allowing councils to invest in other projects and local area needs.

The participating councils see this project as a great first step towards improving sustainability across the region and have committed to discussions on future street lighting updates.

For more information:

www.lightyearsahead.com.au



PHOTO: JAY/LA

Members of the Project Reference Group and WSROC President at launch event. Left to right: Back row: Cllr Tony Hadchiti (President, WSROC), Zahid Hassan (Asset Manager, Civil and Built, Fairfield City Council), Leanne Niblock (Project Officer Environmental Outcomes, Parramatta City Council), Rudi Svarc (Director City Assets, Blacktown City Council), Andy Karklins (Traffic Management Officer, Blacktown City Council) Front row: Victor Lim (Traffic Engineer, Liverpool City Council), Murray Halls (Public Domain Coordinator, Penrith City Council), James Allsop (Senior Environmental Sustainability Officer, Holroyd City Council), Jon Bannister (Manager Plant & Energy, Blacktown City Council).

Western Sydney Regional Waste Strategy

Working together to reduce our region's footprint



Council staff at the May 2015 Waste Planning Forum at Penrith.

In 2014, the *Western Sydney Regional Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Strategy*² was endorsed by participating councils and the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA). The Strategy was launched by WSROC President Tony Hadchiti, Holroyd Mayor Greg Cummings and NSW EPA Director of Waste and Resource Recovery Mr Stephen Beaman.

The Strategy aims to improve waste avoidance and resource recovery rates across the region through improved infrastructure, collaborative planning and community education.

The Strategy's key targets include:

- **Increase household waste recycled to 70 per cent by the year 2021**
- **Establish 10 Community Recycling Centres in Western Sydney by 2021**
- **Reduce waste generated per person**

- **Reduce littering and illegal dumping**
- **Improve regional cooperation and collaboration**

In order to meet these targets, WSROC's regional waste team has developed a number of projects that address common challenges faced by councils throughout Western Sydney.

Highlights of projects that commenced in 2014/15 include:

Regional waste planning forum

During 2015, WSROC hosted waste and planning officers from 14 councils across Western Sydney to discuss the challenge of rapid development and increasing housing density on delivering efficient waste and resource recovery services to the community. This was the precursor to an ongoing WSROC waste planners professional group.

Western Sydney infrastructure needs assessment

WSROC commissioned an assessment of waste and recycling infrastructure across the region to determine how population growth and increasing household waste generation will affect councils' capacity to process and dispose of waste.





The Hon. Rob Stokes (NSW Minister for the Environment) and Tony Hadchiti (President, WSROC) on site at Australian Native Landscapes (ANL) for the Waste Less Recycle More organics infrastructure grant announcements.



Launch of the WSRADS program at Blacktown. Left to right: Warrick Hay (Holroyd Council), Alek Radovic (Blacktown Council), Blacktown Mayor Steven Bali, NSW EPA Director of Waste and Resource Recovery Mr Stephen Beaman, Paul Zirilli (The Hills Shire), Sarah Callus (Penrith Council), Andrew Scholz (Parramatta Council) and Hong Nguyen (Fairfield Council).

Western Sydney Residential Asbestos Disposal Scheme (WSRADS)

WSROC has assisted eight councils to safely collect and dispose of more than 9,000kg of asbestos from households across the region. WSROC won a Betty Award³ in late 2014 for its efforts promoting safe asbestos disposal in conjunction with the WSRADS scheme.

Regional waste and recycling market research

WSROC and six councils are undertaking detailed market research to understand the community's knowledge of, and barriers to effective recycling.



Launch of the Western Sydney Regional Waste Strategy at Holroyd City Council. Left to right: Cllr Tony Hadchiti (President, WSROC) and Cllr Greg Cummings (Mayor of Holroyd).



Launch of the Regional Waste Strategy at Holroyd City Council. Left to right: Mr Stephen Beaman (Director of Waste and Resource Recovery, NSW EPA), Cllr Tony Hadchiti (WSROC, President), Cllr George Campbell (WSROC Board Member, Auburn Council), and Chris Chung (Auburn Council).

Advancing Sustainability Leaders

Providing professional development for Western Sydney's future leaders

"This program... really changed the way I approach my work. The facilitators were inspiring and challenged us to reflect on our own abilities and thoughts."

– Donna Wallace,
Blacktown City Council.

Advancing Sustainability Leaders (ASL) was an innovative professional development program for managers and emerging leaders in local government.

