



Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils

ANNUAL 2015- 2016 REPORT



ABOUT WSROC

Advocating for the people of Western Sydney

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

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

WSROC's ongoing commitment to the region is demonstrated by its joint procurement programs, co-funded project work and shared community activities.



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



As President of WSROC, I am proud to represent one of the most vibrant regions in Australia.

On the edge of the nation's largest global city, Western Sydney is diverse, growing and hungry for opportunity – both economically and socially.

It is also a region where local government is leading the way on issues as diverse as transport planning, arts and cultural investment, liveable communities, sustainable technologies and tackling domestic violence.

As the collective voice of nine active and passionate local councils, Western Sydney's emerging prominence on state and federal agendas is both inspiring and challenging.

WSROC is constantly working with a range of regional stakeholders to form partnerships to achieve economic, social and environmental outcomes which benefit the whole community.

Even in a year of significant uncertainty for local government, WSROC has managed to deliver outstanding results for the region in the form of major infrastructure projects, cost savings and shared services, research, policy development and advocacy, as well as grass-roots community engagement programs.

I would like to thank our staff, members and partners for their tireless work over the past year. Without your collective efforts, WSROC couldn't have achieved as much as it has.

We have much to look forward to in the next 12 months, and I welcome all who wish to join us in building a stronger, more equitable Western Sydney.

Councillor Tony Hadchiti
WSROC President



REGIONAL WASTE STRATEGY

A growing population, increasing household waste generation, and rising landfill costs make a strategic approach to waste management essential in Western Sydney.

The Western Sydney Regional Waste Strategy delivers collaborative waste management that safe-guards community amenity, protects our environment, and delivers safe, cost-effective services to residents.

The Strategy was developed by 10 participating councils and funded by the NSW EPA in 2014. Over the past three years the program has successfully delivered \$2.9 million for Western Sydney initiatives.

Landfill space in Western Sydney is in short supply. A regional approach is essential to future-proof our region.

Building a sustainable region:

- ✓ Reduce waste to landfill
- ✓ Tackle litter and illegal dumping
- ✓ Identify infrastructure gaps
- ✓ Achieve greater efficiencies
- ✓ Support innovative technology
- ✓ Improve resource recovery
- ✓ Facilitate positive policy change



2015/16 highlights

 Better governance	 Regional advocacy	 Community engagement	 Better infrastructure
			
Facilitate regional networks for waste management, education and planning	Advise on structure and implementation of NSW Container Deposit Scheme	Deliver community food waste avoidance program Shop. Cook. Save.	Support six Community Recycling Centres (including NSW's first joint mobile solution)
Aggregate regional data sets, analyse trends and develop regional solutions	Advocate for better resource recovery planning controls in new developments	Deliver Western Sydney Residential Asbestos Disposal Scheme to residential homes	Assess waste and recycling infrastructure needs for Western Sydney to 2021
Develop a library of best practice case studies	Advise on future funding models for the NSW Waste Less Recycle More program	Research how councils can better facilitate reuse of household bulky waste	Develop Western Sydney's first ever Regional Litter Plan
Identify opportunities for joint contracts and collaboration	Meet with NSW Ministers to advocate for better waste outcomes for councils	Develop a Western Sydney Waste Education Action Plan	Establish a regional baseline for litter and illegal dumping

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

LIGHTING THE WAY

During 2015/16 WSROC carried out one of Australia's largest energy reduction projects in Western Sydney – Light Years Ahead (LYA).

Facilitated by funding from the Australian Government, nine Western Sydney councils worked in partnership with Endeavour Energy to replace 14,491 high emission 80W mercury vapour street lights with energy efficient LED lighting across 136 suburbs.

Street lighting accounts for around 55 per cent of Western Sydney councils' energy costs so the project offered clear benefits for council budgets, as well as the environment.



The investment

\$8 million total cost

\$5.2 million contributed by the Australian Government

\$2.8 million contributed by WSROC and nine participating councils



The savings

\$19.4 million in energy savings for the nine councils over 20 years*

4.4 million kWh per year energy reduction

77% reduction in electricity costs

91,000 tonnes estimated reduction in emissions over 20 years

Community engagement

In addition to an extensive infrastructure program, the Light Years Ahead team delivered a community engagement campaign, including 18 events, to promote energy-efficient practices in Western Sydney homes.

Over 80% of people surveyed about Light Years Ahead supported the program, believed it was important for Western Sydney and thought governments should be doing more of these sorts of initiatives.



Light Years Ahead's Project Manager with resident at the Hawkesbury Show.

- ✓ Delivered on time and on budget
- ✓ A coordinated regional approach
- ✓ Positive community response
- ✓ A model for future initiatives
- ✓ Exceeded the project target of changing 12,770 mercury vapour lights to LEDs

14,941
lights were changed



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

*The life of the light.

WORKING TOGETHER

Regional procurement

WSROC has continued with its strategic approach to regional procurement in 2015/16. Over the last 12 months, WSROC members have utilised a regional procurement model to better leverage WSROC's collective spending power on contracts including traffic management services and signage, office supplies, asphalt, fuel and electricity.

As a result, WSROC councils have been able to save in excess of \$3 million collectively on key procurement contracts in the last financial year.



Landing jobs for locals in need

Where possible, WSROC aims to work with local suppliers and pursue social procurement initiatives.

Soft Landing Mattress Recycling is a Western Sydney-based social enterprise that provides employment and training opportunities for people on the margin of our society, including people with disabilities.

