



Walgett Shire Council

2013/2014 Annual Report





Mayor G.A (Bill) Murray

Foreword

I am pleased to present the 2013/2014 Annual Report to the community although with ongoing concern as the drought continues to severely impact all sectors of the Shire including council operations.

During 2013/2014 Council continued to focus on maintaining and improving road infrastructure with the remaining components of the flood damage program completed.

In addition to flood damage works, the Council undertook a number of significant capital works including the refurbishment of 1.82 kilometres of the Walgett levee. A total of 248,678 m² of resealing and 76.76 kilometres of shoulder grading work was undertaken on State Highways, two bridges on Brewon Road and box culvert on Merrywinebone Road near Burren Junction.

The Council adopted a proactive position with the Local Government Reform process and participated with Brewarrina and Bourke Councils in developing a response to the reform objective of increasing Local Government efficiency and co-ordination in the delivery of services to our respective communities. The Outback Shires Alliance was formed with Brewarrina and Bourke Shires to develop joint initiatives for resource sharing across the three Councils' operational areas. Discussions between the Engineering and Town Planning areas of each Council have been undertaken to commence the identification and development of areas that could be undertaken on a joint basis and provide improved operational outcomes.

Council continued to work with the community and other agencies through a range of community services initiatives and programs. Through its Youth Council, there has been consistent delivery of programs and activities culminating in Youth Week 2013. Council was a finalist in two categories and was announced winner in Best Small Council in NSW with the most outstanding Youth Week Program.

The Council continued to direct significant resources into its community service areas and is recognized as a leader and innovator of youth services in NSW. Council also participated and supported the multicultural community across a range of activities and programs. The Healthy Communities Initiative commenced a range of programs and activities directed at improving the health and well being of our community and these continue to be well received and supported by the community.

During the year, the Council continued to progress the establishment of a PCYC in Walgett and it is hoped that this project will commence in early 2015.

In closing, many challenges remain as the Council continues to engage with a range of stakeholders through the Local Government reform process to ensure that government driven outcomes which may disadvantage our Shire are not progressed without an opportunity for full participation and debate. The Council continues to progress its programs and activities under the IP&R framework and to develop long term financial plans to respond to its objectives and strategies.

I would also acknowledge the work of my fellow Councillors, General Manager Don Ramsland and Council Staff for their contribution to the outcomes achieved by Council in 2013/2014.

G.A (Bill) Murray
Mayor

Statutory Annual Report

Index

Your Council.....	4
Council Senior Management	5
Council Organisational Chart	6
Snapshot of Significant Achievements	7
Local Government Reform	8
Financial Information Attachment (A)	9
Principal Activities Delivery Program.....	10
Rates and Charges Written Off	11
Overseas Travel	12
Mayoral and Councillor Fees	13
Mayoral and Councillor Attendance	14
Contracts Awarded	15
Legal Proceedings	16
Private Works	17
Contributions	18
External Bodies	19
Controlling Interest in Companies	20
Joint Ventures	21
Equal Employment Opportunity	22
Employment of Senior Staff	23
State of the Environment Report	24
Statement in Compliance with Special Variations Approval Conditions	25
Companion Animals and Regulation	26
Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009	27
Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979	28
Condition of Public Works	29
Bushfire Hazard Reduction Programs	30
Tourism and Economic Development	31
Cultural and Linguistic Promotions	32
Human Resource Activities	34
Children's Services	35
Library Services	36
Health	37
Access and Equity	38
Category 1 Business Activities	39
Statement of expenses/revenue/assets for Category 1	40
Category 2 Business Activities	41
Implementation of Competitive Neutrality	42
Competitive Neutrality Pricing Requirements	43
Complaint Handling Mechanism for Competitive Neutrality	44
Summary of Competitive Neutrality Complaints	45
Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act	46

Your Council



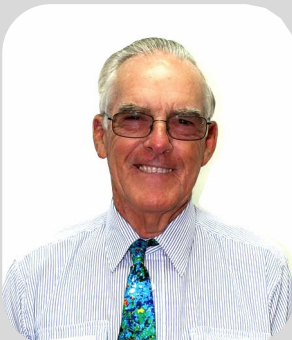
Mayor
Bill (Gustavus) Murray
WALGETT



Deputy Mayor
David Lane
LIGHTNING RIDGE



Councillor
Darryl Cooper
WALGETT



Councillor
Robert Greenaway
ROWENA



Councillor
Jane Keir
COME BY CHANCE



Councillor
Manuel Martinez
LIGHTNING RIDGE



Councillor
Michael Taylor
LIGHTNING RIDGE



Councillor
Ian Woodcock
LIGHTNING RIDGE



Councillor
Lawrence Walford
LIGHTNING RIDGE

Council Senior Management



General Manager
Don Ramsland



Director Corporate Services
Stephen Holland



Director Engineering Services
Raju Ranjit



Director Planning &
Regulatory Services
Matthew Goodwin



Acting Director Urban
Infrastructure Services
Prafulla KC



Council Organisational Chart

COMMUNITY, COUNCIL AND MAYOR

GENERAL MANAGER

Executive Assistant

PLANNING AND REGULATORY SERVICES

- Building Services
- Development Approvals
- Development Compliance
- State of Environment Report
- Onsite Wastewater Management
- Environment and Health Compliance
- Land Use and Environment Strategies
- Development Control Plans
- Local Environment Plans
- Section 149 Certificates
- GIS Management
- Animal Control