Thanks to funding from the NSW Environmental Trust and Metropolitan Water Directorate (MWD), WSROC was able to deliver the ASL program to 20 of Western Sydney's most promising sustainability champions from across 12 councils.

ASL was designed to develop participants' capacity to become effective sustainability leaders and catalysts of change within their council to increase the delivery of leading practice water projects.

Training was delivered by experts in sustainability leadership from Macquarie University's Australian Research Institute for Environment and Sustainability (ARIES).

The program ran between July 2014 and March 2015, in partnership

with the MWD and builds on the successful program with the same title that was run by MWD's Water for Life program in 2012.

The program:

- Provided access to skills, coaching and networks that support the role of sustainability leaders as catalysts of organisational change.
- Facilitated social networking and learning among emerging sustainability leaders.
- Built the leadership capacity of managers and emerging leaders in local government to deliver effective water-related sustainability projects.
- Fostered support within councils for sustainability leaders and their initiatives.
- Facilitated the delivery of innovative sustainability projects that use learning as a tool for creating change.
- Encouraged the integration of education into other sustainability programs and activities within local government.

Participants worked their way through four training modules, each covering essential skills and capabilities in sustainability leadership including: personal integrity and influence, learning and innovation, vision to action and creating change.

In addition to formal training modules, participants received one-on-one coaching and peer review assessments.

The program included input from inspirational leaders including Mr Chris Davis, Chair of the Independent Water



Participants during ASL workshop.

Advisory Panel, and Mr Gavin Hanlon, Deputy Director General Water of the NSW Department of Primary Industries.

The program's independent evaluation found that participants gained a great deal from the program and many gave glowing praise.

Senior Environmental Education and Strategy Officer at Blacktown City Council, Donna Wallace, said the ASL program helped her think outside the square when approaching new tasks.

"This program has been fantastic and really changed the way I approach my work. The facilitators were inspiring and challenged us to reflect on our own abilities and thoughts, whilst pushing us to think outside the square...this course introduced me to topics and content I had not been exposed to even after 10 years in the business," she said.

Senior staff within participating councils also reported significant improvements in the confidence and capabilities of ASL graduates in their day-to-day roles.

The program had several concrete outcomes for sustainable water use. In particular, it helped some participants overcome hurdles to infrastructure and other sustainability projects – allowing them to proceed.

In other cases, participants helped establish new council procedures to identify and respond to water saving opportunities.

The ASL graduation event was held in late March 2015, at the Sydney Maritime Museum in Darling Harbour.

Special guest, Professor Tim Flannery, Australia's former Chief Climate Commissioner and founder of the Climate Council, presented at the graduation.



Professor Tim Flannery addressing the ASL graduation event in Cockle Bay, Sydney.



Advancing Sustainability Leaders program graduates.



ASL program organisers and presenters. Left to right: Alison White (Director, MWD), Professor Tim Flannery (Chief Councillor, Climate Council), Karin Bishop (CEO, WSROC), Judith Bruinsma (Deputy CEO, WSROC), Melinda Kelly (Acting Senior Education Officer, MWD), Peter Randall (Acting Manager, MWD).

Wood Smoke Reduction Program

Helping Western Sydney residents cut air pollution and their household heating bill



Excess smoke from wood heaters is a key source of air pollution in Western Sydney.

Resident action can go a long way towards achieving local outcomes if armed with the right tools and information.

In response to high pollution levels in the Western Sydney basin, WSROC secured funding for a number of hands-on wood smoke reduction workshops for residents in six local government areas.

Excess smoke from residential wood-fire heaters is a key source of air pollution in many council areas.

The presence of smoke is also an indication that a wood heater is not working efficiently, and that residents are not getting the best value for money.

Feedback from the workshops was overwhelmingly positive, with over 90 per cent of participants reporting they found the information useful and wanted to tell others about what they had learned.



Resident participating in Liverpool workshop.



Residents at Parramatta workshop.

The workshops provided residents with tips for better wood heater operation to help them:

- save money;
- reduce smoke;
- improve local air quality; and
- care for their health and that of their family.

Workshops were run in the Bankstown, Blacktown, Hawkesbury, Liverpool, Parramatta and Penrith council areas, with 76 residents participating across the region.

These workshops were complemented by an advertising campaign across local media, and letter box drop to over 24,000 residents offering tips on efficient wood fire operation and promoting the workshops.

Industry engagement was also undertaken. WSROC provided selected wood heater retailers and firewood suppliers across Western Sydney with information packs to hand out to customers.

