



# WALGETT SHIRE COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT



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# STATUTORY REPORT

## FINANCIAL REPORTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2008

Attached to this report is a copy of Council's audited General Purpose Financial Reports and Special Purpose Financial Reports for the year ended 30 June 2008. These reports are marked '**Appendix A**'.

## RATES AND CHARGES WRITTEN OFF DURING THE YEAR

Because Council has continued its intensive rates recovery processes the amount outstanding has decreased significantly. As a result, the Rates & Charges Outstanding percentage has declined from 15.97% in 2005 to 7.89% in 2008 where a percentage greater than 10% is an indicator of concern. The total amount of rates and charges written off for the period from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008 totaled \$176,776.61.

Of this amount \$91,721.44 came from Section 713 sales in May 2007 which were not finalised until after the beginning of this financial year.

The total legal fees written off for this period were \$16,455.37 and the total interest written off was \$47,329.51.

## STATEMENT OF PERFORMANCE

Attached to this report is the comparison of actual performance against projected performance of Council's principal activities measured in accordance with the Management Plan including statements of reasons for any identified differences. This report is marked '**Appendix B**'.

## EXTERNAL BODIES EXERCISING COUNCIL FUNCTIONS

Castlereagh Macquarie County Council have been delegated the responsibility for the management of noxious weeds within the Walgett Shire Local Government area.

## CONTROLLING INTERESTS IN COMPANIES

Council held no controlling interest in any company during 2007 – 2008.

## PARTNERSHIPS, CO-OPERATIVES AND JOINT VENTURES

- **Northern Regional Library** – The Northern Regional Library and Information Service is based in Moree and is administered by Moree Plains

Shire Council. It exists to provide an information and recreational resource to the residents of the Shires of Brewarrina, Moree Plains, Walgett and Gwydir. The annual contribution paid by Walgett Shire Council in 2007 – 2008 was \$128,216.

- **Statewide Mutual Insurance Group** – Members of this scheme join together to form a self insurance mutual. Members include Councils, the Local Government Association and the Shires Association. Its objective is to ensure protection of its members through stable premiums, cost containment and spread of risk.
- **Barwon Darling Alliance** – This alliance was born out of a desire of the Murdi Paaki Regional Council of ATSIC and the participating Shire Councils to address their common regional concerns regarding high unemployment and serious quality of life issues. The mission aim of the alliance is to combine its members' resources to support and maintain sustainable economic growth and employment in the region and to develop positively the social capital and the lifestyle and culture of its people. Walgett Shire Council's contribution for 2007-2008 was \$21,500.
- **Northwest Weight of Loads Group** – Moree Plains Shire Council administers this RTA and Council joint venture. The key challenges of this group include the prevention of overload vehicles, concentrated high volume harvest periods, seasonality, 24 hour 7 days per week operations, recovery of fine revenue and negative regulatory image.
- **Rural Fire Service NSW** – Walgett, Coonamble and Warren Shire Councils operate and manage the Rural Fire Districts as the North West Zone under the terms of a Service Level Agreement (SLA). In accordance with this SLA the councils have agreed to delegate certain functions, powers and duties to the Fire Control Officer. Walgett Shire Council contributed \$140,207.
- **Orana Regional Organisation of Councils (OROC)** – This partnership between a number of north west councils collaborate on matters of common interest including research, regional strategies, resource sharing, advocacy and brokering.
- **Namoi Local Government Group (NLGG)** – The area of operation is within the Namoi

Hydrological Catchment and its mission is to facilitate effective management of natural resources using a collaborative approach between local government and the Namoi CMA within the hydrological catchment of the Namoi River.

- **Hunter Councils Inc – Regional Procurement Initiative** – This initiative has been established in response to a need for a collaborative approach to regional tendering and contracting.

## BUSINESS ACTIVITIES

Council does not have any *Category 1* business activities. Council has two (2) business activities declared as *Category 2* business activities with total annual operating revenue less than \$2 million. These business units are Walgett Shire Water Supplies and Walgett Shire Sewerage Services as contained in Special Purpose Financial Reports marked '**Appendix A**'.

## 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.

Council handles competitive neutrality complaints by way of Complaints received. No complaints have been received for the 2007 – 2008 period.

## STATE OF ENVIRONMENT REPORT

Council's State of the Environment Report is being compiled on a regional basis by a consultant. A separate report will be presented.

## REPORT ON THE CONDITION OF PUBLIC WORKS

Attached to this report is the Condition of Public Works as at 30 June 2008. This report is marked '**Appendix C**'.

## SUMMARY OF LEGAL PROCEEDINGS

Council incurred no costs as there were no legal proceedings in 2007-2008.

## MAYORAL AND COUNCILLOR FEES

All civic offices of Walgett Shire Council were declared vacant on 30 June 2004. Mr. Vic Smith was appointed for a period of two years, commencing 30 June 2006 and ceasing immediately before the first meeting of the Council held after the local government election on 13 September 2008.

The Administrator expenses for the period ended 30 June 2008 totaled \$69,323.58. The estimated provision of dedicated office equipment is \$4,000.

## COUNCIL'S POLICY ON PROVISION OF FACILITIES – COUNCILLOR EXPENSES

The Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities for Council Policy was presented to Council on 16 October 2007, placed on public exhibition for a period of 28 days and the policy was presented to Council for adoption on 20 November 2007.

## OVERSEAS TRAVEL

No overseas travel was undertaken by the Administrator, General Manager, Council staff or other persons representing Council.

## SENIOR STAFF

In accordance with Section 332 of the Local Government Act 1993, the position of General Manager is the only position at Council determined as a senior staff position.

Council's General Manager for approximately the first 24 weeks of the year, Mr Stephen McLean, incurred the following expenses:

Housing Subsidy - \$1,384.60

9% Super - \$8,460.00

Car - \$2,307.70

FBT - \$6,898.00

Cash Component - \$66,111.43 (inc. untaken leave paid on termination).

Mr Ray Kent was appointed General Manager for the remaining approximately 27 weeks period.

Expenses incurred were:

Housing Subsidy - \$1,557.69

9% Super - \$6,087.98

Car - \$2,596.15

FBT - \$3,432.00

Cash Component - \$67,642.78.

## PRIVATE WORKS

Council received \$57,699.62 for private works carried out in 2007 - 2008

## STATEMENT OF CONTRACTS AWARDED IN EXCESS OF \$150,000

A total of 3 major contracts valued in excess of \$150,00 were awarded by Council during 2007 – 2008

Contractor	Activity	Amount
Earthtec	Replace Pian Creek Bridge	\$250,865
Spencer Steer	6 years Audit services	\$216,000
Westrac Pty. Ltd	Supply new grader	\$310,000

- ✓ Significant increases in attendances at all Shire Youth Centres and Vacation Care Programs;
- ✓ Increased support from community organizations (from three for the first activities two years ago to forty five this year);
- ✓ Refurbishment of Walgett Youth Centre;
- ✓ Branching out from mainly self directed sport activity into social programs that target health and well being;
- ✓ Retention of youth worker staff, the majority of whom Indigenous workers;
- ✓ The establishment of the Walgett Shire Youth Council with representatives elected from three largest communities of Collarenebri, Lightning Ridge and Walgett including the development of its own Constitution, approved by Council;
- ✓ Successful funding submissions; and
- ✓ Further development of the School to Work Program has seen three young Indigenous people employed in the Shire youth centres on a part time basis.

## SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY PLAN

Attached to the report is the Walgett Shire Council Social Plan 2007-2010. This report is marked '**Appendix D**'.

## ACCESS AND EQUITY NEEDS

Council has an obligation to all residents to ensure that access and equity activities meet residents' needs. 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.
- Opportunities are provided to the public to address agenda items at every meeting.
- Strengthening and maintaining the community's involvement in the delivery of services through a transparent process of networking and partnerships.
- Consultation with shire residents and other local organisations when adopting formal policies
- On going audit and assessment of Council facilities.

Childcare delivery has reached a crisis point in the Shire, mostly because of an inability to attract qualified staff. Rigid regulatory requirements are also proving to be an obstacle to the Shire being able to supplement those childcare services which do operate here. Staff are working with the State government to try to resolve this issue.

## GRANTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

Council contributed a total of \$403,412.21 to 54 organizations under Section 356 of the Local Government Act 1993.

## SERVICES AND PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN

Council offers equal opportunity to all young people within our shire, striving to achieve positive outcomes for the benefit of all youth in the Shire.

Council removed all unsafe playground equipment from parks throughout the Shire and started a program of gradual replacement. The Shire made submissions to the Department of Local Government for funding to assist in the development of its program and was successful in one of its applications in the first round. More submissions will be lodged to the Department for other sites around the Shire in the forthcoming rounds but a budget allocation has been made as well.

Council's Youth Program was nominated for the second consecutive year in the Local Government Youth Awards – this year for Most Innovative Youth Week Program 2008.

Achievements this year include:

## 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. Council is committed to providing equitable and accessible services, facilities and activities for the whole community. The Local Ethnic Affairs Priorities Statement (LEAPS) and Action Plan 2006-2009 was adopted within the Management Plan 2006-2007 on 22 June 2006. This Plan is due to be reviewed by March 2009.

Council staff underwent Cultural Awareness Training in May 2007. This training included procedures within Council to provide interpreter services. Council has also displayed a language board to assist in identifying certain languages.

In 2007-2008, 8 people became Australian citizens at Council ceremonies.

## STATEMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES ACTIVITIES

### RECRUITMENT

During the 2007/2008 financial year Council's Human Resources Officer has been working towards reducing Council's staff turnover rate.

Recruitment activity for the 2007-2008 involved 24 new staff commencing employment with Walgett Shire Council. A new General Manager and two Directors were appointed as well as the creation and filling of an additional Assets Officer position and the filling of a GIS Co-ordinator position. All of these staff will assist Council to better meet its obligations in those areas.

The turnover rate for the period 2007-2008 was 29.4%. Whilst this rate is unacceptably high, Council has implemented flexible working conditions, corporate uniform, salary packaging, subsidised housing rental and additional training in an attempt to attract, retain and develop suitable staff. Advertising of positions has been extended to technical and professional areas of interest in order to bring Walgett Shire Council to the attention of a wider range of potential employees.

Council also commenced implementation of a new Salary System anticipated to be operational by February 2009, updated Positions Descriptions where necessary and revised its Organisational Structure significantly (in accordance with Management Plan requirements).

### SCHOOL TO WORK PROGRAM

Walgett Shire Council operates a School to Work program in partnership with Walgett Community College and the Walgett/Collarenebri Community Facilitator for students at Walgett Community College. This program has been introduced to assist students in choosing a career path within Local Government. Students have been assigned to a 'buddy' to assist them whilst at work and are offered training and development to improve their skills.

In 2007-2008 the program was extended to Lightning Ridge and Collarenebri students. Six (6) students started work experience at Walgett Shire Council in 2007 and a further 2 in Lightning Ridge and 2 in Collarenebri.

Four of the six students in Walgett remain in the program and of the other two, one left the district and one changed interests but could not be mentored in another part of the organisation. These students will continue the program until the end of Term Four. The program will continue to be implemented and further developed annually.

## WORK FOR THE DOLE PROJECTS

Walgett Shire Council has undertaken a number of Work for the Dole projects to assist unemployed people to re-enter into the workforce, develop their skills and understand good work ethics.

These projects have provided good results within the shire improving community facilities such as the "Tracker Walford Walkway" with some participants have gained further employment with Council.

### Council's Workforce Profile

Age	Male	Female
15-19	2	1
20-24	1	2
25-34	12	18
35-44	20	6
45-54	17	12
55-64	17	4
65+	5	5

Group Identifier	Percentage of staff
Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander	24%
Culturally and linguistically diverse origin	3%
Women	40%
People with physical disability	1%

### TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Council continues to encourage employees to participate in training and development. During the period 2007/2008 Council expended \$59,000 excluding wages costs on training and conference expenses to ensure that all staff are continually improving their skills and to remain up to date with legislative requirements.

*Training included but was not limited to*

- Induction
- Code of Conduct
- First Aid
- Identify & Respond to Children & Young People at Risk of Harm
- Asbestos Handling
- Minute Taking
- Safe Working in Confined Spaces
- Rates
- Bitumen Surface
- Records
- Traffic Control
- OH&S General Induction
- Chemcert
- Website Development

Purchasing Administration  
 OH&S Committee  
 Plant Operator  
 Grant Seeker Workshop  
 OHS Auditors Course  
 Fair Value Asset Accounting Workshop  
 Ozwater 2007 Convention & Exhibition  
 FBT  
 Crane & Plant Electrical Safety  
 Conquest User Group Meeting  
 Cultural Awareness Workshop  
 Writing effective PR and Promotional Copy  
 WorkChoices Workshop  
 Civica Software  
 Local Government Finance  
 RTA ASCIS Heavy Vehicle  
 Women & Leadership Forum  
 Youth Centre Coordinator  
 Frontline Management  
 Human Resources  
 Environment & Planning Legislation Amendments

*Conference attendance included but was not limited to:*

Civica National User Group Conference  
 Human Resources Conference  
 NSW Family Day Care Association Conference  
 Library Conference  
 NSW Rural Youth Work Conference  
 Water Summit & Floodplain Conference  
 NSW Rating Professionals Conference  
 Local Government Finance Professionals Conference  
 IPWEA NSW Division Annual Conference

## EEO MANAGEMENT PLAN

Activities undertaken during the period July 2007 to June 2008 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 Human Resources Officer to ensure advertising is non-discriminatory
- Implementation of School to Work Programs and Work for the Dole Projects to allow unemployed persons to enter into the workforce
- Provision of assistance to employees and supervisors regarding EEO issues and grievances through Council's Human Resources Officer.