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

- Youth Services
- Property Register
- Childcare Services
- Financial Services
- Aboriginal Services
- Information Technology
- Swimming Pool Management Arrangements
- Budget and Management Plan
- Arts and Cultural Services
- Records Management
- Public Officer Services
- Legal Services
- Libraries

GENERAL MANAGER

- Mayoral Support
- Councillors Training and Support
- Council Business - Agenda and Action
- Inter Governmental Relations
- Inter Council Relations
- Community Relations
- Corporate Leadership and Direction
- Organisational Structure and Performance Management
- Corporate and Strategic Planning
- Policy and Delegates to External Bodies
- Economic Development
- Main Street Programs
- Human Resource Management
- Work Health & Safety
- Tourism and Visitor Information
- Emergency Services

URBAN INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES

- Water Services
- Waste Water Services
- Urban Stormwater Management
- Urban Streetscape and Cleansing
- Parks and Reserves Maintenance
- Bore Baths Maintenance and Management
- Urban Flood Mitigation including Levy Bank Solid Waste and Recycling Services including New Landfill Development
- Infrastructure Asset Register
- Reconstruction
- Airfields

RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND SUPPORT SERVICES

- Road and Bridge Construction
- Road and Bridge Maintenance
- Quarries and Construction Material Traffic Facilities
- Plant and Fleet Management
- New Depot Development
- Storage and Supply
- Workshop and Stores



Snapshot of Significant Achievements

- Refurbishment of the FL Moore Grandstand at the Walgett Showground and Racecourse
- Installation of the new shade sail at Walgett Swimming Pool
- Construction of Old Burren Creek box culvert on Merrywinebone Road
- Construction of Cumborah Hall commenced
- Construction of Big Baroka Bridge and Big Baroka Overflow Bridge
- Continued partnership with Riverina Rescue, resulted in an increasing numbers of dogs and cats being rehomed
- Reconstruction and sealing of 2km on Ridge Road (RR426)
- Stage 3 of the Walgett Levee Rehabilitation work completed
- Walgett and Namoi Village water and sewerage supply upgrade work commenced
- Installation of a new sewer dump point in Harlequin Street, Lightning Ridge
- Commencement of new Water Supply System in Walgett
- Outdoor gym equipment installed in three towns across the Shire, under the Healthy Communities Initiative
- NSW Local Government Youth Week Award Winners
- Rural Residential Land Use Strategy commenced



Local Government Reform

Serious Local Government reform in NSW began with the Integrated Planning and Reform process which was introduced by legislation in 2009. This legislation, provided for Councils throughout NSW to prepare a ten year community strategic plan, a four year works programme and an annual operational plan. These documents were underpinned by a long term (ten year) financial plan, a ten year asset management plan and a four year workforce plan.

In August, 2011, the then Department of Local Government convened its Destination 2036 workshop in Dubbo. Arising from this workshop was the establishment of the Independent Local Government Review Panel (ILGRP) which conducted an extensive consultation process before preparing a final report containing sixty four recommendations in October, 2013 which were finally release for public comment in early 2014.

During the ILGRP consultation process as the result of apparent political intervention the Panel was tasked with undertaking a more detailed review of what were termed the “Western Rivers Councils” – the Shires of Bourke, Brewarrina, Central Darling and Walgett. Later, this focus was extended by the Panel to include Broken Hill City, the Shires of Cobar, Balranald and Wentworth as well as the Unincorporated Area.

Running parallel to this process has been the Local Government Acts Taskforce which was given the task of reviewing and updating the somewhat dated 1993 Local Government Act and subsidiary legislation.

As far back as October, 2011 Walgett Shire Council initiated discussions with the neighbouring shires of Bourke and Brewarrina and this process led to the formation of what was initially known the Barwon Darling Co-ordination Group but later became the Outback Shires Alliance (OAS) in response to issues raised by the ILGRP recommendations.

The entire local government reform process has now been embraced by the Office of Local Government’s “Fit for the Future” reform which provides for all councils in NSW to submit a case outlining how they believe they will be “Fit for the Future” by June, 2015. Eight western division Councils including Walgett Shire have been exempted from this process and will instead have to consider the establishment of some form of umbrella Western Regional Authority/Organisation/Initiative.

Council’s financial position was reviewed by T-Corp in 2012 when it was given an FSR rating of “moderate” but a long term outlook of “negative”. Council has been investigating how the T-Corp ratings are arrived at with a view to being able to improve its standing to one where it is able to substantiate its long term viability as a stand alone local government undertaking participating in an appropriate level of resource sharing with neighbouring councils.

Later this year and early in 2015 Council will be commencing an ongoing public consultation process with the whole of the Shire’s community aimed at keeping the community well informed as the reform process enters the next crucial stage of establishing a “western area initiative” which will obviously have far reaching impacts not only at a council level but an individual ratepayer level as well.



Financial Information

**Local Government Act Section
428 (4)(a)**

A copy of the Council's audited financial reports.

See attachment (A): Financial Statements



Principal Activities Delivery Program

**Local Government Act Section
428 (1)**

A report on the Council's actual performance of its Principal Activities during 2012/2013 against the Actions detailed in the Delivery Program.

See attachment (B): 2013/2014 Principal Activities Delivery Program



Rates and Charges Written Off

**Local Government (General)
Regulation 2005 Clause 132**

Rates and Charges written off by Walgett Shire Council during 2013/2014.