The program also included a colouring-in competition through local public schools to bring the conversation about efficient heating into the home.

Feedback from the workshops was overwhelmingly positive, with over 90 per cent of participants reporting they found the information useful and wanted to tell others about what they had learned.

The Woodsmoke Reduction Program received funding from the NSW Government through the Environment Protection Authority.



Blacktown wood smoke reduction workshop.



Primary School colouring-in competition winners Thomas and William.



Resident participating in Penrith workshop.

Procurement report

Procurement report



Staff at Mission Australia's Soft Landing Mattress Recycling plant, Smithfield.

WSROC adopted a new strategic approach to regional procurement for the 2015 calendar year following a formal review of procurement activities in late 2014.

The Board-endorsed Procurement Roadmap Action Plan (December, 2014) aims to improve the financial sustainability of WSROC's procurement arm; transitioning existing WSROC contracts to a new Regional Organisation of Councils (ROC) funding model.

This new approach will secure regional funding through Local Government Procurement (LGP) to support procurement projects and better leverage WSROC's collective spending power.

Our councils already use LGP contracts for purchasing. According to the last available figures, WSROC councils have spent in excess of \$54.5M through LGP contracts currently in place. However, most of these transactions are made on a per-council basis; with councils receiving a rebate of just 0.001 per cent from LGP on certain contracts.

The new ROC funding model leverages the critical mass of 10 councils to improve both the benchmark prices on offer and the rebates available.

If a minimum of 80 per cent of councils participate in a particular contract, WSROC would receive 50 per cent of any available rebates (splitting equally with LGP) – generating a significant and sustainable income stream for the group.

This has been successfully achieved for several contracts to date.



The value of WSROC-led contracts for the 2014/15 financial year was \$31.7M. When these contracts were put in place it was estimated that an average saving of around 10 per cent would be achieved across councils due to the collective WSROC spend.

Local Government Procurement contracts

The following expiring WSROC regional contracts were transitioned to LGP VendorPanel™ contracts in 2014/2015; increasing group savings, reducing administrative requirements and providing access to the LGP funding model:

- LGP 113 – Traffic control services contract;
- LGP 114 – Road and traffic signage, hardware and roadside products; and
- LGP 808-20 – HR temporary placements and associated services contracts.

WSROC councils have also agreed to participate in LGP's electricity and natural gas tender; the revamped telecommunications services contract; and the supply of bulk fuel, card and associated services tender.

WSROC-led contracts

The value of WSROC-led contracts for the 2014/15 financial year was \$31.7M. When these contracts were put in place it was estimated that an average saving of around 10 per cent would be achieved across councils due to the collective WSROC spend.

WSROC councils exercised options with respect to the following contracts in 2014/15:

- WR01 – 2011/12 – Standing offer contract for the supply and delivery of general hardware (and janitorial paper) products (the first, of the two available one year options);
- WR01 – 2012/13 – Standing offer contract for mattress collection services (the final year option); and
- WR01 – 2012/13 – Standing offer contract for general office supplies (the first of the two one year options).

Campaigns and advocacy

Campaigns and advocacy

WSROC has a strong history of advocacy and considered policy analysis. The 2014-2015 financial year saw several issues take centre stage in both media advocacy and official submissions.

In addition to being part of key advocacy groups such as the Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue, WSROC has had several key focuses throughout the last year.



Blacktown train station.

Transport infrastructure planning

Western Sydney's rapid growth has forced transport and infrastructure planning onto the state and federal agenda and into the public domain.

2014/15 has been a roads and infrastructure bonanza with Badgerys Creek airport, Moorebank Intermodal freight terminal, Western Sydney light rail and the WestConnex – attracting significant funds.

These projects will be managed at the state level, however close consultation with local government is needed to ensure planning is well-informed and achieves the best possible outcome for the region and its residents.

President Tony Hadchiti has appeared in national, state and industry media, calling for a consultative and strategic approach to planning and infrastructure that includes:

- Decreasing the city-centric nature of Sydney's transport infrastructure by building road and rail connections between Western Sydney centres, particularly along the north-south corridor;
- Investment in local economies to generate jobs closer to where people live;
- Redesign of the WestConnex motorway;
- Moving the proposed Moorebank Intermodal freight terminal to Badgerys Creek; and
- Calling for the prioritisation of State-owned infrastructure to the North West and South West Growth Centres.