Attached to the report is the Walgett Shire Council EEO Plan 2007-2010. This report is marked '**Appendix E.**'

## BUSHFIRE HAZARD REDUCTION ACTIVITIES

Bush Fire Hazard Reduction activities for 2007/2008 are as follows:-

Grading: Regional Roads 200 x 10m  
 Shire Roads 800 x 10m  
 Slashing: (Roadside) 400 x 6m  
 Slashing of Parks: Not Included

Total cost of works undertaken at:

Walgett Aerodrome	\$2,800
Walgett Waste Depot	\$1,200
Lightning Ridge Aerodrome	\$1,600
Collarenebri Town Area	\$2,040
Collarenebri Aerodrome	\$2,560
Burren junction Village	\$1,600
Burren Junction Cemetery and Waste Depot	\$2,880
Rowena Village Area and Waste Depot	\$1,360
Carinda Village Area and Waste Depot	\$2,080
Cumborah Village	\$1,360

## STORMWATER MANAGEMENT SERVICES

### What we achieved in 2007/08

Specific stormwater management activities were undertaken in 2007/08 and expenditure on routine maintenance was approximately \$96,649. Small lengths of failed kerb and gutter were replaced where adjacent road shoulder reconstruction was being carried out. Council has not, as yet, moved to introduce a stormwater management charge as is provided for in the Local Government Act.

## PRIVACY AND PERSONAL INFORMATION

The Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 was introduced to provide central safeguards to an individual's privacy in relation to a wide variety of personal information held by the public sector agencies such as Council.

The procedures in complying with these requirements are contained in Council's Code of Conduct. No review was conducted by or on behalf of the Council under Part 5 of the Act.

## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

During the period Council received no applications for information under the Freedom of Information Act.

## 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 years return include:
  - 122 dogs and 53 cats were seized.
  - 248 dogs and 78 cats were surrendered.
  - 21 dogs were released to their owners.
  - 365 dogs and 132 cats were euthanised
- Council spent \$64,366.71 on companion animal management related activities in 2007 - 2008.
- Council employs a full time Ranger to conduct these activities.
- Council participated in the RSPCA Companion Animal Welfare Scheme (CAWS) for the first time. The scheme included education sessions for school children, desexing and microchipping programs for dogs.
- The vast majority of companion animals that are surrendered to, or seized by, Council are euthanized. Council's regulatory staff seek new homes for any animal that is trained and/or in good physical condition but it is unfortunate that very few animals meet such criteria.
- A single off leash area for dogs was established by Council some years ago in Euroka Street, Walgett, near the aerodrome.
- Council did not access any Companion Animals Fund money during the period.

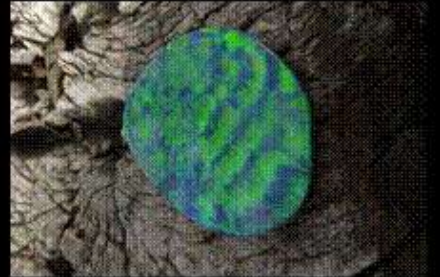
## PLANNING AGREEMENTS UNDER THE ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT ACT

No planning agreements were entered into by Council during the year.



# **WHAT COUNCIL ACHIEVED IN 2007/2008**

# **WHAT COUNCIL IS PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE**



## COMMUNITY SERVICES

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### WHAT COUNCIL ACHIEVED IN 2007 - 2008

- ✓ Nominated in the top five finalists Local Government Youth Week Award 2008 for Best Small Council Youth Week Program and Best Local Youth Week Program.
- ✓ Financial contribution of \$50,000 towards Walgett CWA Building.
- ✓ Community Internet Wireless Access pilot project in Collarenebri approved.
- ✓ Waste to Art program conducted in Walgett and Lightning Ridge.
- ✓ Adoption of Aboriginal Community development and Reconciliation Plan.
- ✓ Butt out Bullying program conducted across the shire with schools.
- ✓ Financial contribution of \$40,000 towards securing PCYC mobile van.
- ✓ Walgett Shire and Gosford City Councils entered into a mentoring relationship and Gosford City assisted in the promotion of Walgett Festival week in May 2008, competition sports activities, music and cultural promotion.
- ✓ Community Bus purchased and utilised for Youth Services, Community Services, Road inspections with RTA and transportation of Administrator/Councillors and senior staff for site meetings and Council meetings which are now held at each of the villages in the Shire.
- ✓ Upgrade of Walgett Youth Centre completed including refurbishment of a *Chill Out* Room.
- ✓ Youth Council established to assist in establishing a voice for the youth within the Shire. Members elected from Lightning Ridge, Collarenebri and Walgett. Constitution adopted and meetings held.

### WHAT COUNCIL IS PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

- ✚ Replacement of playground equipment program rolled out across the Shire.
- ✚ Continually provide ongoing programs such as Harmony Day, Youth Week, Children's Week, PCYC programs and vacation care programs.
- ✚ Introduce new youth programs focused on Healthy Lifestyles and education.
- ✚ Stage Cricket NSW Indigenous Cricket Camp to promote and develop cricket within the indigenous youth.

## CORPORATE SERVICES

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### WHAT COUNCIL ACHIEVED IN 2007 -2008

- ✓ Further reduction in outstanding rates and charges arrears
- ✓ Continued extensive debt recovery program
- ✓ First stage of implementation of electronic records system started
- ✓ Auditors appointed for six year period
- ✓ Commitment to updating of salary system
- ✓ Reduction in the number of outstanding legal matters eg contracts

## WHAT COUNCIL IS PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

- ✚ Changes to IT systems to improve efficiency and effectiveness of the organisation
- ✚ The continuation of sound financial management including quarterly review and revision of the budget.
- ✚ Ensure the sound operational direction and financial viability of Council through the Management Plan.
- ✚ Maintain Councils intensive debt recovery procedures to assist in a reduction in Rates & Annual Charges Outstanding Percentage to an acceptable level of below 9%.
- ✚ An increase in the commitment towards staff training and development.
- ✚ Maintain Unrestricted Current Ratio above 3.5:1. This ensures that Council has the ability to meet their debts and obligations as they fall due.

## TOURISM

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### WHAT COUNCIL ACHIEVED IN 2007 -2008

- ✓ Attended Community Workshops – “Fire Up Your Business” Go West and Tourism NSW International Tourism Managers Familiarisation & International Marketing Workshop
- ✓ Promoted Community Events: Clean Up Australia Day and Business Clean Up Day
- ✓ Attended Caravan Camping Shows: Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, Maitland and Retirement Expo in Sydney
- ✓ Attended the Local Government Shires Association Tourism Conference in Lismore and the inaugural Outback NSW Tourism Symposium in Broken Hill
- ✓ Attended Local E Website Training, Customer Service Workshop & Aurora Visitor Information Centre accreditation
- ✓ New Local Indigenous Language Books located in Visitor Information Centre
- ✓ New souvenirs using the Walgett Tourism Logo being introduced into the Walgett Visitor Information Centre
- ✓ Development of a new Bore Bath Brochure
- ✓ Updated the ‘Welcome to Walgett’ Brochure with new information and photos
- ✓ Development of a tourism logo for Walgett; “The Gate” John Murray designed and donated the logo to the Walgett Tourist Association.
- ✓ Assisted in the development of Interpretive signage at Lightning Ridge Bore Baths in conjunction with Western Catchment Management Authority.
- ✓ Assisted in the development of Interpretive signage at Barwon Rest Area in conjunction with the Darling River Run.
- ✓ Assisted in the development of Economic Development Conference Submission.
- ✓ Highly successful relationships have been maintained with Kamilaroi Highway, Darling River Run, Orana Area Consultative Committee, Go West, Outback Arts and Outback Regional Tourism Organisation.

- ✓ Assisted in the promotion of Walgett Shire on several websites including State Data Tourism Websites, Get Connected, Tourism NSW, Tourism Australia and Outback Regional Tourism Organisation.
- ✓ Participated in a number of promotions including - Walgett Shire in the New England North West Map, the Outback NSW Map, in the Australian Publishing Resource Service – NSW Traveller 2008, in Caravanning Australia, in The Caravanner, the Walgett Shire 2008 Events Calendar being promoted in the Sydney Weekender Magazine and in profiling Walgett Shire in the Darling River Run Promotional DVD
- ✓ First stage of signage audit completed with attractive entrance signs to all towns in place.

## WHAT COUNCIL IS PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

- ✚ Further development of a long term Shire wide Tourism strategy
- ✚ Interpretive Signage for a number of significant sites across the Shire
- ✚ Welcome signs at either shire boundaries or town entrances – welcoming visitors to country from the local indigenous perspective. These signs will be complimentary to major welcome signs and will acknowledge the traditional owners of the land and will be completed in consultation with relevant elders groups.
- ✚ A Marketing Strategy to be developed in consultation with Outback Regional Tourism Organisation, local Tourism Associations and operators
- ✚ Development of a merchandising strategy for Walgett Visitor Information Centre.

## TRANSPORT

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### WHAT COUNCIL ACHIEVED IN 2007/ 08

- ✓ Continued routine maintenance on state, regional and local roads.
- ✓ Council completed one stage of significant road upgrading project on MR333 Carinda- Walgett Road
- ✓ Approximately 12 kilometres of the Mungindi to Collarenebri Road were upgraded and sealed.
- ✓ Improvement works along the three State Highways within Walgett Shire to the value of approximately \$2.3 million.
- ✓ Commonwealth Government's AusLink Programme funding enabled Council to work on upgrading its regional roads network to complete the sealing of the Walgett to Carinda road, the Burren Junction to Collarenebri road and Collarenebri to Mungindi road from the Queensland border
- ✓ Allocated funds for a new Works Depot.
- ✓ Replaced the bridge over Pian Creek.
- ✓ Replaced 1 Grader, 1 Roller and 2 light trucks.

### WHAT COUNCIL IS PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

- ✚ Funding provided by the Commonwealth Government's AusLink Programme will be used to complete extensive upgrading along Council's regional roads network over the next three years including completion of the sealing of the Walgett to Carinda and Burren Junction to Collarenebri Roads and the Collarenebri to Mungindi Road from the Queensland border.

- ✚ Replacement of timber bridges over Castlereagh River (Walgett to Carinda Road) is planned for the year 2008/09
- ✚ Reconstruction and sealing of Burren Junction streets.
- ✚ Construction of a new Works Depot over a period of 2 years.

## **PARKS AND GARDENS**

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### WHAT COUNCIL ACHIEVED IN 2007/08

- ✓ In excess of \$613,600 was spent in maintaining parks and reserves in Walgett, Lightning Ridge, Collarenebri and several smaller villages in the Shire
- ✓ Rehabilitation of Burren Junction Bore Baths
- ✓ Provision of an automatic watering system for Number One Oval in Walgett.

### WHAT COUNCIL IS PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

- ✚ Automatic watering systems for Gray Park, Walgett and Len Cram Park, Lightning Ridge are proposed for later years; however these have been brought forward because applications for Community Water Grants were successful.
- ✚ Rehabilitation of the amenities block at the Lightning Ridge Bore Baths, at an estimated cost of \$100,000.
- ✚ Provision of perimeter fencing at Lightning Ridge Bore Baths in 2008/09
- ✚ Provision of \$60,000 in each of the next five years to replace non compliant playground equipment in Council's parks. An additional grant of \$20,000 has been received for the first year 2008/09.
- ✚ Initiate assessment for footpath rehabilitation and replacement in Walgett township
- ✚ Study and make application for skate park construction in Walgett
- ✚ Improvement on Walgett Cemetery Memorial Wall.

## **PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND COUNCIL ASSETS**

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### WHAT COUNCIL ACHIEVED IN 2007/08

- ✓ Routine maintenance on both fixed and moveable assets, such as public buildings, staff dwellings, works depots, Walgett Town levee, plant and vehicles, and aerodromes.
- ✓ Receipt of a grant to build a dementia care unit in Lightning Ridge adjacent to the newly constructed HACC centre.
- ✓ Tender process completed for new staff accommodation in Arthur Street Walgett.
- ✓ NSW Department of Commerce continued to undertake pre-construction activities associated with the rehabilitation of the Walgett town levee.
- ✓ Upgrade Carinda community hall.
- ✓ Upgrade of Collarenebri Showground grandstand
- ✓ Upgrade of Walgett Showground kitchen
- ✓ Completion of Lightning Ridge HACC facility building stage 1.

- ✓ Maintenance was undertaken to the Walgett administration building and the Visitor's Information Centre/library.
- ✓ Security in the Administration building/Council Chambers has been improved.
- ✓ Council has purchased is a community bus

#### WHAT COUNCIL IS PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

- ✚ Additional staff accommodation on vacant land in Arthur Street, will be erected in 2008/09 at a cost approaching \$2 million. It is anticipated that the accommodation will be funded from reserve funds and sale of existing assets.
- ✚ Preliminary work on the re-location of the Walgett Works Depot will be undertaken in 2008/09
- ✚ \$30,000 has been provided for a Rural Fire Service building in Burren Junction.
- ✚ Ongoing expenditure on plant and vehicle replacement in 2008/09.