Description	Amount
Rates - Pension Rebates	
(S 356 Local Government Act 1993)	\$75,063.57
Rates - Donations	
(S 356 Local Government Act 1993)	\$15,520.85
Total	\$90,584.42



Overseas Travel

Local Government Act Section 428 (4)(b)

**Local Government (General)
Regulation 2005 Clause 217 (1)(a)**

Details (including the purpose) of overseas visits undertaken during the year by Councillors, Council Staff or other persons representing the Council (including visits sponsored by other organisations).

No overseas travel was undertaken during 2013/2014 by Councillors, Council Staff or persons representing Council.

Mayoral and Councillor Fees

Local Government (General) Regulation Clauses 217 (i)(a1)(i-viii)

A statement of the total amount of money expended during the year on Mayoral fees and Councillor fees, the Council policy on the provision of facilities for use by Councillors and the payment of Councillor's expenses, together with a statement of the total amount of money expended during the year on the provision of such facilities and the payment of such expenses for the 12 month period 1 July 2013 to 30 July 2014.

In addition it is necessary to provide separate details of the total cost of;

- Dedicated office equipment allocated to Councillors
- Telephone calls made by Councillors
- Attendance at conferences and seminars by Councillors
- Training of Councillors and provision of skill development
- Interstate visits by Councillors (including transport, accommodation and out of pocket expenses)
- Overseas visits by Councillors (including transport, accommodation and out of pocket expenses)
- Expenses of any spouse or partner who accompanied a Councillor
- Expenses involved in the provision of childcare for a Councillor or immediate family member

Councillor	Mayoral/Councillor Allowance	Office Expenses	Accommodation	Travel	Interstate Visits	Total for each Councillor
Clr Darryl Cooper	\$10,479.96	\$1,080.00	-	\$97.50	-	\$11,657.46
Clr Robert Greenaway	\$10,479.96	\$1,080.00	-	\$1,293.50	-	\$12,853.46
Clr Jane Keir	\$10,479.96	\$1,080.00	-	\$1,605.50	-	\$13,165.46
Clr David Lane <i>Deputy Mayor</i>	\$16,197.48	\$1,080.00	\$324.54	\$2,210.00	\$1,926.54	\$21,738.56
Clr Manuel Martinez	\$10,479.96	\$1,080.00	-	\$49.40	-	\$11,609.36
Clr Bill Murray <i>Mayor</i>	\$27,632.52	\$1,080.00	\$637.54	\$9,669.45	-	\$39,019.51
Clr Michael Taylor	\$10,479.96	\$1,080.00	-	\$715.00	-	\$12,274.96
Clr Lawrence Walford	\$10,479.96	\$1,080.00	-	-	-	\$11,559.96
Clr Ian Woodcock	\$10,479.96	\$1,080.00	\$480.00	\$2,715.00	-	\$14,754.96
Total for each Category	\$117,189.72	\$9,720.00	\$1,442.08	\$18,355.35	\$1,926.54	



Mayoral and Councillor Attendance

Council meetings are predominately held in Walgett with one meeting each year held in Lightning Ridge, Collarenebri, Carinda, Rowena and Burren Junction. A total of 11 ordinary meetings and 4 extra-ordinary meetings were held in 2013/2014.

Councillors also attended committee meetings of which they are a member with Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillor Woodcock also attending conferences.

The Mayor is an ex-officio member of all committees.

Councillor	Ordinary Council Meetings	Extra-Ordinary Council Meetings	Conferences	Committee Meetings
<i>Clr Darryl Cooper</i>	10	4	-	4
<i>Clr Robert Greenaway</i>	11	2	-	4
<i>Clr Jane Keir</i>	10	4	-	5
<i>Clr David Lane</i> <i>Deputy Mayor</i>	10	3	1	1
<i>Clr Manuel Martinez</i>	8	3	-	5
<i>Clr Bill Murray</i> <i>Mayor</i>	11	4	1	2
<i>Clr Michael Taylor</i>	9	2	-	2
<i>Clr Lawrence Walford</i>	8	3	-	1
<i>Clr Ian Woodcock</i>	8	4	1	5

Contracts Awarded

Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 Clause 132

Details of each contract awarded by the Council during 2013/2014 (whether as a result of a tender or otherwise), other than;

- a. Employment contracts (that is, contracts of service but not contracts for service), and*
- b. Contracts for less than \$150,000.00 or such other amount as may be prescribed by the regulations for the period 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014*

Included is the name of the contractor, the nature of the goods or services supplied by the contractor and the total amount payable to the contractor.

Name of Contractor	Goods/Services	Contract Amount Awarded	Amount Paid in 2013/14
D & G Lane Earthmoving	Operation of Lightning Ridge Waste Management Centre	\$179,289.90	\$179,289.90
D & G Lane Earthmoving	Operation of Walgett Waste Management Centre	\$185,440.50	\$185,440.50
Batterline Earthmoving	Stage 3 Levee Bank Upgrade	\$870,007.00	\$885,407.00
Watertreatment Australia	Walgett Water Supply Design and Construction of Water Treatment Plant	\$3,668,797.91	\$2,267,882.47
Milbant Constructions	Walgett Water Supply and Sewerage Upgrade Construction of Namoi Village Sewer & Water supply pipelines	\$2,449,195.97	\$2,181,948.70
Kerroc Constructions Pty Ltd	Walgett Sewerage Augmentation Upgrade of Sewerage Treatment Plant	\$200,100.00	\$200,100.00
Deniliquin Irrigation Pty Ltd	Old Burren Creek, Box Culvert, Merrywinebone Road	\$595,027.00	\$553,955.15
Mathew Civil & Asphalt	Construction of 2 timber Bridges Big Baroka - Brewon Road	\$584,500.00	\$561,171.30
Mathew Civil & Asphalt	Construction of Overflow Box Culvert - Brewon Road	\$307,976.00	\$273,267.50



Legal Proceedings

Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 Clause 217 (1)(a3)

A summary of the amount by the Council during 2013/2014 in relation to legal proceedings taken by or against the Council (including amounts, costs and expenses paid or received by way of court settlements, other than those the terms of which are not to be disclosed) and a summary of the state of progress of each legal proceeding (if it has been finalized) the result, for the 12 monthly period 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014.