Significant funds have been allocated in the 2015/16 State Budget for transport and infrastructure projects across Western Sydney, including significant acceleration funding for greenfield housing developments.

WSROC will continue to lobby the State Government to ensure these funds are directed to projects of key importance in the region.



“Recent commitments to the north-west and south-west rail links are moving in the right direction, however these lines are still city-centric,” the president of WSROC, Tony Hadchiti, said. “Travel to non-central destinations, particularly along the north-south corridor, remains extremely difficult.”

The Sydney Morning Herald, March 23, 2015

More jobs is the linchpin, Hadchiti says. “If there’s a job where people live it means less travel time. Less travel time is less pressure on public infrastructure...If we get jobs right, we are going a long way.”

The Guardian, March 23, 2015

Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils president Tony Hadchiti said he was particularly pleased to see an increase in grant funding to help councils deliver infrastructure for new housing developments.

“The roll-out of state-managed infrastructure to western Sydney’s key growth centres has also received a boost and we hope to see this accelerate new housing supply in the Sydney’s north west and south west regions,” he said.

The Sydney Morning Herald, June 23, 2015

Local government reform

WSROC has been a strong supporter of the local government reform process and has participated fully since its inception at the Destination 2031 summit in Dubbo in 2011.

In particular, WSROC supports the principle of building capacity within local government to act as equal partners with the NSW Government in service delivery and infrastructure provision.

However, WSROC does not agree that mergers are the sole route to achieving this outcome.

In particular, WSROC maintains IPART’s⁴ recommendation that scale and capacity be the key measure of council ‘fitness’ is simplistic and unsubstantiated.

For this reason WSROC has advocated strongly against forced mergers over the past twelve months, advising against a one-size-fits-all approach to reform.

WSROC has advised a consultative process that capitalises on the strengths of existing regional organisations of councils to achieve the efficiencies and strategic capacity the Office of Local Government is seeking.

This view has been expressed in submissions to the Office of Local Government, editorial pieces in state media and WSROC publications.

In the 2015/2016 financial year, WSROC will continue to lobby the Office of Local Government to ensure reform measures reflect the complexities of the process and are not based on simplistic assumptions.

“The potential benefits of merging two underperforming councils simply because they happen to be neighbours are doubtful and there is the real risk that the end result is simply one large underperforming council.

“If the NSW Government is serious about creating a more sustainable partnership between state and local government – and a more efficient and collaborative local-government sector – then perhaps it should look to the structure of the existing regional organisations of councils as another way forward, to achieve the increased economies of scale they seek.”

Sydney Morning Herald, October 9, 2014

Western Sydney airport

The proposed Western Sydney airport at Badgerys Creek has the potential to be the most significant infrastructure project in the region's history.

WSROC conditionally approves the airport as a catalyst for the economic redevelopment of Western Sydney, however, ensuring Badgerys Creek has the appropriate transport infrastructure to support it, as well as adequate protections for local residents, environment and heritage will remain WSROC's primary concern.

Substantial funding has been allocated for roads connecting the precinct to Sydney's motorway network, however, WSROC will continue to lobby for rail infrastructure connecting the airport to Penrith in the north and Liverpool in the east.

In early 2015, WSROC initiated a jointly commissioned independent review of the forthcoming Western Sydney Airport environmental impact statement (EIS).

Eleven councils are participating in the review including eight WSROC councils and three MACROC⁵ councils.

The findings of this review will inform WSROC's future advocacy work regarding Badgerys Creek airport.

Tony Hadchiti, president of the Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils, said with population growth set to surge by more than 1 million over the next 15 years, urgent investment is needed, including access to Badgerys Creek.

Daily Telegraph, November 3, 2014

"We need to link Liverpool to Badgerys Creek. We need a new link with Penrith and Campbelltown. Unless you drive, it's impossible," Mr Hadchiti said.

Sydney Morning Herald, March 15, 2015

"Both sides of government have committed to this airport and we should allow the process to take place. This is set to be the biggest game-changer for western Sydney."

Sydney Morning Herald, March 18, 2015

The arts

Western Sydney has long been a producer of quality artists and cultural content, including sophisticated engagement with the Pacific-Asian arts.

Existing cultural events such as Parramasala, Cabramatta Moon Festival and the Blacktown City Arts Prize all celebrate the diversity of Western Sydney and offer insight into the great potential for arts and tourism within the region.

During the last year much debate has centred on relocation of the Powerhouse Museum to Parramatta as well as the development of a cultural precinct in this vicinity.