## WASTE SERVICES

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#### WHAT COUNCIL ACHIEVED IN 2007/08

- ✓ Walgett Landfill continued to progress towards meeting stringent licence conditions.
- ✓ The contractor at Walgett has made sound progress on site improvements.
- ✓ Council increased its efforts to educate the community on matters relative to waste management.

#### WHAT COUNCIL IS PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

- ✚ Geotechnical testing on the site for the Lightning Ridge Landfill will need to be carried out to ensure suitability, after which the site can be acquired and pre-construction activities completed.
- ✚ Increase efforts in meeting licensing requirements of Walgett Landfill as well as obtaining quality solid data generated from all existing landfills.
- ✚ Council will introduce a Solid Waste Management Plan which will delicately monitor the following:
  - I. Landfill Development - feasibility study of new landfill sites leading to a development and construction at Lightning Ridge and Walgett.
  - II. Landfill Operational Management – licensed and non- licensed landfills
  - III. Transfer Station Development – encourage recycling and solid waste reduction
  - IV. Refuse Collection Management – improving daily domestic and commercial collection programs throughout the shire community
  - V. Waste Minimisation Strategy - increasing efforts to educate the community on matters relative to solid waste management
  - VI. Waste Minimisation and/or Reduction Programme – a socially organized program involving all active organizations in the shire as well as neighboring councils
- ✚ Council will hold discussions with the community as a whole to understand the goals and objectives of Solid Waste Management Plan prior to full implementation within the next few years.
- ✚ On-line tests for rubbish collection using tablets and PDAs over the next two years.

## WATER SUPPLY SERVICES

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#### WHAT COUNCIL ACHIEVED IN 2007/08

- ✓ Continued routine maintenance on all water supply schemes in the Shire.
- ✓ The pump intake on the Namoi River in Walgett was re-located to improve the raw water supply to the town's filtration plant.
- ✓ The installation of telemetry at all water supply installations to improve the monitoring and response to operational difficulties was completed although it is not yet completely operational.
- ✓ Water has been carted from the bore at Cumborah to public tanks at the Grawin Opal Fields on numerous occasions throughout 2007/08.

## WHAT COUNCIL IS PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

- ✚ Installation of water meters and the introduction of water billing based upon cost of service and water consumption (user pays).
- ✚ Water meters will be introduced in all towns and villages which have water supply schemes in operation.
- ✚ Council will hold discussions with the Burren Junction community to ascertain if that community wishes to pursue a water scheme within the next few years.
- ✚ Progressive replacement of water mains at Carinda, Walgett, Rowena, Lightning Ridge and Collenebri, including valve and hydrant replacements.
- ✚ Development of a comprehensive Water Management Plan (similar to Total Water Management Plan) to set the direction for providing optimum service level requirements to the community.
- ✚ Provision of a Water Renewal Management Program to effectively establish annual renewal works over the next 10 years.
- ✚ Rehabilitation and installation of new metered stand pipes in Lightning Ridge and Walgett.
- ✚ On-line tests for telemetry system using tablets and PDAs over the next two years.
- ✚ Improvement of Drought Management Plan to focus on Water Minimisation Strategy - increasing efforts to educate the community on matters relative to solid waste management
- ✚ Council to improve Water Sampling Collection Management and Reporting.
- ✚ A new, larger reservoir in Rowena is planned for 2009/10 at an estimated cost of \$200,000.

## SEWERAGE SERVICES

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### WHAT COUNCIL ACHIEVED IN 2007/08

- ✓ Routine maintenance on Walgett's sewerage scheme, and common effluent schemes in Lightning Ridge and Collarenebri.completed
- ✓ Commenced an initiative to acquire the site upon which the Collarenebri effluent ponds are located.
- ✓ Replaced electrical control gear in all Walgett sewer pump stations.
- ✓ Installation of telemetry in pump stations for the same reason telemetry is being installed in the water schemes.
- ✓ Total expenditure in 2007/08 on sewerage activities was \$434,000

### WHAT COUNCIL IS PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

- ✚ Effluent pump station replacement at Collenebri including fencing improvement at effluent pond.
- ✚ Conduct full CCTV study of all lines to determine the extent of renewal works to be done in the future.
- ✚ Provide a Sewerage Renewal Management Program to effectively establish annual renewal works of over the next 10 years.
- ✚ Rehabilitation of old and dilapidated main sewer main pipes in Lightning Ridge and Walgett.
- ✚ On-line tests for telemetry system using tablets and PDAs over the next two years.
- ✚ Improvement of Drought Management Plan to focus on Wastewater Minimisation Strategy - increasing efforts to educate the community on matters relative to solid waste management
- ✚ Council will introduce a Sewerage Management Plan within two years.
- ✚ Council to rehabilitate oxidation ponds and improve the sewage treatment flows prior to final discharge to an approved environment.
- ✚ Conduct a feasibility study of pumping treated wastewater to all parks and reserves as part of Wastewater Minimisation Strategy.

## **STORMWATER MANAGEMENT**

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### WHAT COUNCIL ACHIEVED IN 2007/08

- ✓ Routine maintenance was undertaken across the Shire.
- ✓ Small lengths of failed kerb and gutter were replaced where adjacent road shoulder reconstruction was being carried out.

### WHAT COUNCIL IS PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

- ✚ Council will introduce a stormwater management charge as is provided for in the Local Government Act.
- ✚ Undertake routine maintenance including drain clearing, gutter sweeping and associated activities.
- ✚ Conduct full CCTV study of all lines to determine the extent of renewal works to be done in the future.
- ✚ Develop a comprehensive Stormwater Management Plan to set direction in providing a:
  - I. Stormwater Renewal Management Program to effectively establish annual renewal works of over the next 10 years.
  - II. Progressive installation of kerb and gutters in towns and villages in conjunction with urban road rehabilitations.

## **PLANNING AND REGULATION**

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### WHAT COUNCIL ACHIEVED IN 2007/08

- ✓ The Walgett Shire Growth Management Study and Draft Strategy was placed on public exhibition from 30 July 2007 through to 30 September 2007. Twenty four submissions were received on this



document which contains a series of recommendations that will form the basis for a draft Local Environmental Plan.

- ✓ Council's Heritage Advisor has finalised a list of heritage items proposed to be listed in the Local Environmental Plan.
- ✓ Burial plot maps have been revised and digitised for the Burren Junction and Carinda cemeteries.
- ✓ A rural addressing project has commenced with the intent of ensuring that each rural property in the shire is identified in a manner that complies with relevant Australian Standards. This should reduce the potential for confusion about addresses and facilitate prompt responses by emergency and other services.
- ✓ Centralised record keeping of building and development approvals has been implemented using Council's Authority software. This will substantially improve Council's ability to track and manage building related approvals.

## WHAT COUNCIL IS PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

- ✚ It is expected that the Department of Planning will authorise the public exhibition of a draft Local Environmental Plan. The Local Environmental Plan will provide greater certainty for developers and the community about what types of land uses are permissible, and those that are not, within a given location.
- ✚ The rural addressing project will be completed by updating road signs and establishing geocoded addresses for each rural property. A review will then be conducted of all addresses within the Shire's towns and villages with a view to addressing gaps and inconsistencies with Australian Standards.
- ✚ A smoke testing program will be completed in Walgett and Lightning Ridge with a view to identifying properties that have substandard connections to Council's sewerage and effluent systems. Council will be seeking the assistance of property owners to fix these connections, especially to reduce problems associated with the unauthorised discharge of stormwater into its systems.
- ✚ A project to remove contaminated soil from a pesticide residue pit at the Walgett airport has been funded by Council.

# APPENDIX A

# **APPENDIX B**

## PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT - GENERAL MANAGER

No	Mission Aim	2007/2008 Activity	Measurement, Method and Target	Responsible Manager	Status
1.	To promote better practice and encourage improvement in the way Council conducts its activities and ensure good governance	Completion of the Local Governments Self Assessment Checklist.  Report to Council any discrepancies	On going	General Manager	Checklist completed and reported to Council  Report presented to Council 21 August 2007 Minute 230/07  Status report to be presented to 2 <sup>nd</sup> September 2008 Council meeting
2.	To develop and improve the aesthetic physical characteristics of the Shire.	Develop an organisation culture to ensure all work undertaken by staff is done with pride, care and commitment.	Parks, gardens, road reserves and town entrances are clean, tidy and attractive and Council assets are kept to a standard that sets a good example for the community.	General Manager	Town entry signs erected January/February 2008  Ongoing upkeep of all Council assets and reserves
3.	To be actively involved in developing the strategic vision of the Shire through informed staff involvement	Identify and provide training.  Staff appraisals to include reference to actions required to achieve training and multi skill objectives.	All staff appraised by June 2007 and training calendar developed by August 2007.	General Manager	Staff appraisals completed for 2007/08  Training calendar developed and implemented

## PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT - GENERAL MANAGER

No	Mission Aim	2007/2008 Activity	Measurement, Method and Target	Responsible Manager	Status
4.	To be a good employer and provide leadership through a safe and productive workplace.	<p>Develop an organisational culture, which acknowledges dedication and innovation.</p> <p>Staff and Elected Members to be encouraged to self/accept nomination for training which develops innovation, creativity and lateral thought in addressing existing or new challenges.</p>	<p>Staff appraisals by Supervisor and Departmental Manager to be completed by June of each year.</p> <p>Monthly Employee of the Month to be recognised for dedication and innovation of employees.</p> <p>Councillor Training to be implemented in 2008, prior to elections.</p>	General Manager	<p>Appraisals complete</p> <p>Employee recognition given monthly and Employee of the year recognised annually</p> <p>Four information sessions for prospective candidates completed July 2008</p>
5.	To Provide training for newly elected Councillors.	Ensure that all newly elected Councillors are provided with the necessary training as required by the Department of Local Government.	Completed by October 2008.	General Manager	Training and Planning Sessions scheduled for new Council
6.	To provide strong local and regional leadership.	Council will encourage greater involvement and participation in regional and state activities by its senior staff and Council representatives.	<p>Participants reporting to Council on the outcomes of external meetings attended.</p> <p>All senior staff active members of relevant professional groups.</p>	General Manager	<p>Reports being received</p> <p>Complete</p>

## PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT - GENERAL MANAGER

No	Mission Aim	2007/2008 Activity	Measurement, Method and Target	Responsible Manager	Status
7.	To ensure that Council's corporate planning needs and policy decisions meet the requirements and expectations of the community and comply with the legislative requirements.	Council will consult widely and communicate decisions effectively.	<p>Council's website will be updated regularly and contain relevant and current information.</p> <p>Council will advise through press releases and information passed onto Precinct Committees and Community Working Parties.</p>	General Manager	<p>Website maintained</p> <p>Advice being distributed</p>
8.	To ensure responsible and good governance.	<p>All ordinary meetings and special meetings of Council are appropriately advertised to the public.</p> <p>Walgett Shire Management Plan adopted in June each year</p>	<p>All meetings are advertised to comply with the Local Government Act 1993.</p> <p>Opportunities are provided to the public, to address agenda items at every meeting.</p> <p>Adoption by 30 June.</p>	General Manager	<p>Meetings to date compliant</p> <p>Objective met</p> <p>Complaint</p>

## PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT - GENERAL MANAGER

No	Mission Aim	2007/2008 Activity	Measurement, Method and Target	Responsible Manager	Status
9.	To Strengthen and maintain involvement in the delivery of services to the community through a transparent process of networking and partnerships.	<p>Support and promote a coordinated approach to planning of services with youth, families and service providers.</p> <p>Investigate library operations with Northern Regional Library to improve utilisation of library resources.</p> <p>Assess child care options and opportunities for the provision of adequate child care for families within the Shire.</p>	<p>Continue to assist the Walgett Interagency Committee with the Shire Youth Plan.</p> <p>Increase in general activity and borrowings in our libraries.</p> <p>Aim to have greater than 6 carers in place by April 2008. Continue support of Walgett Preschool and Long Day Care Centre Inc.</p>	General Manager	<p>Council member of Youth Sub Committee</p> <p>Regular exchanges occurring with Northern Regional Library</p> <p>Library hours have changed and are being monitored</p> <p>Continuing to advertise vacancies for carers</p>

## PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT - DIRECTOR, INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENGINEERING SERVICES

No	Mission Aim	2007/2008 Activity	Measurement, Method and Target	Responsible Manager	Status
1.	To consult with the Community and wider regional Council's to ensure ongoing well planned and appropriate road network development.	Council to prepare a new five year Strategic Road Plan for the period 2008/2013.	<p>Consultation with Shire residents and other local organisations.</p> <p>Complete document review by December 2007 and adopt reviewed document by March 2008.</p>	Director, Infrastructure and Engineering Services	<p>Review complete</p> <p>Consultation ongoing</p>
2.	To actively pursue external funding opportunities relative to engineering projects.	Identify a link between available funding programmes and Council projects and, working particularly with community groups, prepare and submit funding applications.	<p>A minimum of four funding submissions proposed and submitted.</p> <p>Ongoing.</p>	Director, Infrastructure and Engineering Services	Complete
3.	To Provide and maintain facilities which meet reasonable community standards.	Audit all facilities currently available in the Shire and assess future requirements.	<p>Community consultation on assessed future requirements by Council.</p> <p>Utilisation of Council facilities.</p> <p>Ongoing internal audit of Council facilities</p>	Director, Infrastructure and Engineering Services	Has not been achieved in 2007/2008



## PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT - DIRECTOR, INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENGINEERING SERVICES

No	Mission Aim	2007/2008 Activity	Measurement, Method and Target	Responsible Manager	Status
4.	To provide an efficient and reliable kerbside domestic waste collection service.	Provide a weekly kerbside collection service to designated built up areas.  Respond to complaints in a timely fashion.	To provide a minimum of one collection service per week.  Respond within 72 hours Ongoing.	Director, Infrastructure and Engineering Services	Some delays in services due to wet weather/flooding Jan/Feb 08
5.	To Manage Council swimming pools in accordance with relevant legislation.	Maintain a frequent liaison with the Pool Operators' at each facility.	An increase in total patronage.  An amenity which meets relevant legislation and acceptable standards.  Ongoing	Director, Infrastructure and Engineering Services	Pools now closed for winter.  Walgett & Collarenebri pools operation satisfactory  Carinda reported limited usage.
6.	To investigate options for improving heavy vehicle passage through the towns of Lightning Ridge and Collarenebri.	In consultation with the Roads and Traffic Authority and the Community, review available options and prepare a report to Council on these options.	To review the situation regarding heavy vehicle access through Lightning Ridge Township by 30 April 2008.  Review heavy vehicle passage through Collarenebri by April 2009.	Director, Infrastructure and Engineering Services	Has not been achieved 07/08 due to resource limitations

## PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT - DIRECTOR, INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENGINEERING SERVICES

No	Mission Aim	2007/2008 Activity	Measurement, Method and Target	Responsible Manager	Status
7.	To provide street lighting to urban areas using energy efficient lighting at the most competitive cost.	Assess adequacy of street lighting in Lightning Ridge Town area in consultation with Country Energy and the Community in an effort to improve levels of service and efficiency.	Review street lighting in the Shire over a three year return period, undertaking a review in Lightning Ridge in 2007/2008.	Director, Infrastructure and Engineering Services	Completed
8.	To progressively remove trees from public areas which are considered to be inappropriate because of either species type or location and where appropriate replace with a more suitable tree.	Identify trees considered to be inappropriate after consultation with Country Energy and / or others, and report findings to Council.	Twenty trees removed and replaced with trees of more appropriate species and / or in a better location.  Ongoing.	Director, Infrastructure and Engineering Services	Ongoing
9.	To reduce the number of overloaded vehicles using Council's roads network.	Attend meetings of the North West Weight of Loads Committee and analyse breach report information.	A reduction in the number of recorded breaches, relative to the hours worked by Weight of Loads Inspectors.  Ongoing.	Director, Infrastructure and Engineering Services	Three meetings attended to date. Recorded breaches are slightly down, probably partly due to very modest grain harvest activity

## PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT - DIRECTOR, INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENGINEERING SERVICES

No	Mission Aim	2007/2008 Activity	Measurement, Method and Target	Responsible Manager	Status
10.	To identify and respond to issues which adversely affect road safety.	React to matters identified by either; correction, referral to Local Area Traffic Committee or referral to a future works programme.	Complete inspections on Council's complete public roads network. A minimum of four times per annum.	Director, Infrastructure and Engineering Services	Completed
11.	To close Waste Disposal Depots in Collarenebri, Carinda, Rowena and Burren Junction and replace these facilities with Waste Transfer Stations.	To develop proposals to close village waste depots and introduce transfer stations at these locations, maintaining consultation with the community and the Department of Environment and Conservation throughout the process.	Close Waste Disposal Depots at Burren Junction and Rowena and replace them with Waste Transfer Stations by 30 June 2008.	Director, Infrastructure and Engineering Services	No waste depots have been closed at this stage.  Community consultation in future of solid waste Management to be continued in 08/09
12.	To provide waste disposal facilities in Walgett and Lightning Ridge which meet environmental standards, as well as the ratepayer's reasonable expectations.	To operate the Walgett Waste Disposal Depot in accordance with licence conditions.  Construct a new Waste Disposal Depot at Lightning Ridge.	To meet all licence conditions applicable to the Walgett Waste Disposal Depot.  Complete construction of new Waste Disposal Depot at Lightning Ridge by 30 June 2008.  Ongoing.	Director, Infrastructure and Engineering Services	Landfill Environmental Management Plan yet to be approved. Quarterly testing yet to be arranged. Plans for a new Lightning Ridge Waste Depot are currently on hold

## PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT - DIRECTOR, INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENGINEERING SERVICES

No	Mission Aim	2007/2008 Activity	Measurement, Method and Target	Responsible Manager	Status
13.	To operate sewerage treatment and effluent disposal schemes in Walgett, Lightning Ridge and Collarenebri in accordance with legislative requirements	Review the operation of all schemes, and prepare network maintenance and development plans.	Sewerage system chokes and overflows do not exceed numbers of the previous years.	Director, Infrastructure and Engineering Services	Insufficient data to measure this aim.
14.	Implement a user pay system that also encourages efficient water use.	Develop a new pricing policy and implement a public relations programme to complement it.	Introduce a charging regime for water customers based on consumption.	Director, Infrastructure and Engineering Services	Progress is behind schedule regarding the introduction of user pays water supply delivery  Consumption based pricing can not be implemented until 09/10
		Repair and install Water meters in designated urban areas with the objective of introducing consumption based pricing in 2008/2009.	Prepare a charging regime for water customers based on consumption for introduction in 2008/2009.		
		Maintain customer access to water conservation information through <a href="http://www.savewater.com.au">http://www.savewater.com.au</a>	On going		

## PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT - DIRECTOR, INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENGINEERING SERVICES

No	Mission Aim	2007/2008 Activity	Measurement, Method and Target	Responsible Manager	Status
15.	To professionally manage Council's assets and ensure reasonable needs of Council are met.	Undertake re-valuation of all Council assets.	Domestic Waste by December 2007	Director, Infrastructure and Engineering Services	Some progress has been achieved against these tasks but none is complete as yet due to resource limitations
		Develop and implement twenty year asset management plans for all infrastructure assets.	Council Housing by March 2008 Transport infrastructure by June 2008 Water and Sewer by December 2008 Recreation and Community assets by June 2009 Administrative assets by June 2009		
		Assess initial condition of road and bridge assets.	Assess trends in asset condition.		
		Review the fifteen year plant replacement program.	Review by March 2008		
	Maximise availability and utilisation of all major Council plant.		Ongoing 85%availability rate	Manager Engineering	Achieved
	Review on an annual basis, the plant hire fees.		Completed annually	Manager Engineering	Completed June 2008

## PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT - DIRECTOR, INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENGINEERING SERVICES

No	Mission Aim	2007/2008 Activity	Measurement, Method and Target	Responsible Manager	Status
16.	To operate aerodromes at Walgett, Lightning Ridge and Collarenebri in accordance with relevant legislation.	Maintain daily (Monday to Friday) safety inspections of these aerodromes. Maintain an inspection Schedule at Collarenebri Aerodrome consistent with usage and climatic factors.  Meet with aerodrome users, including RPT providers, at least annually to discuss operations.	No breaches of relevant legislation.  The financial loss of the aerodromes is kept below \$140,000.00.	Director, Infrastructure and Engineering Services	No reported breaches of legislation  On present trends, financial loss at year's end will be approximately \$160,000
17.	To provide a water supply to Walgett, Collarenebri, Lightning Ridge, Carinda, Cumborah and Rowena.	Respond to any decline in water quality.	Adverse results addressed where possible.	Director, Infrastructure and Engineering Services	Adverse results minor in nature & addressed before any public health issue developed.
18.	To introduce annual stormwater management service charges.	To investigate stormwater activities in consultation with the Walgett Shire Community.	Inclusion of the proposed stormwater management activities in Draft Management Plan 2008/2009	Director, Infrastructure and Engineering Services	Will not be completed 07/08
19.	To identify options for the introduction of a village water supply to Burren Junction.	To investigate, in consultation with the community, the need for a village water supply, in addition to the ability and willingness of the community to meet costs associated with introduction of a water supply.	Complete consultation with the community by 31 March 2008 and report results to council by 31 May 2008.	Director, Infrastructure and Engineering Services	Will not be completed 07/08

## PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT - DIRECTOR CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

No	Mission Aim	2007/2008 Activity	Measurement, Method and Target	Responsible Manager	Status
1.	Support the development of active and creative community members, working in partnership with community, business and Government.	Actively support, develop and promote community services and strategies which address existing and emerging needs.	<p>Use Precinct Committees, Community Working Parties to assist Council with community development.</p> <p>Respond to issues raised within thirty days taking appropriate recommendations to Council.</p>	Director, Corporate and Community Services	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Staff attend precinct and Interagency meetings as requested</p> <p>Minutes submitted to Administrator for action when required</p> <p>Community consultation regularly sought</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Targets met</p>
2.	Provide an efficient timely and user friendly response to client requests and concerns.	Council will maintain and improve its customer action request statistics.	<p>Customer Action Requests System average days outstanding &lt;45 days, will quarterly average and be maintained at 80% minimum.</p> <p>All customer enquiries and complaints will be dealt within five working days.</p>	Director, Corporate and Community Services	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing, Council Management ensure dealt with in a timely manner</p>

## PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT - DIRECTOR CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

No	Mission Aim	2007/2008 Activity	Measurement, Method and Target	Responsible Manager	Status
3.	Ability to provide people with better opportunities for involvement and consultation about our decisions.	Maintain and publish policies and procedures which promote confidence in the conduct of Council.	Publish newly approved or amended policies on Council's website within thirty days of their adoption by Council.	Director, Corporate and Community Services	Policies being reviewed and updated
4.	To provide services to meet the needs of people from cultural and linguistic backgrounds.	Review Local Ethnic Affairs Priorities Statement (LEAPS) and Action Plan 2006-2009.	Completed by December 2007	Director, Corporate and Community Services	Complete
5.	To support individuals and groups taking initiatives to protect, restore, enhance and conserve the environment of the area.	Respond and actively support or refer initiative from community to protect the environment.	The Shire will be involved in the Business Clean Up Campaign and any environmental initiatives with which Council can assist.	Director, Corporate and Community Services	Complete



## PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT - DIRECTOR CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

No	Mission Aim	2007/2008 Activity	Measurement, Method and Target	Responsible Manager	Status
6.	Provide an organisation that displays good management and strong forward planning.	Prepare detailed Management Plan encompassing annual operating budget	Completed by June 2008	Director, Corporate and Community Services and General Manager	Management Plan adopted
		Management Plan and Budget Review undertaken on a quarterly basis.	Completed October 2007, February 2008, April 2008 and July 2008	Director, Corporate and Community Services and General Manager	On Target
		Rates and Annual Charges Outstanding reduced by sale of land for unpaid rates, agreements and strong debt recovery policy.	Rates and Annual Charges outstanding reduced to 9% by June 2010.  Annually hold sales of land for unpaid rates in accordance with S713 of LGA.	Director, Corporate and Community Services	30 June 2007 \$1,521,165 - 30 June 08 \$1,078,965  Sales held in May each year, last sale on June 2008
		Unrestricted current ratio remains at an acceptable level above 2:1	2:00:1 Unrestricted current ratio maintained	Director, Corporate and Community Services	3.59:1 for 2006/2007
		Debt Service Ratio remains below 10%	Below 10% Maintained	Director, Corporate and Community Services	0.02:1 for 2006/2007

## PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT - DIRECTOR CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

No	Mission Aim	2007/2008 Activity	Measurement, Method and Target	Responsible Manager	Status
7.	Provide a secure and compliant Records Management Regime.	Continue with the effective "Authority" record keeping system, in keeping with its obligations under Australian Standards (ISO 15489 as amended)	100% operational with suitably qualified staff.  Ongoing	Director, Corporate and Community Services	Ongoing, scoping of complying electronic records management system undertaken  Staff training ongoing
		Implement electronic record keeping for assessment of effectiveness for Council documents and records.	100% operational with suitably qualified staff by March 2008.	Director, Corporate and Community Services	Scoping of complying electronic records management system undertaken. Expected implementation in 2008/2009
8.	Council to be an advocate for social matters on behalf of the Community.	Complete Social Plan	Draft Complete by June 2007. Adopted by August 2007	Director, Corporate and Community Services	Adopted 21 August 2007
		Report to Council achievements of the Social Plan	Completed by November 2007.	Director, Corporate and Community Services	Complete
		Continually update Council Website.	Ongoing	Director, Corporate and Community Services	Website updated on a regular basis. Redesign under review

## PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT - DIRECTOR CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

No	Mission Aim	2007/2008 Activity	Measurement, Method and Target	Responsible Manager	Status
9.	To ensure that Information Technology is adequate for the organisation.	Continue implementation of "Conquest" System to ensure more effective tracking of Council assets.	Ongoing	Director, Corporate and Community Services	Ongoing
		Continually review "Authority" System to ensure that it is used at full capacity.	Ongoing	Director, Corporate and Community Services	Ongoing
		Provide ongoing training and support to all staff.	Ongoing	Director, Corporate and Community Services	Ongoing training provided to all staff within budgetary constraints
10.	To provide quality service to all customers.	Measure performance through the use of a Customer Satisfaction Survey.	A minimum of 160 surveys per annum, tracking individual responses and mean averages for each survey.  An average of four to be targeted:- 1= Poor, 2= Fair, 3= Good, 4= Very Good, 5= Excellent  Ongoing	Director, Corporate and Community Services	Ongoing
		Review the operation of customer service area.	Ongoing	Director, Corporate and Community Services	Staff training and systems review ongoing
		Further review and develop processes and procedures to ensure optimal delivery and customer satisfaction.	Ongoing	Director, Corporate and Community Services	Ongoing training with processes continually developed

## PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT - DIRECTOR CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

No	Mission Aim	2007/2008 Activity	Measurement, Method and Target	Responsible Manager	Status
11.	To provide a highly skilled and motivated workforce.	Staff are continually provided with adequate resources and training when required to ensure optimal productivity.	Percentage of staff at skill level 2 and above is over 60% by March 2007.	Director, Corporate and Community Services	47% staff at skill level 2 or above
		Staff turnover is kept at an acceptable level of industry standard.	Labour turnover is below average industry standard.	Director, Corporate and Community Services	29.4% turnover for the period July 2007 – June 2008
12.	To network with other Councils and the State Government funding providers to achieve major sustainable benefits through tourism and visitation programs.	Report to Council Achievements of Tourism Marketing Plan.	Completed November 2007	Director, Corporate and Community Services	Tourism Strategy report July 2008 Meeting
13.	To provide an image of Walgett Shire that presents as a tourism destination.	Develop a program to improve presentation of shire towns and entrances.	Completed by July 2007	Director, Corporate and Community Services	New Signage for town entrances installed  Plan for gradual bar removal & CBD environmental upgrade for Walgett included in Council's application to NCCPP application in Partnership with local police and community to be submitted in round 6  Ongoing community consultation

## PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT - DIRECTOR CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

No	Mission Aim	2007/2008 Activity	Measurement, Method and Target	Responsible Manager	Status
14.	To make information regarding structured tour options available to all visitors to the Shire.	Review and update existing tourism information and pamphlets.	Ongoing	Director, Corporate and Community Services	Complete
15.	To offer equal opportunity to all young people within our shire, striving to achieve positive outcome for the benefit of all youth in the shire.	Development of Youth Services Strategy	Completed by September 2007	Director, Corporate and Community Services	Due to extensive ongoing programs this strategy will not be presented until May 2008
		Provision of Quality Supervised Programmes to engage and maintain their attendance relevant to the youth of today and to provide a safe and enjoyable environment	Youth centre attendance figures maintained and increased by 50%.	Director, Corporate and Community Services	Collarenebri approx 15-20 per day Lightning Ridge approx 15-20 per day\ Walgett – average 60 for PCYC. Approx 30-40 per day
		Further Staff appointment and training by June 2008	Director, Corporate and Community Services	All youth workers & Youth Development Officer commenced study Cert III Community Services All youth staff have undertaken First Aid training Youth Development Officer – Management Skills Training Cultural Awareness Training	

## PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT - DIRECTOR CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

No	Mission Aim	2007/2008 Activity	Measurement, Method and Target	Responsible Manager	Status
			Positive Community feedback	Director, Corporate and Community Services	Positive Feedback ongoing
		Renovation of Youth centre buildings to ensure safety standards are met.	Completed by December 2007	Director, Corporate and Community Services	Walgett Youth Centre upgrade complete
16.	To enhance, support and sustain economic development in the Walgett shire.	<p>Develop an Economic Development Plan</p> <p>Develop strategies and events for the effective marketing and promotion of the shire.</p> <p>Access funding opportunities relevant to Economic Development in the Walgett Shire.</p> <p>Look for Business opportunities which have the potential to bring income to the Shire.</p> <p>Provide support to existing businesses in the Shire.</p>	<p>Completed by September 2007</p> <p>Reactivation of Chamber of Commerce in Walgett, Lightning Ridge and Collarenebri.</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Director, Corporate and Community Services</p> <p>Director, Corporate and Community Services</p>	<p>Economic Development Officer Position removed from 2008/2009 budget. No suitable applicants.</p> <p>Liaison with suitable State Government representatives established &amp; ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

## PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT - DIRECTOR CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

No	Mission Aim	2007/2008 Activity	Measurement, Method and Target	Responsible Manager	Status
17.	To ensure a high quality of service and responsiveness to the needs of the Aboriginal community within Walgett Shire.	<p>Develop an Aboriginal Employment Strategy.</p> <p>Develop School to Work Programme</p> <p>Formalise partnerships with Agencies such as Community Facilitator, Interagency groups and Dharriwa Elders group, in order to Provide support to Aboriginal community members in liaising with these agencies.</p>	<p>Draft Completed by November 2007</p> <p>Adopt and implement a Walgett Shire Learning Program by August 2007.</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	Director, Corporate and Community Services	<p>Aboriginal Community Development and Reconciliation Plan presented at April 2008 Council meeting</p> <p>Liasion commenced with Aboriginal Employment Service Re: opening Walgett office</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

## PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT - DIRECTOR, PLANNING AND REGULATORY SERVICES

No	Mission Aim	2007/2008 Activity	Measurement, Method and Target	Responsible Manager	Status
1.	To promptly and professionally assess development proposals.	Process Complying Development Certificate Applications.  Process Construction Certificate and Development Applications	90% of complete applications are finalised within 7 days.  80% of complete applications are finalised within 40 days.	Director, Planning and Regulatory Services	Target met (42 applications average 3.8 days)  Target met 49 Applications Average 27.8 days
2.	To develop a Local Environmental Plan that brings Walgett Shire in line with current New South Wales standards.	Prepare and adopt a land use study and strategy.  Prepare and adopt a Local Environmental Plan based on the land use study and strategy.	Currently in draft form and due for finalisation by May 2007.  Draft Environmental Plan to be finalised by December 2007.	Director, Planning and Regulatory Services	Adopted by Council 11.12.2007. Modified since.  Draft maps & LEP awaiting endorsement by Department Planning
3.	To provide companion animal management and control services.	(a) Address emergency situations where dogs are attacking people and animals.  (b) Micro chipping of companion animals.	(a) All attacks are investigated within 24 hours of notification.  (b) 90% of animals are micro chipped within three working days of request.	Director, Planning and Regulatory Services	Target met  Target met
4.	To ensure that dilapidated premises and environmental health matters are addressed to minimise risks to the public.	Complaints will be promptly investigated.	Action will be taken within two weeks to address 90% of complaints received.	Director, Planning and Regulatory Services	Target met



## PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT - DIRECTOR, PLANNING AND REGULATORY SERVICES

No	Mission Aim	2007/2008 Activity	Measurement, Method and Target	Responsible Manager	Status
5.	Minimise the risk of significant environmental pollution.	Respond to major pollution incidents.	All reported major incidents are investigated within 24 hours.	Director, Planning and Regulatory Services	No major incidents reported
6.	We will responsibly manage planning and environmental issues, while taking into account the needs of the community and we will update means of acquiring information for users.	Integration of GIS (Geographical Information System) into present corporate software package.	Continual operational updates.	Director, Planning and Regulatory Services	Cemetery plot maps being revised.
7.	To monitor algal blooms within the Namoi and Barwon Rivers.	Submit samples of river water from Collarenebri and Walgett to the Department of Natural Resources for analysis of algal content.	Samples are submitted on a weekly basis in summer and fortnightly in winter.	Director, Planning and Regulatory Services	Target met except when significant flow events did not warrant sampling
8.	To provide a water supply to Walgett, Collarenebri, Lightning Ridge, Carinda, Cumborah and Rowena.	Undertake a regular programme of sampling and testing to check water quality.	Monthly sampling of water supply.	Director, Planning and Regulatory Services	Target met
9.	To ensure that rural and urban addressing within the shire is improved to comply with Australian Standards.	Rural Addressing number allocation and signage implementation.  Urban Addressing numbers allocated with community consultation.	Complete by 30 June 2008.  Majority of urban premises clearly numbered by 30 June 2009.	Director, Planning and Regulatory Services	Geo-coding and draft names determined.  Public consultation in progress .  Not yet commenced..

# **APPENDIX C**







# APPENDIX D



# **Walgett Shire Council Social Plan 2007-2010**

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# Executive Summary

## ***Walgett Shire Council Vision Statement***

That the community be able to utilise the opportunities that arise within our environment, to improve their quality of life, while embracing their own culture and social diversity to the benefit of all.

## ***Executive Summary***

The Walgett Shire Community Plan 2007 - 2010 is an update of the 2003 - 2006 Walgett Shire Community Plan/Profile.

This plan was developed by Walgett Shire Council in consultation with community groups who were invited to submit comments.

These community groups were given the opportunity to raise concerns regarding community strengths and issues and to explore meaningful and appropriate solutions.

The following organisations provided comments:-

- *Walgett Community College.*
- *Lightning Ridge Community Facilitator.*
- *Walgett Community Working Party.*
- *Lightning Ridge Home and Community Care.*

This document has been prepared with reference to the "Release of the Social/Community Planning and Reporting Guidelines", Circular 98/41 released by the Department of Local Government on 20 May 1998.

The Plan aims to recognise and build on the existing Council efforts to promote the well-being of all community members and meet their needs through effective social planning.

Social/community planning is a vital corporate tool to help Councils increase their accountability, guide the future of their communities and develop effective planning partnerships with other government and non-government agencies.

Walgett Shire Council is committed to co-operating with the Murdi Paaki Regional Council, Community Working Parties and Interagency Structures within the Council of Australian Government (COAG) Trial. The COAG Trial is an agreement, signed by Federal, State and Local Governments, to work in partnership by setting a workable structure to address local issues. The COAG Trial is due to end on 30<sup>th</sup> November, 2007. It is anticipated these partnerships will continue working within the established structures.

Social or Community Planning is an evolving process. It involves continual updates, assessment, planning, implementation, monitoring and review. The Plan will regularly be updated as social objectives are achieved, new strategies emerge and as the community evolves and changes.

The mandatory target groups for Council's Social Plan are as follows:-

- Children
- Young People
- Women
- Older People
- People with Disabilities
- Aboriginal People
- People from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds (CALD)

## COMMUNITY PROFILE

Walgett Shire Local Government Area is located in the far north west of New South Wales and covers an area of 22,007 square kilometres.

Walgett Shire borders with Queensland to the North, Moree Plains and Narrabri to the East, Coonamble to the South and Brewarrina to the West.

The Shire is located on Gamilaraay country in the southern and eastern sector, and to the north is on Yuwaalaraay country. Acknowledgement of the traditional land is displayed on signs along main roads entering into the Walgett Shire.

The Shire is geographically on the productive black-soil plains of New South Wales, part of which is in the Central Division and part in the Western Division. In the north and north west of the Shire is opal bearing country.

Council's Administrative Building is located in Walgett, on the Castlereagh Highway, 275 kilometres north of Dubbo. Walgett township is situated near the junction of the Namoi and Barwon Rivers.

Walgett Shire comprises of thirteen towns / villages / hamlets spread throughout the Shire. There are seven villages and two rural divisions and the preserved opal fields of Grawin, Glengarry and Sheepyard. Each community has its own identity, through cultural expression, cultural diversity and economic structures and development.

Income is derived from traditional farming and grazing activities, together with cotton and other irrigated crop production. Opal mining, tourism, and service industries are other sources of income for residents of the Shire.

The drought has had an impact on the Shire over these years, as it has on other areas in remote and rural Australia. This has certainly affected employment opportunities within and around the Shire.

### ***Population Profile***

The population of the Shire is very difficult to collate due to the high number of people in the mining areas and the Aboriginal communities who chose not to complete the census. There are also a number of people who reside in the mining areas for different periods of the year but whose main residence is in other Local Government Areas.

The ABS Postal Area Population Estimate in 2006 showed the Walgett Local Government Area population to be 7503.

All statistics below are collated from the 2006 Census QuickStats - Postal Area.

<b>TOWN</b>	<b>AGE 0-14</b>	<b>% 0-14</b>	<b>AGE 15-24</b>	<b>% 15-24</b>	<b>AGE over 55</b>	<b>% over 55</b>	<b>Population</b>
Walgett	611	22.9	308	11.1	624	22.4	2782
Lightning Ridge	528	20.3	204	7.8	897	34.5	2602
Collarenebri	254	25.7	101	10.2	236	23.9	988
Carinda	157	21.6	82	11.3	184	25.3	728
Rowena	51	18.7	25	9.2	48	17.6	273
Burren	27	20.7	10	7.7	37	28.5	130

Junction							
TOTALS	1628	21.5	883	11.5	2026	27.0	7503

All statistics below are collated from the 2006 Census QuickStats- Postal Area.

TOWN	MALE	%	FEMALE	%
Walgett	1537	55.2	1245	44.8
Lightning Ridge	1474	56.6	1128	43.4
Collarenebri	528	53.4	460	46.6
Carinda	378	51.9	350	48.1
Rowena	167	61.2	106	38.8
Burren Junction	68	52.3	62	47.7
TOTALS	4152		3351	

Statistics below are collated from the 2006 Census Quick Stats – Postal Area.

**Indigenous persons (comprises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders)**

TOWN	PERSONS	POPULATION %
Walgett	990	35.6
Lightning Ridge	554	21.3
Collarenebri	374	37.9
Carinda	249	34.2
Rowena	17	6.2
Burren Junction	20	15.4
TOTAL	2204	

Total persons	1991	1996	2001	2006
Male	4596	4843	4678	4152
Female	3612	3707	3632	3351
Persons	8208	8550	8310	7503

***Walgett Shire Population of Towns and Villages Demographic Summary***

Statistics below are taken from the 2006 Census QuickStats – Postal Area.