Council incurred \$37,911.14 in legal costs in 2013/2014, comprising \$21,988.70 for rates collection which is recoverable as a charge on the rateable property. The balance of \$15,922.44 involved general legal costs for such matters as contract preparation.



Private Works

Local Government Act Section 67(3) Local Government (General) Regulation Clause 217 (1)(a4)

Details of a summary of resolutions made during 2013/2014 under Section 67 concerning work carried out on private land and details or summary of such works if the cost of the work has been fully or partly subsidised by the Council, together with a statement of the total amount by which the Council has subsidised any such work during 2013/2014.

Council received \$330,008.00 for private works carried out in 2013/2014, with an expenditure of \$49,669.00*

** The balance was expended in July 2014 following the completion of the private works.*

Contributions

Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 Clause 217 (1)(a5)

The total amount contributed or otherwise granted under Section 356.

Council contributed a total of \$568,532.85 under Section 356 of the Local Government Act 1993. The expenditure is listed in the table below;

Organisation	Donation
<i>Glengarry Grawin Sheepyards Miners Association</i>	\$25,500.00
<i>Burren Junction Pool</i>	\$40,000.00
<i>Lightning Ridge Pool Complex</i>	\$350,000.00
<i>Lightning Ridge Jewellery Design Award</i>	\$3,500.00
<i>Lightning Ridge Visitor Information Centre</i>	\$121,012.00
<i>Fees & Charges Rebates, Local Churches</i>	\$15,520.85
<i>Barwon Group CWA Medical Scholarship Scheme</i>	\$3,000.00
<i>Clr Geoffrey 'Dick' Colless Scholarship</i>	\$10,000.00
Total	\$568,532.85

Council also contributed a further \$11,311.70 of grants under its Community Assistance Scheme to another 12 organisations listed below;

Organisation	Donation
<i>Carinda and District Race Club</i>	\$2,800.00
<i>Walgett Little Athletics</i>	\$1,000.00
<i>Barwon District Anglican Church</i>	\$1,000.00
<i>Lightning Ridge Junior Rugby League</i>	\$500.00
<i>Lightning Ridge IBC</i>	\$500.00
<i>Lightning Ridge Community Radio</i>	\$500.00
<i>Isolated Children's Parents Association</i>	\$500.00
<i>Walgett Men's Shed</i>	\$1,000.00
<i>Country Women's Association</i>	\$500.00
Other Donations	
<i>Carinda Public School</i>	\$422.73
<i>Country Women's Association</i>	\$500.00
<i>Aquawest</i>	\$1,042.02
<i>Materials Reimbursement</i>	\$546.95
<i>Walgett Sporting Club Thorne Memorial Bowls Event</i>	\$500.00
Total	\$11,311.70



External Bodies

Local Government (General) Regulation Clause 217 (1)(a6)

A statement of all external bodies (such as County Councils) that during 2013/2014 exercised functions delegated by the Council.

Castlereagh Macquarie County Council has been delegated the responsibility for the management of noxious weeds within the Walgett Shire Council Local Government Area. Walgett Shire Council contributed \$94,000.00 (ex GST) to the County Council for its services.



Controlling Interest In Companies

**Local Government (General)
Regulation 2005 Clause 217 (1)(a7)**

A statement of all companies in which the Council (whether alone or in conjunction with other Councils) held a controlling interest during 2013/2014.

Walgett Shire Council held no controlling interest in any company during 2013/2014.



Joint Ventures

Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 Clause 217 (1)(a8)

A statement of all corporations partnerships, trusts, joint ventures, syndicates or other bodies to which the Council participated during 2013/2014.

Council was involved in the following joint ventures:

- North West Slopes and Plains Cooperative Library Service
- Statewide Mutual Insurance Group
- Northwest Weight of Loads Group
- Rural Fire Service NSW
- Orana Regional Organisation of Councils (OROC)
- Namoi Local Government Group (NLGG)
- Hunter Councils Inc. – Regional Procurement Initiative
- Western Division and “C” Division of NSW Shire Association
- Netwaste
- Outback Shires Alliance
- Castlereagh Macquarie County Council
- Walgett Local Emergency Management Committee



Equal Employment Opportunity

Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 Clause 217 (1)(a9)

A statement of the activities undertaken by the Council during 2013/2014 to implement its Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan.

Activities undertaken during the period 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014 to ensure Council continues to apply the principles of Equal Employment Opportunity legislation;

- Continual review of Job Descriptions, Policies and Induction programs
- Monitoring of advertisements and selection criteria by General Manager to ensure advertising is non-discriminatory
- Continued development of School to Work Programs to assist student transition into the workforce
- Provide assistance to employees and supervisors regarding EEO issues and grievances through Council's Human Resources Manager
- Continuation of Council's Employee Assistance Program through Converge International
- Engagement of professionals to provide counselling, support and/or mediation to staff if required
- Creation of apprentice and trainee opportunities to provide career paths in Local Government.