Soft Landing offers great social outcomes for Western Sydney, but also supports councils' reuse and recycling efforts by diverting old mattresses from landfill.



Soft Landing team, based in Wetherill Park, Fairfield LGA.

Western Sydney Airport

Western Sydney Airport has the potential to be a game changer: attracting regional investment, boosting employment and enhancing local infrastructure. However, these benefits will mean little if protections for Western Sydney residents and the region's natural assets are not put in place.

In 2015, 11 Western Sydney councils united to jointly fund the only technical review of the Western Sydney Airport draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The review was managed by WSROC in consultation with MACROC and a steering committee of planners from participating councils, producing an extensive, multi-faceted analysis of the federal government's draft EIS.

Participating councils included: Auburn, Blacktown, Blue Mountains, Camden, Campbelltown, Fairfield, Holroyd, Liverpool, Parramatta, Penrith and Wollondilly.

Western Sydney business investment program

WSROC acknowledges the need for attracting new business and investment opportunities to the Western Sydney region. Together with four project partners and Western Sydney councils, this program aims to develop an overarching strategic framework for marketing the region to the domestic and international business community.

Our partners



Boosting economic growth and job opportunities by delivering:

- ✓ A Western Sydney investment marketing and resource pack;
- ✓ Businvest website that provides a one-stop-shop access to key and up-to-date information affecting Western Sydney for investors, industry and business; and
- ✓ Economic development team to provide a range of industry/business engagement services and supporting activities.

ADVOCACY

For more than 40 years WSROC has provided a strong collective voice for the people of Western Sydney on issues which are crucial to ensuring an economically vibrant and liveable region; one that provides good access to jobs, transport, education, housing, recreation, social services and natural environments.

From public advocacy to direct political lobbying, WSROC provides a platform through which key regional issues can be raised at the highest political levels.



WSROC President and CEO meeting with Minister for Planning, The Hon. Rob Stokes.



WSROC President, CEO and Project Coordinator meeting with Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation, The Hon. Victor Dominello.



WSROC CEO meeting with Minister for Environment, The Hon. Mark Speakman at the Sydney Environmental Educators forum.



During 2015/16, WSROC provided a number of opportunities for its members to engage directly with political leaders and key government decision makers including:

- ✓ Western Sydney mayoral round-table with NSW Premier The Hon. Mike Baird;
- ✓ Federal Minister for Major Projects regarding proposed Western Sydney Airport;
- ✓ Greater Sydney Commission regarding regional planning issues;
- ✓ NSW Minister for Tourism and Department of Industry regarding a dedicated approach to economic development in Western Sydney;
- ✓ NSW Minister for Planning regarding improved waste planning controls for new communities;
- ✓ NSW Minister for the Environment on the need for strategic action on urban heat;
- ✓ NSW EPA regarding the development of the NSW Container Deposit Scheme;
- ✓ NSW Health regarding needs for a multi-sector diabetes prevention strategy for Western Sydney; and
- ✓ NSW Minister for Multiculturalism regarding stronger engagement with diverse communities.

WSROC also made a number of submissions on behalf of its councils on topics including: the Western Sydney Airport draft EIS, proposed reforms to the NSW Biodiversity Conservation Bill, reforms to the NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, changes to the Emergency Services Property Levy and the Greater Sydney Commission.

FACILITATING REGIONAL DIALOGUE

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



Stronger regional dialogue



Information and resource sharing



Cross-council initiatives



Professional development

WSROC professional networks		
Open to Western Sydney council staff of a certain professional discipline, WSROC's current professional networks include:		
General managers	Environment and strategic planning	Human resources
Arts and cultural development	Environment and sustainability	Procurement
Communications and media	Community development	Waste planning
Economic development	Waste managers	Environmental educators



Professional development forums

Planning an Active Western Sydney Forum October 2015

A multidisciplinary forum that explored how urban planning can improve liveability, and by extension, better health outcomes for the region.

Participants: Over 90 participants from 14 Western Sydney councils, Premier's Council for Active Living (PCAL), NSW Health, NSW Department of Planning, Victoria Walks, Western Sydney Diabetes, WentWest, Western Sydney University, WSROC mayors and councillors.

Sydney Environmental Educators Forum February 2016

As convenor of the Western Sydney Environmental Educators Network (WSEEN), WSROC brought together environmental educators from across metro Sydney for a professional development forum that included a Q&A with Minister for the Environment, The Hon. Mark Speakman.

Participants: NSW Minister for the Environment, Australian Association for Environmental Educators; NSW Office of Environment and Heritage, NSW EPA, 70 environmental educators from councils across metro Sydney with presentations from behaviour change and social media experts.

Western Sydney Regional Transport Forum June 2016

Western Sydney's leading transport and planning professionals came together to explore Western Sydney's transport challenges and opportunities at the regional level.

Participants: Transport for NSW, COX Architecture, Parsons Brinkerhoff, Roads Australia, Keolis Downer, Western Sydney University, Western Sydney councils' transport professionals, WSROC mayors and general managers.



Work with us

WSROC welcomes an open dialogue with anyone wishing to work together for the betterment of Western Sydney.

Whether you are working at the regional level or would like to engage with Western Sydney councils through our professional networks, we invite you to get in touch.

For further information take a look at our website.

WSROC.com.au

You will find:

Projects

Research reports


Policy submissions

Joint procurement activities

Media releases and news

Helpful resources

Contact us

 02 9671 4333

 WSROC.com.au

 info@wsroc.com.au

 PO Box 63 Blacktown NSW 2148

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