Principal Towns	Population Summary
Walgett	1537
Lightning Ridge (including residents on opal fields adjoining the town)	1474
Collarenebri	527
Villages	
Burren Junction	20
Carinda	249

Come By Chance	n/a
Pokataroo	n/a
Cumborah	n/a
Rowena	29
Hamlet of Cryon	n/a
Grawin	Itinerant - mining village -n/a
Glengarry	Itinerant – mining village -n/a
Sheepyard	Itinerant - mining village -n/a

---

## **SECTION A - mandatory target groups**

### **CHILDREN**

#### ***Demographics***

The Australian Bureau of Statistics group children as being aged 0-14.

Statistics are taken from the 2006 Census QuickStats - Postal Area.

Collated statistics show 22.8% of the population or 1628 people are aged between 0-14 years.

#### ***Current Services in Walgett Shire***

##### **Education**

Education Facilities in the Walgett Shire include:-

Burren Junction Primary School	Kindergarten to year 6
Carinda Primary School	Kindergarten to year 6
Collarenebri Central School	Kindergarten to year 12
Lightning Ridge Central School	Kindergarten to year 12
Rowena Public School	Kindergarten to year 6
Walgett St Joseph's Primary School	Kindergarten to year 6
Walgett Community College	
• Primary School	Kindergarten to year 6
• High School	Years 7-12
• Distance Education Centres	Kindergarten to year 12

Data collected in May 2007 from the schools in the towns in the Shire showed enrolment as:

Burren Junction	41
Carinda	14
Collarenebri	120
Lightning Ridge	423
Rowena	28
Walgett Primary	100
Walgett Primary Distance Education	50
Walgett High School	126
Walgett High Distance Education	30
Walgett St. Joseph's Catholic School	183
Walgett High Distance Education	30

##### **Health Services**

Health Services in the Walgett Shire include:-

Collarenebri Health Service  
Lightning Ridge Health Service  
Walgett Health Service  
Walgett Aboriginal Medical Service  
Outback Division of General Practitioners

## **Long Day Care Centres**

Long Day Care Centres are based in Walgett and Lightning Ridge. Coolabah Kids, the Walgett Pre School and Long Day Care Centre, opened in February 2007 and is a community owned centre that provides care for children 6 weeks to 12 years. Childcare is available from 8.00am-6.00pm week-days only

*For further information contact the Director of Coolabah Kids on 68283387*

Little Diggers Child Care Centre is a privately owned centre operated in Lightning Ridge and offers Pre School for children aged 3 to 5 years and a day care centre for children aged 2 to 5 years. Childcare is available 8.30a.m.-6.30pm week days only

*For further information contact the Director of Little Diggers Child Care Centre on 68292929*

## **Pre-Schools**

Pre schools operate in Burren Junction, Collarenebri, Lightning Ridge and Walgett for children aged 3-5 years.

- Burren Junction Pre School is open Wednesday and Friday from 9am to 3.30pm.

*For further information please contact the Director of Burren Junction Pre School on 6796 1245*

- Collarenebri Pre-School is open Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 9.30am to 3pm.

*For further information please contact the Director of Collarenebri Pre School on 6756 2093*

- Lightning Ridge Pre- School is open Monday to Friday from 8am to 3.30pm.

*For further information please contact the Director of Lightning Ridge Pre School on 6829 0626*

- Coolabah Kids Pre School in Walgett is open Monday to Friday from 8.45am. to 2.45pm

*For further information please contact the Director of Coolabah Kids on 6828 3387*

- Koolyangara Pre School in Walgett is open Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 4.15am

*For further information please contact the Director of Koolyangara Pre School on 6828 1759*

- Birraleegal Goondi in Walgett is open Monday to Thursday from 9am to 3pm

*For further information please contact the Director of Birraleegal Goondi on 6828 2841*

## **Vacation Care**

Vacation Care in Walgett is provided by Goonimoo Children's Services at the Walgett Youth Centre.

*For further information please contact the Director of Goonimoo Children's Services at the Walgett Aboriginal Medical Service on 6828 1611*

## **Playgroup**

Playgroup sessions are organised in a voluntary capacity by parents in towns and villages across the Shire for children aged 0-5 years.



## **Mission Australia's McKillop Rural Community Services**

McKillop Rural Community Services offer support for children and their families in Walgett and Lightning Ridge. Their services currently include the following programs:

### **Brighter Futures**

This program offers Early Intervention support, referral and brokerage for families with children aged 0-5 years in Walgett and Lightning Ridge.

### **REACH Early Intervention**

REACH Early Intervention offers support and referral for children with learning difficulties 0-5 years across the Shire. Activities such as playgroups involving families are organised on a regular basis.

### **Re-connect Program**

This program is directed at children in years 6, 7 & 8 who are experiencing difficulties at school in Collarenebri, Lightning Ridge and Walgett.

*For further information contact McKillop Rural Services on 6882 5949.*

## **Department of Community Services**

Department of Community Services are based in Walgett and offers support and a referral service across the Shire for families with children aged 0-16 who are at risk and children with disabilities.

### **Domestic Violence Refuges**

Domestic Violence Refuges for women and young children are located in Lightning Ridge and Walgett.

Walgett: Barwon Cottage  
Lightning Ridge: Coorcoron Cottage

## ***Walgett Shire Council operated services***

### **Youth Centres**

Youth Centres are located in Walgett, Collarenebri and Lightning Ridge and offer after school care with planned activities for children aged 5 to 17 years.

*For further information contact the Youth Development Officer on 6828 6126*

### **Vacation Care**

Vacation Care is available in Lightning Ridge, Collarenebri and Grawin during the school holiday periods for children aged 5 to 12 years. The locations are-

Collarenebri:	Town Hall
Grawin:	Club in the Scrub
Lightning Ridge:	Youth Centre -Ella Nagy Hall

*For further information contact the Youth Development Officer on 6828 6126*

### **Family Day Care**

Family Day Care offers home based childcare in Walgett, Lightning Ridge and Collarenebri for children aged 0-12 years and is the only recognised home based service in the Shire.

The service is licensed through the Department of Community Services. Children's services advisors visit from the Department on a regular basis and the service undergoes the process of accreditation with the National Childcare Accreditation Council on an annual basis.

Vacancies are occasioned by a lack of Carers rather than the lack of children. Ongoing advertising campaigns are necessary to continue to recruit additional Carers.

The Family Day Care Cottage is located at 45 Pitt Street Walgett.

*For further information contact the Co-ordinator of Walgett Shire Family Day Care on : 6828 6189*

### **Library Services**

Libraries are located in Walgett and Lightning Ridge.

These services are utilised by members of our community. Both libraries have designated children's areas with books and other resources available. Story time is held in both libraries at regular intervals. Visits to the libraries for planned activities can be organised with the relevant library officers. Both libraries are open 15 hours per week.

<i>For further information contact:</i>	<i>Lightning Ridge Library:</i>	<i>6829 0005</i>
	<i>Walgett Library:</i>	<i>6828 6103</i>

Library deposit stations are located in:

- Burren Junction Post Office, Alma Street, Burren Junction.
- Carinda General Store, Colin Street, Carinda.
- Collarenebri C.W.A. Rooms, Wilson Street, Collarenebri.

## ***Recommendations***

- That Walgett Shire Council continue to ensure that children residing in and visiting the Shire have access to a range of quality care, educational and social facilities and services.
- That Council support the Family Day Care Service to establish in-home care services. Council continue to seek family day carers, and ensure that information regarding the New Carer's grant for assistance in the set up costs for family day care is promoted and made available for prospective carers
- That Council prepare a cost analysis and undertake a feasibility study for establishing a centre based child care service at the Family Day Care Cottage located in Pitt Street.
- That Council investigate the opportunities for work based placements at the Long Day Care Centre to assist in attracting and retaining skilled staff.
- That Council pursue opportunities for available grants and subsidies to improve facilities and further activities at our Youth Centres.
- That Council continue to maintain and provide facilities, including playground equipment, that meet Australian Standards for all the community

# YOUNG PEOPLE

## ***Demographics***

Young people are defined as people aged between 15 and 24 years who have individual needs requiring support and assistance in the transition from childhood to adulthood.

Statistics are from the 2006 Census QuickStats –Postal Area.  
Collated statistics show 11.5% of the population or 883 people are aged between 15 and 24 years.

Young people are a diverse group and include high school students, those who are dependent on the family, those living independently and those who are establishing families.

Accurate enrolment figures are difficult to collate due to the transience of some community families.

## ***Current Services in Walgett Shire***

### **Education**

Education Facilities for young people in the Walgett Shire include:-

- Collarenebri Central School Kindergarten to year 12
- Lightning Ridge Central School Kindergarten to year 12
- Walgett Community College High School Years 7-12

'School to Work' programs is currently in progress with five students in partnership with the Walgett Community College to assist young people to gain employment at a local level when they complete their formal education.

TAFE also offers further education opportunities at campuses located at Lightning Ridge and Walgett. Courses can be structured according to demand.

*For further information contact TAFE on 6828 1911*

### **Activities**

#### **Police Citizen's Youth Club**

The PCYC currently operate a pilot program from a van equipped with play stations, TV screens, sporting equipment and BBQ in Walgett on a fortnightly basis and also travel to Collarenebri and Goodooga during the school holiday period. Council has allocated \$40,000 per annum commencing 1<sup>st</sup> July 2007 to assist PCYC remaining in the Shire on a permanent basis and expand their service provision to all towns and villages in the Shire. Further funding is being sought to allow the employment of a permanent PCYC co-ordinator for the Castlereagh Local Area Command and to allow the van to visit other locations in the Castlereagh Local Area Command at regular intervals. The PCYC staff are supported by Council staff at activities each fortnight, and also by the Sport and Recreation Officer and various volunteers.

*For further information contact the Chairman of the PCYC committee on 6828 3763*

## **Department of Sport and Recreation**

The Department of Sport and Recreation employs a project officer who is based in the township of Walgett. Programs are offered for youth in Walgett and Lightning Ridge. Council has formed a partnership with the Department of Sport and Recreation to offer sports related activities and training opportunities for youth and volunteers in the Shire

*For further information contact the Sport and Recreation Project Officer on 6828 3763*

## **Youth Off The Streets**

YOTS recently received funding from FACSIA to establish programs for youth aged 14-24 years over a two year period. Two YOTS youth support workers will be located in Walgett. It is planned that the youth support workers will work with existing service providers and commence activities in July 2007. Council has budgeted an amount of \$15,000 to support YOTS commencing in Walgett.

## **Blue Light Discos**

Blue Light Discos are a police initiative and are held regularly in the township of Lightning Ridge. These are organised by the local police and volunteers and are held at the Lightning Ridge Bowling Club for young people.

*For further information contact the Lightning Ridge Police Force on 6829 9799*

## **Blue Reelers**

Blue Reelers are a police initiative and show recently released films at no cost in all towns throughout the Shire on a regular basis for families and children

*For further information contact the Walgett Police Force on 6828 6899*

## **Volunteer Activities**

There are a number of volunteer activities for youth that operate throughout the Shire. These include Little Athletics, Junior Football, Basketball, Netball, Soccer, Cricket, Tennis, Swimming and Pony Clubs.

## **Lightning Ridge Community Church**

The Lightning Ridge Community Church provides occasional holiday activities including music and singing for young people in Lightning Ridge.

## **Murdi Paaki Program**

The Murdi Paaki Program provides holiday activities for youth in Collarenebri during the school holiday period. This is run in conjunction with the Vacation Care Program and with the Council Youth workers.

**Sporting Clubs and Facilities include tennis courts, squash courts, golf course, bowls, netball, cricket, rugby union**

Collarenebri Golf Club	Manages and maintains the golf course
Collarenebri Club	Manages and maintains the bowling greens
Lightning Ridge Bowling Club	Manages and maintains the bowling greens
Lightning Ridge Golf Club	Manages and maintains the golf course
Walgett Returned Soldiers League Club	Manages and maintains the squash courts
Walgett Sporting Club	Manages and maintains the golf, bowling, tennis and netball facilities
Walgett Rugby Union Club	Situated adjacent to No. 2 oval
Cricket Clubs	Cricket competitions occur each summer in each town and village
Burren Junction, Carinda, Grawin, Rowena	Facilities established by volunteers include golf and tennis

These facilities are generally able to be accessed by school groups and other youth organisations by contacting the relevant club management.

**Bore Baths, Swimming Pool and Theme Parks**

Bore Baths are located in Lightning Ridge, Walgett and Burren Junction and are maintained by Council. These services are provided free of charge.

Swimming Pools located in Walgett and Collarenebri are currently contracted to private contractors and are maintained under Council's management.

Swimming Pools located in Carinda and Burren Junction are maintained by Council and managed by volunteers and community groups.

Lightning Ridge Swimming Pool and Theme Park is privately operated and subsidised by Walgett Shire Council.

Swimming Clubs offer training opportunities for young people at the pools each summer. The schools in each town access the pools for sports days and carnivals.

The pools are used as venues for providing activities for young people during the hot summer months with an extension of opening hours until the end of April due to climate change.

