



Waste Management Consultation and Communication **Policy Statement**

PREPARED BY THE



MUNICIPAL WASTE ADVISORY COUNCIL
"Getting the Environment Right"

December 2008

Status of this Policy Statement

This Policy Statement has been prepared by the Municipal Waste Advisory Council and adopted by the Western Australian Local Government Association. The Municipal Waste Advisory Council is a standing committee of the WA Local Government Association with delegated authority to represent the Association in all matters relating to solid waste management.

The Municipal Waste Advisory Council has been formed through collaboration with Regional Councils who are not ordinary members of the WA Local Government Association. The resulting body effectively represents the views of all Local Government bodies responsible for waste management in Western Australia.

Policy Statements adopted by the WA Local Government Association represent a consolidated viewpoint from local government and may differ from the positions adopted by individual member organisations. The Municipal Waste Advisory Council and the WA Local Government Association will strive to promote this Policy Statement and to act consistently with its contents. Individual Local Governments and Regional Councils are encouraged to support them in this but are not bound by the document.

Policy Statements adopted by the WA Local Government Association are reviewed and new Policy Statements are developed regularly. The latest WA Local Government Association Policy Statements can be obtained from the website: www.wastenet.net.au

In-line with standard MWAC policy, this policy statement will be reviewed 6-months after its endorsement by the State Council. It will be reviewed again at least every 2-years subsequent to this; with any significant developments acting to instigate an earlier review.

The Municipal Waste Advisory Council's member organisations are:

City of Geraldton-Greenough

East Metropolitan Regional Council

Mindarie Regional Council

Rivers Regional Council

Southern Metropolitan Regional Council

Western Australian Local Government Association

Western Metropolitan Regional Council

Policy Statement on Waste Management Consultation and Communication

Title:	WA Local Government Association Policy Statement on Waste Management Consultation and Communication – December 2008
Scope of Policy:	<p>This Policy Statement is intended to outline the Western Australian Local Government Association (the Association) position on the key principles, stakeholders and methods to ensure comprehensive Consultation and Communication with regard to waste management.</p> <p>It is intended that this Policy Statement should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the roles and responsibilities of the Association, which include; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identifying key principles on which to base Consultation and Communication with stakeholders; ○ Providing a list of primary and secondary stakeholders; ○ Providing commitments to stakeholders from the Association regarding Consultation and Communication on waste management issues; ○ Providing a clear set of test parameters for issues to determine the appropriate level of Consultation and Communication; ○ Identifying appropriate methods of Consultation and Communication for the Association; and • Clarify what other roles Local Government has in terms of Consultation and Communication. <p>This Policy Statement does not focus on individual Local Government engagement with its local community however, the key principles outlined in the Policy Statement are common to all communication/consultation processes.</p>
Background of Policy:	<p>The Association, as the peak body for Local Government, considers that the development of the Waste Management Consultation and Communication Policy Statement will highlight the importance of its strengthening commitment to improving the relationship between Local, State and Federal Government and the local community.</p> <p>The Association has developed this Policy Statement with reference to Local Governments twin roles as a representative of the community and as a service provider. Local Government must represent community values, since these are the fundamental basis for undertaking new challenges and continuing past work. Local Government must also apply its service provider expertise when considering means by which to achieve community benefits.</p> <p>State and Local Government have committed to the <i>Partnership Agreement on Communication and Consultation</i>, this Agreement outlines the benefits of partnering include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better decision making; • The achievement of mutual objectives;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitating the most effective use of State and Local Government resources; and Enabling the provision of a greater range and quality of services. <p>The Association acknowledges that a number of Local Governments have developed their own Community Engagement Policies to help guide them in the implementation of programs they undertake.</p>												
<p>Statement of Policy:</p>	<p>1. Principles of Consultation and Communication</p> <p>The Association has identified the following key principles on which to base Consultation and Communication with stakeholders, these include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Democratic – everyone has a right to input into issues and decisions that affect them; Transparency – the process will be open and transparent and aim to achieve clear outcomes; Equity – an equal opportunity to participate be given to all stakeholders; and Access – ensure that participants from all stakeholder groups can be involved. <p>Local Governments Consultation and Communication with local communities is an integral part of community engagement. Integration of the democratic, transparency, equity and access principles is needed to ensure equal access for all members of the community, including people for whom English is a second language, people with vision-impairment or people who are normally unable or unlikely to participate and to provide certainty of outcomes in Consultation and Communication.</p> <p>2. Key Stakeholders</p> <p>The Association recognises that the identification of stakeholders (Primary and Secondary) is imperative to the process of seeking input and expertise whenever undertaking Consultation and Communication.</p> <p>Primary stakeholders are those that are directly affected by the activities of the Association (including both internal and external stakeholders). Secondary stakeholders are those indirectly affected by the activities of the Association.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="391 1624 1503 1998"> <thead> <tr> <th>Primary Stakeholders</th> <th>Key methods of Communication and Consultation</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>MWAC Members (elected members and officers)</td> <td>Regular meetings, provision of agendas and minutes</td> </tr> <tr> <td>WALGA Policy Team and Internal Staff</td> <td>Regular meetings</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Regional Council Officers</td> <td>Through WALGA/MWAC members, WasteNet updates</td> </tr> <tr> <td>WA Local Governments Councillors</td> <td>LG News, information bulletin, WasteNet updates</td> </tr> <tr> <td>WA Local Governments Officers (CEO, Waste and Health Professionals)</td> <td>Information bulletin, direct email, ad hoc consultation, WasteNet updates</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Primary Stakeholders	Key methods of Communication and Consultation	MWAC Members (elected members and officers)	Regular meetings, provision of agendas and minutes	WALGA Policy Team and Internal Staff	Regular meetings	Regional Council Officers	Through WALGA/MWAC members, WasteNet updates	WA Local Governments Councillors	LG News, information bulletin, WasteNet updates	WA Local Governments Officers (CEO, Waste and Health Professionals)	Information bulletin, direct email, ad hoc consultation, WasteNet updates
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Forum of Regional Councils (FORC)	Through WALGA Executive Officer and MWAC members
WALGA Zones and Secretariats	State Council Agenda process
Secondary Stakeholders	Key methods of Communication and Consultation
State Government	Regular meetings, letters, newsletters
Minister for the Environment	Regular meetings, letters
Federal Minister for Environment	Meetings, letters
Federal Minister for Climate Change	Meetings, letters
Waste Authority	Meetings, letters
Waste Management Association Australia	Ongoing liaisons, letters
Interstate Waste Management Industry	Email, sporadic meetings
Local Communities	Media release, newsletters
Education Sector	Media release, newsletters
Media	Media release Via WALGA
3. Commitment to Stakeholders	
<p>The Western Australian Local Government Association is the peak organisation of Local Government in Western Australia. The Association has a strong commitment to Local Government regarding Consultation and Communication and aims to actively seek stakeholder input and expertise. The level of this commitment includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying Primary and Secondary stakeholders; • Keeping all stakeholders informed; • Utilising the most appropriate form of Consultation when seeking stakeholder input; • Ensuring the aims, scope and purposes of any Consultation processes are clear; • Providing adequate and timely feedback on what stakeholder information was used from surveys or emails received; and • Documenting and evaluating Consultation and Communication processes. 	
4. Test Parameters for Major and Minor Issues	
<p>When an issue arises, the appropriate level of Consultation and Communication needs to be identified. The level of Consultation and Communication needed will depend on the significance of the issues, therefore a set of test parameters for issues has been developed. These parameters will assist in identifying whether an issue is of minor or major significance. When prioritising an issue, the following test parameters will be considered:</p>	
Major Issues	Minor Issues
Cause significant health, social or environmental impacts	Do not cause significant health, social or environmental impacts
Have long term, wide spread impact	Short term, localised impact
Cause significant community concern	Are not a major concern for the community