Employment of Senior Staff

**Local Government (General)
Regulation Clause 217 (b)
Clause 217 (1)(b)(i-iv)
Clause 217 (1)(c)
And Clause 217 (1)(c)(i-iv)**

A statement of the number of Senior Staff employed by the Council during 2013/2014, together with a statement of the total amount of money payable in respect of the employment of Senior Staff, including money payable for salary, for the provision of fringe benefits and for all other on-costs connected with their employment.

Council employs three (3) senior staff as defined under the requirements of the Local Government Act with these being the General Manager, the Director Corporate Services and the Director Engineering Services.

The total amount spent on employing these senior staff was \$551,965.68 This amount includes salaries, fringe benefits tax, private use of a Council vehicle and employer's superannuation contributions.

Senior staff positions and salary;

Position	Employment Cost
<i>General Manager</i>	\$203,975.27
<i>Director Corporate Services</i>	\$173,703.31
<i>Director Engineering Services</i>	\$174,287.10



State of the Environment Report

Local Government Act Section 428A (1)

State of the Environment Report

The Local Government Act 1993 (sub-section 428A(1)) requires the annual report of Council to include a “State Environment Report” (SOE) in the year of an ordinary election. The last Council election was in September 2012, hence SOE report was prepared for 2012-2013. The next SOE report is required after Council election, currently scheduled for September 2016.

A report as to the State of the Environment in the area, and in particular in relation to the following environment sectors;

- (i) Land
- (ii) Air
- (iii) Water
- (iv) Biodiversity
- (v) Waste
- (vi) Noise
- (vii) Aboriginal Heritage
- (viii) Non-Aboriginal Heritage

With particular reference, with regard to each such environmental sector to;

- (ix) Management plans relating to the environment
- (x) Speed Council projects relating to the environment
- (xi) The environment impact of Council activities

See attachment (C): 2013/2014 State of the Environment Report



Statement of Compliance

with Special Variations Approved Conditions

**Local Government Act Section
508 (2) and Section 508A**

No applications for Special Rate Variations were made by Walgett Shire Council for the 2013/2014 financial year.

An application was made for a Special Rate Variation of 3% to be effective from 1 July 2013. Additional revenue from the Special Rate Variation will be allocated to funding Council's proportion of a "Betterment" program for road improvements.



Companion Animals and Regulation

Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 Clause 217 (1)(f) And Companion Animal Guidelines

Statement on activities relating to enforcing and ensuring compliance with the Companion Animals Act and Regulations (including information on pound data, data relating to dog attached, funding spent on companion animal management and activities, community education programs, strategies to promote the de-sexing of dogs and cats, strategies to comply with Section 64 to seek alternatives to euthanasia for unclaimed animals, off leash areas provided by Council area and detailed financial information on the use of companion animals fund money).

Companion Animals Act and Regulation

Council lodges an annual return with the Department of Local Government which shows the numbers of impounded companion animals. Key aspects of this year's return include:

- 164 dogs and 77 cats were seized
- 91 dogs and 0 cats were surrendered
- 35 dogs were released to their owners and 187 were re-homed
- 16 dogs and 75 cats were euthanased

Council spent \$138,051.00 on companion animal management related activities during 2013-2014, including the employment of a Regulatory Officer. Council participated in the RSPCA Companion Animal Welfare Scheme (CAWS) again, which was very well received and attended. The scheme includes a de-sexing and micro-chipping program for dogs.

The vast majority of companion animals surrendered to, or seized by, Council were rehomed by volunteers from Riverina Rescue who undertook regular visits to the Walgett pound to retrieve and re-home unclaimed dogs.

Council did not access any money from the Companion Animals Fund during the period.



Government Information

Public Access Act 2009

Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 S125 (1)

Authorised proactive release of Government Information.

An agency must, at intervals of not more than 12 months, review its program for the release of Government Information to identify the kinds of Government Information held by the agency that should in the public interest be made publicly available without imposing unreasonable additional costs on the agency.

Walgett Shire Council's program for proactive release of information involves;

- Progression of the systems and mechanisms utilised by the organisation to increase the effective access by members of the public to information that they have a right to view, download or copy (where applicable)
- Working towards ensuring all government information is available to the public on the Council website
- Ensuring that if information is not available on the Council website that it may be accessed by other means
- Reviewing the types of information requested via Formal Access applications and via customer contact with Council's Customer Service Centre and deciding if the information should be made readily available to all members of the public.

For the period 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014, Council received a total of 3 Formal Applications of which two were granted access in full and one was refused.



Environment Planning and Assessment Act 1979

Planning agreements under the Environmental Planning Assessment Act 1979

Details of compliance with and effect of planning agreements in force during the year.

No planning agreements were entered into by Council during the 2013/2014.



Condition of Public Works

A report on the condition of public works (including public buildings, public roads and water, sewerage and drainage works) under the control of the Council as at the end of 2013/2014 together with;

- a. An estimate (at current values) of the amount of money required to bring the works up to a satisfactory standard*
- b. An estimate (at current values) of the annual expense of maintaining the works at that standard and*
- c. The Council's program of maintenance for that year in respect of the works.*

Public Buildings

Council owned or controlled buildings have not been fully assessed in relation to the funding required to bring them up to a satisfactory standard. Comprehensive building condition reports are being prepared for each building/facility in 2013/2014.