In November 2014, President Tony Hadchiti spoke to 2UE's Tim Webster to discuss the Powerhouse's relocation, however this iconic landmark is representative of a much wider issue;





The Old Kings School, Parramatta.

naming Western Sydney as one of three key regions.

The 2015-2016 State Budget included a small increase in the percentage of funding dedicated to Western Sydney arts projects, however there is still a significant per capita funding discrepancy between this region and the Sydney CBD.

Proportional investment in locally-relevant artistic experiences for Western Sydney residents – including world-class infrastructure, grants and support for Western Sydney artists and groups – will continue to be a priority moving forward.

disproportionate investment in Western Sydney arts.

As outlined in WSROC's response to NSW Arts' policy discussion paper, the artistic and cultural contribution of Western Sydney is unique, and should be identified as a priority area by the State and Federal Government.

The revised NSW Arts policy framework, released in May 2015 has taken WSROC's suggestion on board,

"There is a great inequity in arts funding between Western Sydney and the rest of the city and our region needs more first-class arts and cultural institutions. The majority of funding is reserved for Sydney's inner-city and it is encouraging to see the NSW Government recognises this needs to change."

Tony Hadchiti, *Powerhouse for the west*, October 29, 2014.



Other advocacy:

- Submission to the Australian Energy Regulator regarding the NSW Utility Public Lighting Confidentiality Claims, July 2014.
- Letter to the Federal Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development calling for close consultation with councils when planning the proposed Western Sydney airport, November 2014.
- Letter to the Federal Minister for Justice calling for the reinstatement of funding for new CCTV cameras across certain areas of Western Sydney, December 2014.
- Letter to the Mayor of Liverpool expressing support for the council's campaign to transfer the proposed Moorebank Intermodal freight terminal to a new site at Badgerys Creek, January 2015.
- Letter to the NSW Minister for Planning supporting Liverpool City Council's campaign to transfer the proposed Moorebank Intermodal freight terminal to a new site at Badgerys Creek, January 2015.
- Response to the Federal Department of the environment on the national television and computer recycling scheme operational review, February 2015.
- Response to the draft Changing Behaviour Together: NSW Waste Less, Recycle More Education Strategy 2015 – 2017, May 2015.
- Submission to the NSW Department of Planning and Environment on the role, powers and structure of the proposed Greater Sydney Commission, May 2015.
- Letter to the NSW Minister for Planning calling for the relocation of the proposed Moorebank Intermodal freight terminal to Badgerys Creek, June, 2015.
- Letter to the NSW Minister for the Environment supporting the development of a NSW container deposit scheme, June 2015.
- Letter to the NSW Minister for Planning calling for revision of the WestConnex M4 upgrade design including the relocation and addition of on-off ramps, and further investigation into the impact on local roads, June 2015.
- Letter to the Federal Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development calling for a minimum 60 day consultation period for the proposed Western Sydney airport environmental impact statement, June 2015.
- Letter to the NSW EPA calling for a minimum 60 day consultation period for the proposed Western Sydney airport environmental impact statement, June 2015.



Professional groups

- Arts and cultural development
- Communications and media
- Economic development
- Environment and strategic planning
- Environment and sustainability
- Human resources
- Sport and recreation
- Transport planning
- Waste planners
- Western Sydney Environmental Educators Network (WSEEN)

Strategic partnerships



Karin Bishop (CEO, WSROC) and Alison White (Director, Metropolitan Water Directorate).



President Tony Hadchiti with Professor Glen Maberly of the Western Sydney Local Health District.



Left to right Jim Battersby (Chief Engineer, Endeavour Energy), Wade Elliot (Acting Program Director, Maintenance, Endeavour Energy), Tony Hadchiti (President, WSROC) and Ross Fowler (Mayor, Penrith Council).