	Severely impact on Local Governments ability to provide a service	Do not impact on Local Government service provision															
	Affect most or all Local Governments'	Low number of Local Governments' affected															
	Significant financial impact on Local Government	Insignificant financial impact on Local Government															
	Relates to a significant proportion of the waste stream	Only localised impact on waste stream															
	Requires State or Federal Government involvement	Does not require State or Federal Government involvement															
	Requires involvement of primary stakeholders	Only requires involvement of secondary stakeholders															
	<p>5. Methods of Consultation</p> <p>WALGA recognises that regular Consultation with stakeholders is vital to ensure important issues are identified and addressed appropriately. Depending upon the depth of feedback and the complexity of responses required, Consultation with stakeholders may occur in different ways.</p> <p>The Consultation Matrix provides a tool for assessing the appropriate method of Consultation, based on whether the issue is major or minor and the level of complexity of the issue (and response required).</p> <p>Consultation Matrix</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">← Level of complexity and detail required →</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">Low High</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="2" style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Significance of issue</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Major ↑</td> <td>Surveys (web, email, fax back) Telephone polls/conversations Conferences</td> <td>Workshops and seminars Focus groups Regional meetings Face to face consultation Conferences</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">↓ Minor</td> <td>Online forums Mail outs and direct emails</td> <td>Mail outs and direct emails Telephone conversation</td> </tr> </table>				← Level of complexity and detail required →				Low High		Significance of issue	Major ↑	Surveys (web, email, fax back) Telephone polls/conversations Conferences	Workshops and seminars Focus groups Regional meetings Face to face consultation Conferences	↓ Minor	Online forums Mail outs and direct emails	Mail outs and direct emails Telephone conversation
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	<p>6. Methods of Communication</p> <p>Communication with stakeholders will take place on a regular basis. It may take several forms, depending on the type of information which needs to be conveyed and the target audience.</p> <p>The Methods of Communication will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular newsletters and information brochures – via email and/or mail out; • Minutes of meetings and annual reports; 																

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waste & Recycle Conference and Local Government Week; • Workshops, seminars and site visits; • Internal communications and media releases.
Date of Adoption:	December 2008
Associated Policies and Documents:	<p>WA Department of Local Government and Regional Development, WA Local Government Association and Local Government Managers Australia (2004) <i>Partnership Agreement on Communication and Consultation</i></p> <p>Policy Statement on Extended Producer Responsibility (June 2008)</p> <p>Policy Statement on Waste Management Education (December 2008)</p>
Definitions:	<p>Consultation: The act or procedure of consulting, a conference for discussion or the seeking of advice. A discussion aimed at ascertaining opinions or reaching an agreement.</p> <p>Communication: The exchange of information ideas or feelings between people by means of speaking or writing.</p> <p>Stakeholder: A person or group with a direct interest, involvement, or investment in something.</p> <p>Principles: A principle is the underlying part (or spirit) of the basis for an evolutionary normative or formative development, which is the object of subjective experience and/or interpretation Consultation and Communication.</p> <p>Reference: HarperCollins Publishers Australia Pty Ltd (2003) <i>Collins Australian Dictionary 5th Edition.</i></p>
	End of Policy Statement