**Department of Juvenile Justice**

Juvenile Justice works with children who are on Court Orders. Youth Justice Conferencing facilitators are also available to work with young offenders

*For further information please contact the Walgett Juvenile Justice office on 68282010*

**Centrelink**

Centrelink offices are located in Lightning Ridge and Walgett and offer support for young people living in the Shire.

## **Greater Western Health Area Service (GWAHS)**

Health Services are located in Collarenebri, Lightning Ridge and Walgett. Young people are able to access community health and specialist services from these locations. Outreach community health is offered at Carinda on a regular basis.

GWAHS offer varying health related programs focussing on young people.

*For further information please contact the Health Services at:*

<i>Collarenebri</i>	<i>6756 4888</i>
<i>Lightning Ridge</i>	<i>6829 9900</i>
<i>Walgett</i>	<i>6828 6000</i>

## **Walgett Aboriginal Medical Service (WAMS)**

Community Health Staff offer varying health care programs for young people living in the Shire.

*For further information please contact WAMS on 6828 1611*

## ***Walgett Shire Council operated services***

### **Parks, Playing Fields and Ovals, Race Courses and Show Grounds**

Council owns and maintains parks, playing fields, ovals in each town and village in the Shire. It is responsible for managing and maintaining the race courses and/or show grounds in Carinda, Collarenebri, Lightning Ridge, and Walgett. Council is currently reviewing the number of parks and open spaces within the Shire with a plan to upgrade the standard of some parks whilst reducing the overall number of parks by reason of limited use throughout the Shire.

Council is committed to maintaining all sporting ovals taking into account the harsh weather conditions and Council's available resources.

Council is currently in the process of auditing all playground equipment in the Shire. A five year replacement program is currently within the Council's Management Plan for 2007/2008-2011/2012 to replace all playground equipment in the Shire that currently does not meet Australian Standards (AS 4685).

Funding is regularly sought by Council for specific projects relating to parks and playing fields.

Funding will be sought through grant applications to assist with a replacement program for equipment established for parks and playing fields throughout the Shire.

These above facilities are able to be booked by contacting:

*Council's Customer Service Officer – Lands on 6828 6117*

## **Youth Development Officer**

Council employs a Youth Development Officer who is responsible for co-ordinating staff and overseeing all activities and programs organised for the young people at the Youth Centres, Vacation Care Programs, Youth Week, Youth Harmony Days, and other relevant activities. The Youth Development Officer also works with other organisations such as Sport and Recreation, Mission Australia, Murdi Paaki, Youth off the Streets, Walgett Aboriginal Medical Service, Primary and High Schools, PCYC and the local Police to provide quality programs and activities for the youth in the Shire.

The Youth Development Officer pursues funding opportunities for any activities or services associated with Youth across the Walgett Shire.

*For further information please contact the Youth Development Officer on 6828 6126*

## **Youth Centres - located in Walgett, Collarenebri and Lightning Ridge**

After school activities are organised by Council youth workers for children aged between 5-17 years of age. Activities include sport, cultural, music, film, dance, art and craft. Other youth orientated and visiting organisations and artists also work with the youth at the youth centres. Vacation Care programs are also located at the Youth Centres.

- The Youth Centre in Walgett operates from 3-6pm Monday to Thursday.
- The Youth Centres in Collarenebri and Lightning Ridge operate from 3-6pm Monday to Thursday during school terms and provide vacation care during the school holidays from 9am-1pm and

Structured programs are coordinated at the Youth Centres and partnerships with organisations such as Department of Sport and Recreation, Murdi Paaki and Community Churches have been established. In addition, BEST Employment coordinates workplace training from the Walgett Youth Centre.

Walgett Youth Centre is currently investigating a "No School –No- Youth Centre" policy that will assist in addressing school truancy issues.

## **Library Services**

Libraries are located in Walgett and Lightning Ridge  
These services are utilised by young people of all ages and have Information Technology available for research purposes.

*For further information please contact:*

*Lightning Ridge Library:                      68290 0005*  
*Walgett Library:                                      6828 6103*

Deposit stations are located in Burren Junction, Carinda and Collarenebri and have a range of books available for young people. The deposit stations are operated by volunteers.



## ***Recommendations***

- Council continues to support services for young people aged 14-24 years.
- Council support programs initiated by Government agencies that address alcohol and substance abuse by young people.
- Council support the establishment of 'drop in' centres with in the Shire for young people where they can avail themselves of information, encouragement and support.
- Council with the support of Education staff encourage students to participate in the School to Work program.
- Council promote and implement the 'School to Work' Program to all businesses in the Shire, through it's Economic Development Officer, Aboriginal Liaison Officer and the Community Liaison Officer.

# WOMEN

## ***Demographics***

Statistics are taken from the 2006 census QuickStats – Postal Area.  
Collated statistics show 44.8% of the population or 2251 people were female.

By contrast 55.2% of the population or 4152 were males.

Social indicators demonstrate that women not only have lower socio-economic status, but have less employment and educational opportunities, lower incomes, are poorly represented in high status occupations and high income brackets and are over represented in part-time and casual work.

For many women, lack of accessible and affordable child care restricts their opportunities to gain employment.

## ***Current Services in Walgett Shire***

There are very few women specific services in Walgett Shire. Some services offered include:

### **Health Services**

Walgett and Lightning Ridge Health Services offer:

- Women's Health Nurse
- Sexual Assault Nurse

### **General Practitioner**

A female General Practitioner visits Walgett and Lightning Ridge for appointments at regular intervals.

*Appointments can be made by contacting:*

*Walgett Aboriginal Medical Services - 6828 1611*  
*Walgett Medical Practice- 6828 2133*

### **Women's Safe Houses**

- Barwon Cottage, Walgett
- Coocoran Cottage, Lightning Ridge

### **Yawarra Meamei Women's Group**

Yawarra Meamei Women's Group, Lightning Ridge provide information, advice, referral, court support and host a women's group in conjunction with the Lightning Ridge and Regional Trans Cultural Centre once per month.

*For further information contact the Co-ordinator on 6829 2014*

### **Domestic Violence Organisations**

- Walanbaa Yinnar Vharoo – The Walgett Violence Prevention Unit provides legal advice, support and assistance to women.
- A Domestic Violence Counselor visits Walgett at monthly intervals for referrals and appointments.

*For further information contact the Co-ordinator on 6828 3143*

### **Country Women's Association**

The Country Women's Association has members across the Shire and holds monthly meetings in Collarenebri, Lightning Ridge and Walgett. The CWA holds fund raising activities, supports drought relief programs and offers scholarships to local medical students.

### ***Recommendations***

- Shire Council support initiatives by the Health Services to recruit family and domestic violence counsellors.
- Council continue to support proposals to increase the availability of accessible and affordable child care throughout the Shire.

# OLDER PEOPLE

## ***Demographics***

Statistics are taken from the 2006 Census QuickStats – Postal Area.  
Collated statistics show 27% of the population or 2026 people were aged 55 years or over.

The average age of Australians is increasing and the with the retirement of the ‘baby boomers’ ageing of the population is forecast to increase even further over the coming years.

The ‘aged’, ‘older persons’, ‘senior citizens’, ‘elderly’ are all terms used by society to describe people judged by society to be advanced in years in comparison with others.

These terms are influenced by government references when attempting to categorise people for retirement incomes, pensions, and concession rates for government services.

## ***Current Services in Walgett Shire***

There are many services for the older residents of Walgett Shire. These services are usually Home and Community Care funded and concentrate on people who are frail aged and/or disabled.

### **Health Service Care**

Acute health care, community health care, palliative care, emergency care and ambulance services are located at Collarenebri, Lightning Ridge and Walgett Health Services. The three Health Services all offer periods of respite care for people who are frail/aged and people with disabilities.

*For further information please call:*

<i>Collarenebri Health Service</i>	<i>6756 4888</i>
<i>Lightning Ridge Health Service</i>	<i>6829 9900</i>
<i>Walgett Health Service</i>	<i>6828 6000</i>

### **Community Health**

Walgett and Lightning Ridge Health Services provide domiciliary and palliative care nursing to clients in all towns and most villages in the Shire.

The Greater Western Area Health Service’s Mental Health Team provides support, information and referrals for people with Mental Health disabilities.

*For further information please contact:*

<i>Walgett Health Service</i>	<i>6828 6000</i>
<i>Lightning Ridge Health Service</i>	<i>6829 9900</i>

## **Home Care**

- Home Care Service of NSW has offices in Walgett, Collarenebri and Lightning Ridge and service provision is offered across the Shire.

*For further information please contact the Co-ordinators on:*

*Collarenebri and Walgett                      6828 1338*  
*Lightning Ridge                                      6829 0711*

- North West Area Community Options have offices Walgett, Collarenebri and Lightning Ridge and provides case management to clients across the Shire.

*For further information please contact the North West Community Options Co-ordinator on 6756 2547.*

- Ngangana Aboriginal Home Care are available in Walgett, Lightning Ride and Collarenebri.
- Ngangana, Aboriginal Community Options provides case management to aboriginal people in the communities of Walgett, Lightning Ridge and Goodooga.

*For further information please contact the Ngangana Aboriginal Home Care Co-ordinator on 6828 1212.*

## **Hostels for the Aged**

- Kookaburra Court Aged Accommodation Hostel offers full time supported accommodation for 8 residents. When accommodation is available respite care may also be offered.
- Wallengulla Aged Care Units in Lightning Ridge provide accommodation for up to 12 people who are aged.
- Earls Court in Collarenebri consists of 4 single units and 4 double units and is available for Aboriginal people who are aged.

## **ACAT Nurse**

An Aged Care Assessment Team nurse works across the Shire from the Walgett Health Service and provides nursing home and hostel assessment and support for families in the Shire with ageing members.

*For further information please contact the Walgett Health Service on 6828 6000.*

## **Day Care Services / Social Club**

Day Care offers centre based activities, information, support and outings for people who are aged and/or disabled in the community

- Balyarta Day Care Centre is attached to Walgett Hospital/Health Services. Different age groups meet at Balyarta on different days. The Coordinator also visits Collarenebri and Burren Junction regularly to offer Day Care services.
- A Seniors Social Club meets in Balyarta weekly.

- The Day Care Centre in Lightning Ridge is auspiced by the Home Care of NSW, and operates from the Lightning Ridge Bowling Club.

*For further information please contact:*

<i>Walgett</i>	<i>The Co-ordinator</i>	<i>6828 6000</i>
<i>Lightning Ridge</i>	<i>The Co-ordinator</i>	<i>6829 0711</i>

### **Meals on Wheels Services**

Meals on Wheels (Mobile Food Services) are available in Walgett, Lightning Ridge and Collarenebri. Frozen meals are also available for aged residents across the Shire.

*For further information please contact the Community Options Co-ordinator on 6756 2247*

Ngangana Aboriginal Meals on Wheels Services provides Meals on Wheels to aboriginal people who live in Collarenebri, Lightning Ridge and Walgett.

*For further information please contact the Co-ordinator on 6828 1212*

### **Community Transport**

Community Transport offers limited service provision for shopping in Walgett and Lightning Ridge and limited health related transport from Walgett and Lightning Ridge only to major centres.

*For further information please contact the Co-ordinator on 6829 1309*

### **Care Services**

- Yarrabin Outreach offers respite care in Walgett, Collarenebri and Lightning Ridge.
- Walgett Aboriginal Medical Service provide primary health care, community health care, health promotion, health education and health related transport to their clients.
- Outback Division of General Practice provides general health care, promotion and physical activities such as aqua-aerobics.
- Legacy (and local legatees) provide support to widows and children of war veterans in Walgett and Lightning Ridge.
- Returned Soldiers League provides support and referral advice to Returned Service Men and their families across the Shire.

### **Aboriginal Elders**

Walgett Dharriwaa Elders Group promotes Aboriginal culture and understanding in the Walgett Community

*For further information please contact the Elders Group on 6828 2619*

### **Clubs**

A number of Clubs throughout the Shire offer activities for older people. These include:

- RSL Clubs in Collarenebri, Lightning Ridge and Walgett
- Lightning Ridge Bowling Club

- Walgett Sporting Club

## ***WALGETT SHIRE COUNCIL OPERATED SERVICES***

While Council does not operate services for Older People, the services that are available in the Walgett Shire are supported by Council.

### ***Recommendations***

- Council support initiatives to meet the demand for facilities and services in aged care including housing, personal care, transport and recreational needs.
- Council support proposals to increase service provision of programmes aimed at the 'well' aged to assist them to remain at home in order that they can continue to self-care.
- Council support funding submissions by organisations and agencies for Independent Living Unit Accommodation.
- Council support proposals for increased mental and general health care agencies for ageing people through the State and Commonwealth Government for residents of the Shire.

# PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

## *Demographics*

Community Profile Information from the 2006 ABS Census will not be available until the end of October 2007.

<b>Disabled Support Pension Recipients 1995-2000</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>2000</b>
Disabled Support Pension Recipients	462	465	487	493
Child Disability Allowance				66
Care Payment				40
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>599</b>

Source: - Department of Social Security / Note: 2001 Data Centrelink 2000 Qtr 2

The high growth rate of older age groups has created a corresponding increase in demand for community support, medical, hospital, and geriatric services and nursing home and hostel accommodation.

Additional pressure is placed on families, friends, and neighbours to provide care to people whose functional abilities have diminished as a result of ageing.

Government funding now supports people to remain in their own homes in the community for as long as possible and recognizes that provision of community support services is less costly than providing supported accommodation.