- Australian Local Government Association
- Blue Mountains Economic Forum
- Committee for Sydney planning taskforce
- Cultural and Indigenous Research Centre Australia (CIRCA)
- Department of Industry and Science
- Endeavour Energy
- External Culture Change Working Group (NSW Planning and Environment)
- Government Architect's Office
- Greater Sydney Local Land Services
- Greater Western Sydney social procurement taskforce
- Hawkesbury Nepean Valley Flood Management Taskforce
- Ku-ring-gai Council
- Local Government New South Wales
- Local Government Procurement
- Macarthur Regional Organisation of Councils (MACROC)
- Macquarie University
- Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District
- Northern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (NSROC)
- NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet
- NSW Department of Transport
- NSW Environment Protection Authority
- NSW Environmental Trust
- NSW Government Love Food Hate Waste Program
- NSW Metropolitan Water Directorate
- NSW Office of Environment and Heritage
- NSW Office of Finance and Services
- NSW Premier's Council for Active Living
- Parramatta River Catchment Group
- Procurement Australia
- Regional Development Australia
- Shore Regional Organisation of Councils (SHOROC)
- Smart Work Centres committee (project by RDA)
- South Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (SSROC)
- South West Sydney Local Health District
- Sutherland Shire Council
- Sydney Alliance
- Sydney Coastal Councils Group
- Sydney Water
- The Hills Shire Council
- Transport for NSW
- University of NSW (UNSW)
- University of Western Sydney (UWS)
- UWS Centre for Western Sydney
- UWS Regional Centre of Expertise
- Waste Management Association of Australia
- Western Sydney Airport Alliance
- Western Sydney Business Chamber
- Western Sydney Community Forum
- Western Sydney Diabetes Prevention and Management Initiative
- Western Sydney Environmental Educators Network
- Western Sydney Institute of TAFE
- Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue
- Western Sydney Local Health District
- Western Sydney Regional Illegal Dumping Squad
- WESTIR Limited
- Wollondilly Shire Council

About the WSROC region

Geography

The Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (WSROC) includes 10 Member Councils – Auburn, Bankstown, Blacktown, Blue Mountains, Fairfield, Hawkesbury, Holroyd, Liverpool, Parramatta and Penrith – spanning an area of approximately 5,400 square kilometres west of the Sydney CBD.

The WSROC region covers the full spectrum of built and natural environments from high-density metropolises to suburban neighbourhoods and untouched wilderness areas.

Land uses are equally varied including residential, rural, industrial, agricultural, commercial, institutional and military.

Central to Australia's past and future, Western Sydney is home to some of our nation's most significant historic landmarks, while flourishing growth regions to the north and south-west pave the way for the communities of the future.

The WSROC region boasts an abundance of natural assets including: the Blue Mountains World Heritage Area; ecologically endangered communities such as Cumberland Plain Woodland; Hawkesbury-Nepean, Georges and Parramatta Rivers; Prospect Reservoir and the Western Sydney Parklands – a 27 kilometre green corridor linking the North West Growth Centre at Blacktown with the South West Growth Centre at Liverpool.

The region also covers numerous major recreation sites such as the Sydney Motorsport Park, Wet'n'Wild, Olympic Park, ANZ Stadium, the Sydney International Equestrian, Shooting and Regatta Centres, Blacktown Olympic Park and the Sydney Superdome and Aquatic Centre.

The Blacktown local government area has the largest population, with 301,000 persons at the last census in 2011, representing 18 per cent of WSROC's population. Hawkesbury City has the smallest population with 62,000 residents.

In contrast, Hawkesbury covers the largest land area with 2,800 square kilometres, while Auburn covers the smallest at 32 square kilometres.



The Blue Mountains.



Parramatta City.

Our population

History

The WSROC region is the traditional land of the Bidjigal, Cabrogal, Dharug, Darkinjung, Eora, Gundungura and Gweagal people. The first European settlers arrived in 1788, yet the area grew slowly until the construction of railways in the late 1800 and early 1900s. Large scale suburban development occurred in the 1950s and 60s, aided by post-war immigration and industrial growth. Western Sydney continues to provide the majority of Sydney's new housing developments.

The combined population of the WSROC council areas is over 1.6 million, 37.7 per cent of whom were born overseas. WSROC's population is expected to increase to over 2 million in the next 20 years⁶.

Current trends indicate that around 70 per cent of this population increase will be due to the combined effects of birth rates and an ageing population. A further 30 per cent will be due to immigration.