Public Roads

Council maintains a network of 2420km local and regional roads, which are made up of regional (589km), local (1742km) and urban (89km) roads. There are 426.66km of classified roads, which Council maintains on behalf of the Roads and Maritime Services (RMS). The urban network consists of 25.70 km of footpath and 89km of sealed roads. The length of sealed and unsealed roads in the Shire is 372km and 1959km respectively. Council maintains 47 concrete bridges, 4 timber bridges, 9 box culverts and 1 pipe culvert.

Council's maintenance programme for 2013/2014 totalled \$1.806 million at an average cost of \$775.00 per kilometre.

The roads assets replacement value and written down value at 30 June 2014 was ;

Assets	Replacement Value	Written Down Value
Roads	\$71,593,761.00	\$37,997,662.00
Footpaths	\$4,649,965.00	\$507,953.00
Bridges and Culverts	\$38,066,267.00	\$20,980,140.00

The cost of improvement works estimated to bring the road assets to a satisfactory condition is \$21 million. Kerb and gutters are considered to be in a satisfactory condition and it is estimated that it will cost \$242,000.00 per annum to maintain the satisfactory condition.



Bushfire Hazard Reduction Program

A report on the bush fire hazard reduction activities of the Council during 2013/2014 that include activities carried out under the Bush Fire Management Plan approved under the Rural Fires Act 1997.

Bushfire hazard reduction programs

The Bush Fire Management Committee held two meetings during 2013/2014. At these meetings, Section 52 plan, land management and reports from various agencies were discussed.

The NSW Rural Fire Service provides up to \$35,000.00 to assist Council with road side vegetation management and hazard reduction through vegetation slashing.

In 2013/2014 a total of \$26,863.86 was expended in relation to Bushfire Hazard Reduction Programs with the reduced amount primarily resulting from reduced vegetation growth during the current drought conditions.

Hazard reduction works

2013/2014 Fire Hazard Reduction Works	
Location	Total
Burren Junction	\$2,268.30
Collarenebri	\$6,707.93
Carinda	\$6,847.50
Cumborah	\$1,204.50
Walgett	\$1,320.00
Shire Roads Slashing	\$8,515.65
Rural Fire Service Contribution	\$26,863.86



Tourism and Economic Development

Economic Development activities 2013/2014:

Markets

Quarterly markets held at Apex Park on 13th July 2013, 14th September 2013, 14th December 2013 and 15th March 2014 with a variety of stallholders from the surrounding region. The markets were well attended by locals.

Drought Relief Events

Hay delivery facilitated by The Daily Telegraph on 23rd February 2014, assistance provided by Walgett Shire Council. In excess of fifty farmers were allocated hay.

Assistance by Walgett Shire Council on a number of drought relief events and hay delivered throughout the Shire included: Drought Buster BBQ; Buy-a-Bale deliveries; Burrumbuttock/Lightning Ridge hay drive

Walgett Bulldust to Bitumen Festival 7-11 August

Events included: Art, Craft and Curio Exhibition; Historical Society Display - 100 year celebration of Old Council Chambers; Kids Day Out; Chickpea Cooking Competition; Waste to Art Competition; Photography Competition; High Tea; Wine with Words; Weaving Workshops; Cake Decorating Workshops; Cheese and Bread Workshops; Dinner Under the Stars; Big Day Out (including The Walgett Voice and Fun Run); Carp Fishing Competition

The Festival attracted approximately 700 people over the five days.

Welcome to the Community Events

Staged in Walgett, Collarenebri and Lightning Ridge during February/March 2014. These are scheduled to be an annual event.

Toyota Tour de OROC October 2013

Support was provided by Walgett Shire Council for the Mayoral bike ride around the Orana Region, with fundraising events staged in each town to raise funds for an Accommodation Unit at Dubbo Base Hospital. During the six day ride, approximately \$40,000.00 was raised, since a further grant of \$3.3 million has been awarded by the NSW state government.

In 2013/14 Tourism Activities

- Regular attendance at Destination Management meetings with the cluster of Walgett, Brewarrina, Bourke, Cobar and Bogan Shires, along with National Parks and Wildlife Service
- New 'Walgett Region' tourism products
- Advertising in The Wanderer (Campervan and Motorhome Club of Australia magazine), Go55s Seniors Newspaper and other neighbouring Shires' Visitor Guides (Balonne, QLD, and Narrabri)
- Active participation in the tourism promotional groups: Great Inland Way, Kamilaroi Highway and Macquarie Marshes
- Development of new Shire tourism brochure



Cultural and Linguistic Promotions

Details of programs undertaken by the Council during 2013/2014 to promote services and access for people with diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Council recognises that people from culturally diverse backgrounds may face issues in relation to access to services and participating in the wider community and is committed to providing equitable, accessible services, facilities and activities for the whole community.

Council recognises the significance of Cultural events in building and strengthening relationships with a diverse community incorporating people from CALD backgrounds. Council supported Harmony Day events in all communities during the year and supported services and programs targeting our CALD residents. Council was successful in a grant submission which will see a part time CALD/NESB support worker based in Lightning Ridge.

Council's Aboriginal Liaison Officer facilitated several community focused events and supported initiatives delivered by the community services team. Community Services played a lead role in the NAIDOC celebrations and recognition events throughout our Shire. Walgett Shire NAIDOC Week staged at three different communities were well attended and supported by the wider community.

International Women's Day and Harmony Day were significant events across communities and continue to get bigger and better each year. Council, through the Community services department liaise and consult with Aboriginal groups and representatives on a regular basis in the strengthening of relationships in building a better community for all.



*LEFT: Walgett Shire Councillor Lawrence Walford and NSW State Land Councillor Anne Dennis cut the cake at the NAIDOC week opening ceremony
RIGHT: Aged residents participating in exercise programs and healthy lifestyle activities through the Healthy Communities Initiative*



Human Resource Activities

A statement of the Human Resource activities undertaken by Council during 2013/2014.

The major human resource related activities undertaken within the Organisation during the 2013/2014 period included:

- Industrial and Employee Relations
- Recruitment, Selection and Induction
- School to Work and Traineeships
- Consultative Committee Administration
- Equal Employment Opportunity
- Training and Development Programs
- Salary Administration/Job Evaluation
- Work Health and Safety
- Workers Compensation, Injury Management and Rehabilitation

Workforce Health and Safety

The major Work Health and Safety related activities undertaken within the organisation between 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014 included:

- Manual handling in-house course developed and conducted
- Noise Policy Developed
- Developed an Induction training package
- Work Health and Safety Newsletter circulated to Council employees
- Conducted Fire Warden Training
- Conducted inspections at various Council owned and maintained properties
- Purchased tag and test equipment and commenced testing
- Identified, actioned and resolved various 'in-house' risks

Workers Compensation, Injury Management and Rehabilitation

The Work Health and Safety Officer and Rehabilitation Coordinator, in conjunction with the Human Resources Manager, provides advice, guidance and support to managers, supervisors and employees to help prevent injury or illness related to work activities. Where injury or illness did occur assistance was given to assist in a timely and safe return to pre-injury duties.

Appropriate controls were actioned to return injured employees to the workplace and to prevent further injury.

Where injury resulted in a claim for Workers Compensation the claims were proactively managed in line with Council's obligations under the legislation.

Medical providers contributed to the management of workplace injuries and illness through the provision of expert medical advice and, pre-employment health assessments.

Industrial Relations

Support and guidance was provided to managers, supervisors and employees during performance management, disciplinary and industrial matters to ensure procedural fairness and effective outcomes were achieved. Advice and guidance was provided to managers, supervisors and employees in regard to the Local Government (State) Award and legislation surrounding employment.

Health and Safety Committee

The Health and Safety Committee is representative of the broader workforce and considers issues relating to the Work Health and Safety Act 2011. The Committee met on (eight) 8 occasions during the 2013/2014 financial year.

Consultative Committee

The Consultative Committee is representative of the broader workforce and considers issues relating to the Local Government (State) Award 2010. The Committee met on three (3) occasions during the 2013/2014 financial year.

Recruitment, Selection and Induction

The turnover rate for the period 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014 was up by 22.75% using the 'all in approach'. Up by 8.25% per cent for the period 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014. Council continues to implement flexible working conditions, training and development opportunities, corporate uniform, salary packaging and subsidised housing rental to support the recruitment, retention and development of suitable staff.

Recruitment activity for the period 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014 totalled 23 replacement appointments. Council continues to recruit, develop and train employees engaged through the trainees and apprenticeship employment options retaining all positions. A further one (1) apprentice was recruited for the 2013/2014 financial year.

In managing recruitment, selection and induction processes, Council was cognizant of the application of fair and equitable processes and maintenance of the principles of merit and Equal Employment Opportunity.

School to Work Program

Walgett Shire Council continued the School to Work program in partnership with Walgett Community College, Collarenebri and Lightning Ridge High Schools. This program was introduced to assist students in choosing a career path within Local Government. Students are assigned to a 'buddy' to assist them whilst at work and are offered training and development to improve their skills. The program continues to grow with five (5) School to Work participants within the 2013/2014 financial year. This program is delivering pleasing results for the students, Council and the community with a number of participants gaining employment within the town on completion of the School to Work program and completing their education.

Training Programs

Council continues to encourage employees to participate in training and development. During the period 2013/2014 Council expended \$152,939.60 including outdoor staff wages costs on training, accommodation, travel and registration expenses. An additional amount of \$15,418.05 was expended on conference attendance and travel to assist staff to improve their skills and remain up to date with legislative requirements.

Children's Services

Details of programs undertaken by the Council during 2013/2014 to develop and promote services and programs that provide for the needs of children.

Council offers equal opportunity to all people within our Shire, to participate in achieving positive outcomes for the benefit of all our residents. Our community and youth development sections key objective is focused on building the capacity of our residents and maximizing opportunities for the community to improve their quality of life whilst embracing their own culture and social diversity. Council continued to demonstrate best practice regarding engagement and development of young people throughout our communities.

The Youth Council continues to play a vital role in offering our young people opportunities to have an effective voice that is supported by Council and the youth and community development team. Programs targeting positive engagement of young people, and outstanding outcomes from the Healthy Communities Initiative were highlights of a very rewarding year in the delivery of youth services.

Council's Youth Week Programs were, for the eighth consecutive year since 2007, nominated as top five finalists in three categories relating to NSW Youth Week. Walgett Shire was named winner of *Best Small Council - Most Outstanding Youth Week Program 2014*, demonstrating ongoing quality delivery of youth week programs and commitment to engaging young people.

Council's Youth Centres and Vacation Care services have aligned with the recently implemented National Quality Framework providing a National standard for delivery of services to young people. Each centre and service continue to record excellent participation and attendance numbers.