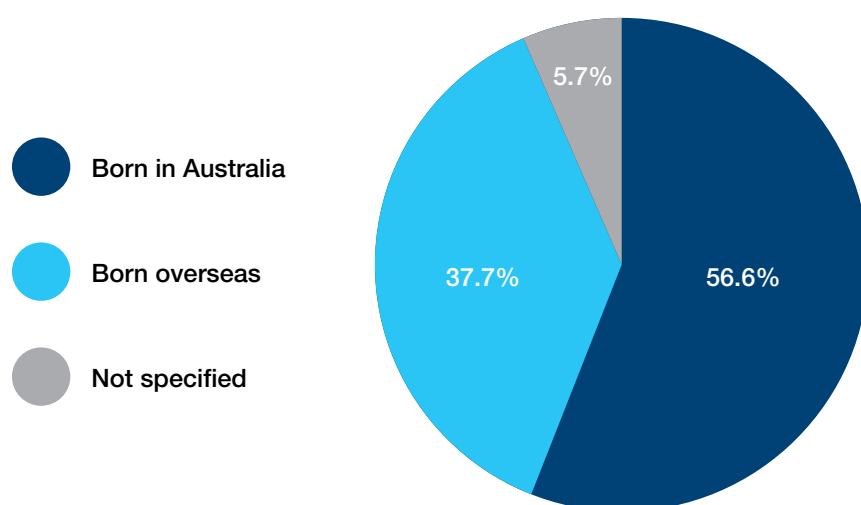


Population snapshot – a multicultural community

- Western Sydney residents speak over 130 different languages;
- 37.7 per cent were born overseas (12 per cent higher than the NSW average). Figures in some LGAs are much higher – around 56.9 per cent in Auburn, 63.3 per cent in Parramatta, 43.1 per cent in Holroyd and 37.6 per cent in Blacktown⁷;
- 8.5 per cent of our residents do not speak English well⁸;
- 60 per cent of new immigrants to Australia settle in Western Sydney;
- Between 2006 and 2011 the greatest increase in immigration has been from India (>22,000), closely followed by China (8,252) and Iraq (8,214)⁹;
- All WSROC LGAs include areas of high SEIFA¹⁰ disadvantage, however when considered as a whole LGA, Auburn, Bankstown, Blacktown, Fairfield, Holroyd, and Liverpool have below average SEIFA scores on the index of disadvantage¹¹;
- There is a significant Indigenous community – about 23,181 people, dominated by a younger age group – 43 per cent are under 18 compared to 25 per cent of the general population. Conversely only four per cent of the Indigenous population is over 65, while 11 per cent of the general population reaches this age group¹².

Residents by country of birth

Percentage of residents born in Australia



Top ten overseas birth places by rank

| Country of birth | Number | Percentage of WSROC population | Percentage of Greater Sydney |
|----------------------------------|-----------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Vietnam | 52,163 | 3.5 | 1.6 |
| India | 47,806 | 3.2 | 2.0 |
| China | 37,643 | 2.5 | 3.4 |
| United Kingdom | 36,603 | 2.4 | 4.1 |
| Philippines | 36,098 | 2.4 | 1.4 |
| Lebanon | 347,436 | 2.3 | 1.3 |
| Iraq | 26,222 | 1.7 | 0.7 |
| New Zealand | 25,866 | 1.7 | 1.9 |
| Fiji | 19,734 | 1.3 | 0.7 |
| Italy | 13,980 | 0.9 | 1.1 |
| Non-English speaking backgrounds | 494,423 | 32.8 | 26.3 |
| Main English speaking countries | 74,561 | 4.9 | 7.9 |
| Total overseas born | 568,984 | 37.7 | 34.2 |
| Australia | 853,496 | 56.6 | 59.9 |
| Not stated | 85,395 | 5.7 | 5.9 |
| TOTAL | 1,507,875 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

Source: Profile.id. Australian Census data 2011.

Economy



The Western Sydney economy is worth around \$85 billion a year – making it the third largest economy in Australia after the Sydney CBD and Melbourne. Manufacturing is the primary sector, accounting for 78,163 jobs. This sector is in decline however, and the emergence of new industries is apparent across much of the region.

Our resident labour force

- 426,366 residents (61.8 per cent) employed full time.
- 197,816 residents (28.5 per cent) employed part time.
- 48,994 residents (7 per cent) unemployed.

Travel to work

- 193,762 (29.9 per cent of employed people) travel outside the region for work.
- 358,809 (55.5 per cent) workers who live in Western Sydney also work in the region.
- 139,827 people travel from elsewhere to work in the region (accounting for 28 per cent of WSROC jobs).
- 419,500 (64.9 per cent) workers who live in the WSROC region travel outside their local government area (LGA) for work.