Council was successful in obtaining several grants for youth programs and the broader community and which support engagement, awareness and information programs across the Shire.

Services to Seniors included supporting Seniors Week events across the Shire. Positive engagement opportunities through the Healthy Communities Initiative included exercise equipment purchased for the Dementia Centre in Lightning Ridge.



LEFT: NSW Local Government awards - Youth Council Representative Brendan Sweeney, Healthy Communities Coordinator Amanda Cheal, Manager Community Development George McCormick and Youth Development Officer Janet Mason.

RIGHT: Walgett Shire 2013-2014 Youth Council Executive and Council representatives.



Library Services

Library service development and participation continued to grow with memberships and borrowing of collections increasing substantially. Library refurbishments have contributed to significant increase in families with young children visiting the libraries and the number of young people participating in activities enhanced programs for seniors have been well supported with the library continuing to be a well utilized resource for the wider community.

New technology has been introduced into our libraries with staff assisting with eBooks, iPad and iPhone. Libraries in our Shire offered varied and inclusive programs for all ages with workshops, exhibitions and upgrades of library resources.

Council is an active participant in the NSW and Regional Library service, working with other member Councils to provide a service that responds to the communities needs and interests.

Health



Healthy Communities Initiative

Council has completed the Walgett Shire Healthy Communities Initiative funded through the National Partnership Agreement on Preventive Health. The programs were recognised at a State level with the award of *Highly Commended* at the NSW Local Government Heart Foundation Awards event at Parliament house, Sydney.

The initiative has seen a number of positive outcomes achieved targeting the health and well being of our Shires residents. The installation of outdoor gym equipment in three (3) communities, support of services and implementation of sustainable programs and continue to support responses to the health needs of the whole community.

Programs under the Healthy Communities initiative included Community Events, Healthy Eating Options in Food Outlets, Group Challenge Activities, National Heart Foundation Walking, BEAT it, Heartmoves, Boot Camp, Market Gardens, Cooking Classes, Aqua Fitness, Strengthening Community Activity Options and 'On for Young and Old' Gala Day Sports Events.



Participants across the Shire engaged in the Cricket Gala Day in Walgett.



Access and Equity

A report on the Council's performance in relation to access and equity to meet residents needs outlined in Council's 2013/2014 Management Plan and undertaken by Council in 2013/2014.

Council recognises the importance to provide all residents with equal access and equity opportunities and activities that meet residents' needs and expectations. Council is committed to be recognised as a listening council and connected to its residents. Council meets these needs by;

- Consulting and communicating decisions effectively through Council's website, media releases and information flow to Precinct Committees and Community Working Parties
- Providing opportunities for the public to address agenda items at Council meetings
- Strengthening and maintaining the community's involvement in the delivery of services through a transparent process of networking and partnerships
- A consultation framework that promotes and values engagement with all community sectors
- Providing opportunities for residents to have input into programs and initiatives facilitated by the youth and community development team
- Ongoing audit and assessment of Council facilities
- Providing a newsletter to all residents, three (3) per year



Category 1 Business Activities

A list of the Category 1 Business activities of the Council.

Council's significant business activities are as follows:

- Category 1 (annual sales turnover \$2 million and above)

Walgett Shire Council does not have any Category 1 Business Activities.



Statement

Expenses • Revenue • Assets - Category 1

A statement of expenses, revenues and assets in relation to each Category 1 business activity.

Council does not have any Category 1 business activities.



Category 2 Business Activities

**Local Government (General)
Regulation 2005
Clause 217 (1)(d)(iii)**

A list of the Category 2 business activities of the Council.

The following business activities have been identified as Category 2 Businesses (annual sales turnover less than \$2 million):

- Council has two (2) business activities declared as Category 2 business activities with total annual operating revenue less than \$2 million. These businesses units are Walgett Shire Water Services and Walgett Shire Sewerage Services as contained Special Purpose Financial Report attached to this report.



Implementation of Competitive Neutrality

A summary of the progress of the Council in implementing the principals of Competitive Neutrality.

The disclosure requirements are reflected in Council's pricing and financial reporting systems and include taxation equivalents, Council subsidies, rate of return on investments in business units and dividends paid.



Competitive Neutrality Pricing Requirements

A statement as to whether the Competitive Neutrality requirements have or have not been applied to each Category 1 business activity of the Council.

Council does not have any Category 1 Business Activities.



Complaint Handling Mechanism for Competitive Neutrality

A statement regarding the establishment of a complaints handling mechanism for Competitive Neutrality complaints, and as to the manner in which the Council publicises and makes the mechanism known to the public.

Council has adopted a Complaints Management Policy which would also respond to complaints in relation to Competitive Neutrality.



Summary of Competitive Neutrality Complaints

A summary of Competitive Neutrality that have been made against the Council during the year (including details of the number of complaints received and the subject matter or nature of the complaints) and a statement as to the outcome of those complaints (including details as to the number of complaints disposed of during the year and the number still outstanding at the end of the year).

No complaints in relation to Competitive Neutrality have been made against the Council in 2013/2014.



Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act

The annual report of each public sector agency must include;

- a. A statement of the action taken by the agency in complying with the requirements of the Act;*
 - Council has adopted an Internal Reporting Policy under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1994. The Policy details the actions and processes for making a disclosure under this legislation
- b. Statistical details of any review conducted by or on behalf of the agency under Part 5;*
 - No reviews were undertaken by Council under Part 5 of the Act.