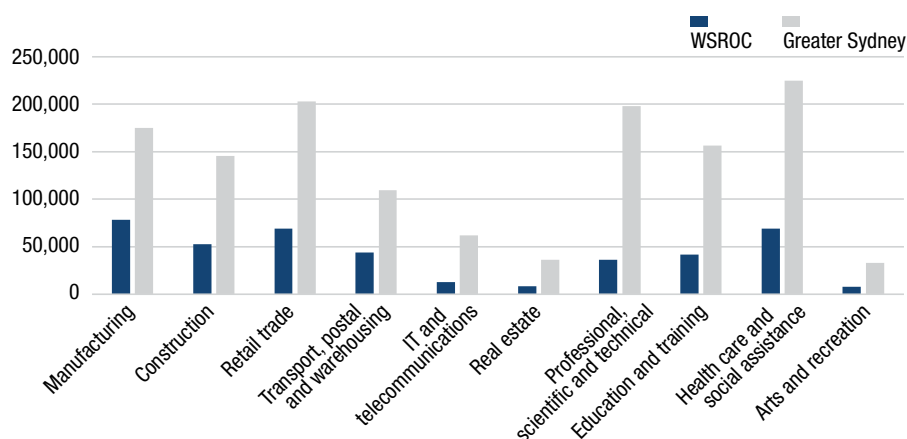
Industry in the WSROC region

A snapshot of industries located in the WSROC region include:

- 7,000 manufacturing businesses employing 78,163 people;
- 9,000 retailers employing 69,160 people;
- 26,000 construction business employing 52,629 people;
- 9,378 services sector businesses employing 46,186 people;
- 14,000 transport and storage operators employing 43,708 people;
- 3,873 hospitality businesses employing 38,018 people;
- 11,000 professional scientific and technical service businesses employing 36,289 people;
- 5,845 finance and insurance businesses employing 33,133 people; and
- 709 communications services businesses employing 12,538 people.

Source: Profile.id. Australian Census data 2011.

Employment by industry



WSROC staff



Karin Bishop
Chief Executive Officer
July 2014 – May 2015



Nic Pasternatsky
Acting CEO
May 2015 – July 2015
Procurement Manager



Judith Bruinsma
Deputy CEO /
Project Director



Shina Khan
Office Manager



Kelly-Anne Gee
Media and
Communications Officer



Michelle Playford
Project Manager
Light Years Ahead



Nicole Miller
Media and
Communications Officer
Light Years Ahead



Amanda Bombaci
Regional Waste Coordinaor
(Team Leader)



Guada Lado
Regional Waste
Coordinator



Wendy Xing
Regional Waste
Coordinator

Notes

1. 20 years is the approximate life-span of the new lights.
2. WSROC. (2014). Western Sydney Regional Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Strategy 2014 – 2017. Available from: <http://www.wsroc.com.au/finish/3-reports/199-western-sydney-regional-waste-avoidance-and-resource-recovery-strategy-2014-2017/0>
2. The Betty Awards are run by the Asbestos Education Committee (AEC) in partnership with the Asbestos Diseases Research Institute (ADRI). They recognise individuals and organisations who have made a significant contribution towards community education during national Asbestos Awareness Month.
4. Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal. http://www.ipart.nsw.gov.au/Home/Industries/Local_Govt/Fit_for_the_Future
5. Macarthur Regional Organisation of Councils (MACROC) consists of Camden, Campbelltown and Wollondilly Shire Councils.
6. Statistics of WSROC council areas. Available from: profile.id.com.au
7. Australian Census 2011 data via Profile.ID. (n.d.). WSROC Region: Proficiency in English. Available from: <http://profile.id.com.au/wsroc/speaks-english>
8. Australian Census 2011 data via Profile.ID. (n.d.). WSROC Region: Birthplace. Available from: <http://profile.id.com.au/wsroc/birthplace>
9. Australian Census 2011 data via Profile.ID. (n.d.). WSROC Region: Birthplace. Available from: <http://profile.id.com.au/wsroc/birthplace>
10. SEIFA stands for socio-economic index for areas. It was developed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics to rank areas according to relative disadvantage.
11. Australian Census 2011 data via Profile.ID. (n.d.). SEIFA – disadvantage. Available from: <http://profile.id.com.au/penrith/seifa-disadvantage?SeifaKey=40002>
12. Office of Communities: Aboriginal Affairs NSW. (2013, October). Community Portrait Western Sydney. NSW Government. Available from: <http://aboriginalaffairs.nsw.gov.au/wpcontent/uploads/2013/05/131016-Community-Portrait-Western-Sydney.pdf>



Auburn – Bankstown – Blacktown – Blue Mountains – Fairfield – Hawkesbury – Holroyd – Liverpool – Parramatta – Penrith