## ***Current Services in Walgett Shire***

There are many services for the residents of Walgett Shire who are frail aged and/or disabled.

*For further information please refer to services listed in this document for Older People*

### **Children with Disabilities**

- There are approximately 25 disabled children who are clients of the Department of Community Services. These children are from Walgett, Lightning Ridge, Collarenebri and Coonamble
- NOVA Employment is a Commonwealth funded program that provides employment opportunities and training for people with disabilities in the hospitality industry in CAFÉ 64 located in Wee Waa Street, Walgett.

*For further information please contact the Manager of NOVA Employment on 6828 3440.*



- REACH Early Intervention provides information, support and referral for families of children with disabilities in the Shire

*For further information please contact McKillop Rural Services on 68825949*

- Mission Australia's Housing and Supported Information –level 2 - program provides support and referral for people with mental health issues in Walgett and Lightning Ridge.

*For further information please contact the Co-ordinator on 6882 5949*

### ***Walgett Shire Council Operated Services***

While Council does not operate services for People with Disabilities, the services that are available in the Walgett Shire are supported by Council.

### ***Recommendations***

- Council support agencies seeking funding possibilities that will enable the opportunity to increase health related transport across the Shire.
- Council support organisations and agencies to increase Allied Health, Mental Health and Therapy Service provision across the Shire.
- Council develop, as a priority, a Disability Action Plan through a process of consultation with people with disabilities, service providers and the community to enable compliance with planning needs.
- Council provide disabled access to all Council owned buildings.
- Council support and give encouragement to people with disabilities so that they are aware of available staff training opportunities

# ABORIGINAL PEOPLE

## Demographics

Walgett Shire Council respectfully acknowledges the Aboriginal people of the Shire.

By striving towards a common sense of purpose, working together through issues and sharing experiences, we believe that reconciliation will be advanced at the local level. The community, as a whole, will then be better informed about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander aspirations and concerns.

Reconciliation activity at the local level is essential to the future of a better society. Change for the better comes about when local communities have an opportunity to participate in change. We need to identify the common ground and develop with quality the nature of our relationship.

Statistics collated from the 2006 Census QuickStats - Postal Area show that 2204 Aboriginal people live in the Shire. This is 29.37% of the total population.

ABS 2006 data indicates there is a continuing increase in the number of indigenous people who live in the Walgett Shire. The Australian Bureau of Statistics suggests that the increase in population counts is partly due to an increasing willingness to self-identify and to report all members of the household as being Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (ATSI).

Statistics below are taken from the 2006 Census Quick Stats – Postal Area  
**Indigenous persons (comprises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders)**

TOWN	PERSONS	POPULATION %
Walgett	990	35.6
Lightning Ridge	554	21.3
Collarenebri	374	37.9
Carinda	249	34.2
Rowena	17	6.2
Burren Junction	20	15.4
TOTAL	2204	29.37

### Walgett GLA ATSI Demographic Summary

ATSI	1991	1996	2001	2006	%Change 1996-2006
Persons	1513	1764	1781	2204	36.29
ATSI as % of Population	18.4	20.6	21.4	29.37	34.04

The age distribution of the indigenous population and total population differ in that the indigenous population is much younger. This reflects the high birth rate and mortality rates of the indigenous population who are considered to be 'old' at the age of 45 years.

**There appears to be a consensus amongst Government departments and service providers that the Aboriginal people are represented by larger numbers in Walgett, Lightning Ridge and Collarenebri than those actually identified in the 2006 Census Collection. Walgett has the largest Aboriginal community in the Shire.**

## **Aboriginal Strategy**

Strategies are to be developed in consultation with the Walgett, Lightning Ridge and Collarenebri Community Working Parties, the Community Action Plan and the employment of the Community Facilitators (until 2008) whose roles are to implement the Community Action Plans under the Murdi Paaki Partnership Program. These strategies will include improving education, housing, health and employment opportunities, and reducing the level of alcohol and substance abuse, gambling and anti social behavior.

## ***Current Services in Walgett Shire***

While the main aim of services in the Walgett Shire is to help the Aboriginal communities, non-Aboriginal people are also welcome to access the services. In many cases, both formal and informal partnerships are evident for events and services.

## **Murdi Paaki Partnership Program Community Facilitators, Walgett / Collarenebri and Lightning Ridge/Goodooga**

The facilitators of the programs are primarily responsible for facilitating the implementation of initiatives and strategies to assist in the resolution of social and economic issues in the Walgett Local Government Area of NSW as part of the Murdi Paaki Partnership Program.

One of the objectives is to build on the strong working relationship between Walgett Shire Council, the Community Working Parties in each town, the business Communities as well as State and Commonwealth Government and the Shire Community in general.

*For further information please contact the facilitators on:*

Collarenebri/Walgett            6828 3533  
Goodooga/Lightning Ridge    6829 1888

## **Networking and Community Consultation with Aboriginal Communities**

The Community Facilitators, Interagency and Community Working Parties are the main conduits for consultation between the Aboriginal communities and Government agencies. There are in the main, three groups of Aboriginal people in the Shire with many sub-groupings that are variable. Variations can occur according to the issue under discussion, the state of inter-family relationships and the fluidity of internal community politics. Extensive community consultations are important with each issue raised.

## **Community Working Parties**

Since 2001 Council has supported the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Trial by working closely with actively networking with the Community Working Parties. It is planned that Council will maintain ongoing networking relationships with the Community Working Parties.

## **Walgett Aboriginal Medical Service Co-operative Limited (WAMS)**

Walgett Aboriginal Medical Service (WAMS) provides a comprehensive Health Service and Healthy Living Programs for Aboriginal people and other members of the Shire Community.

Walgett Aboriginal Medical Service also provides outreach service to Collarenebri and other locations in the Shire.

WAMS Services include:-

General practitioner, dental, community nursing, health screening, health education, referrals, advocacy and crisis intervention, transport.

*For further information please contact WAMS on 6828 1611*

A summary of services available in Walgett, Lightning Ridge and Collarenebri include the following:-

<b>WALGETT</b>	<b>LIGHTNING RIDGE</b>	<b>COLLARENEBRI</b>
Walgett Aboriginal Medical Service	Barriekneal Housing Limited	Collarenebri Land Council
Walgett Land Council	Lightning Ridge Land Council	Aboriginal Community Enterprise Service
Walgett Community Working Party	Lightning Ridge CDEP	Mangankali CDEP
Western Aboriginal Legal Service	Ngangana Home Care Service of New South Wales	Ngangana Home Care Service of New South Wales
Walginnam CDEP	Ngangana North West Area Community Options	Ngangana North West Area Community Options
Murdi Paaki Partnership Program	Lightning Ridge Working Party	Collarenebri Working Party
Ngangana Home Care Service	Yawarra Meamei	Murdi Paaki Partnership Program
Ngangana North West Area Community Options	Lightning Ridge Community Working Party	
Koolyangarra Pre School	Murdi Paaki Partnership Program	
Walanbaa Yinnar Wharoo		
Dharriwaa Elders Group		

### **8.3 Walgett Shire Council Operated Services**

While Council does not operate services for Aboriginal People, the services that are available in the Walgett Shire are supported by Council.

### **8.4 Recommendations**

- Council continue to support and encourage employment opportunities for Aboriginal people.
- Council continues its efforts to encourage better understanding of cultural awareness and sharing of differences by liaising and communicating with the community.

- Council support programs initiated by Governments and Aboriginal Organisations to improve accommodation for Aboriginal people.
- Council support programs that allow for educational opportunities within the Shire to enhance cultural and diversity awareness.

# PEOPLE FROM CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS

## *Demographics*

Currently Walgett Shire residents represent some 65 different countries. The Shire's largest Cultural and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) community is in Lightning Ridge where over 55 different nationalities have been counted.

Prior to the 1996 census, residents of the Lightning Ridge CALD community organised a publicity campaign so that the ethnic community would be accurately represented in the data gathered.

Unfortunately, many people chose not to participate and consequently census figures do not accurately represent the ethnic diversity or accurate population of Lightning Ridge.

## ***Current Services in Walgett Shire***

### **Lightning Ridge and Regional Transcultural Community Council**

The Lightning Ridge and Region Transcultural Community Council Inc. (TCC) started operating in Lightning Ridge in January 1996 with State and Federal Funding for the employment of one worker.

The service operates from the Neighbourhood Centre and is available to migrants, service providers, and general community for information and referral service assistance also providing information for the access of Translator Interpreter Services (TIS).

The Migrant Information and Referral Service (MIRS) worker is available on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.

The TCC continues to play a very proactive role in the community, working towards cultural harmony and better understanding of cultural differences.

TCC Migrant Information and Referral services are available to all communities in the Shire on a needs basis.

*For further information please contact the co-ordinator on 6829 2014*

### **Outcomes from Local Ethnic Affairs Priorities Statement (LEAPS)**

Walgett Shire Council's LEAPS aims to achieve the following outcomes over the next 3 years:

- People from the wider community and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds in Walgett Shire will enjoy mutual respect for each other.
- The Walgett Shire community will value and respect the cultural diversity and the similarities of its people.
- Council services will be better able to meet the needs of the people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds will be better able to meet their own needs.

- People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds will be more aware of and able to access Council's services and facilities

### ***Walgett Shire Council Operated Services***

While Council does not operate services for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, the services that are available in the Walgett Shire are supported by Council.

### ***Recommendations***

- Due to the ageing of CALD residents Walgett Shire Council support service providers seeking to secure additional hostel and nursing home beds, especially for people with dementia.
- Walgett Shire Council continually review LEAPS with the view to the ongoing education of staff when dealing with people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- Walgett Shire Council continue staff training sessions for better understanding and compliance with EAPS guidelines.
- Walgett Shire Council ensure people from diverse cultural backgrounds have equitable access to services.

# **ACCESS AND TRANSPORT**

## ***Current Services in Walgett Shire***

Public transport in the Walgett Shire is limited to air and road.

### **Air**

Walgett and Lightning Ridge have airstrips provided by Walgett Shire Council and regulated by the Australian Government's Civil Aviation Safety Authority. Burren Junction, Carinda and Collarenebri have Aircraft landing Areas which are not regulated.

The Air Ambulance Services also use these strips when patients have to be flown out to larger medical centres. In times of emergencies, the strips at Walgett and Lightning Ridge are of a suitable standard for large fixed wing aircraft to land. Walgett Shire Council has also provided several wider stretches of road between Walgett and Brewarrina that are designed to be used by aircraft in emergencies.

Charter flights are common from all towns in the Shire and some individuals either have their own plane or hire a plane from the Aero Club in Walgett. Hangers are provided for lease at Walgett. In Lightning Ridge, privately owned hangars are built on land purchased from Council.

Air Link provides a week day service from Dubbo to Coonamble, Walgett and Lightning Ridge and return. Passengers change aircraft in Dubbo to continue their journeys elsewhere.

### **Road**

The majority of roads in the Walgett Shire are a combination of black soil and bitumen with some red soil and gravel in the northern part of the Shire. Walgett Shire Council continues to seal roads as funding becomes available. Black soil roads become impassable in wet weather.

Walgett township has two major highways in N.S.W. crossing each other in the centre of the town. The Kamileroi Highway passes through the Shire from east to west. The Castlereagh Highway passes through the Shire from north to south. Approximately 15km north of Walgett, the Gwydir Highway joins the Castlereagh Highway. The Gwydir Highway travels north east through Collarenebri to Moree and beyond.

A return daily coach service operates between Lightning Ridge, Walgett and Dubbo, stopping at all towns between Dubbo and Lightning Ridge so that passengers can connect with the XPT to Sydney. The coach departs Lightning Ridge and then Walgett in the early morning 2 days per week to allow people time in Dubbo if they need to access specialist and other appointments in Dubbo and return home the same day.

Collarenebri has no public transport but has a community bus which travels to Moree one day per week.

### **Access in towns and Villages**

Council recognises the need to continue to upgrade and/or develop footpaths, curbing and guttering in towns and villages to allow ease of pedestrian access for residents across the Shire.



## ***Recommendations***

- Council support proposals to provide and improve transport services between towns and outlying villages in the Shire and to regional centres.
- Council continue to audit the condition of footpaths in the central business districts of towns and prioritise areas in greatest need of replacement and up grading to allow ease of access for residents.
- Council, through it's Engineering Department, lobby for additional funding to upgrade footways throughout the major towns within the Shire and outlying villages.
- Council provide in kind and support to service providers who are endeavouring to seek funding to improve transport and access for residents within the Shire.

# **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

## ***Current Services in Walgett Shire***

Throughout the Shire, individuals in organisations are working to develop the communities by helping people to achieve for themselves rather than solving a problem for them.

### **Murdi Paaki Partnership Project**

The Murdi Paaki Partnership Project has appointed two community facilitators, one for the Lightning Ridge/Goodooga communities and one for the Walgett/Collarenebri communities.

Community Working Parties working under the Council of Australian Government's Murdi Paaki Region Trial operates in Walgett, Lightning Ridge and Collarenebri. NSW Premier's Department oversees Interagency meetings held monthly in Lightning Ridge and Walgett for all Service Providers.

### **Neighbourhood Centre Lightning Ridge**

The Neighbourhood Centre in Lightning Ridge is the only formal centre of its type in the Walgett Shire and is mainly operated by volunteers.

Funding from Department of Community Services and the Department of Transport pays for the services of 1.5 staff. Non Government Organisation funding pays for two ethnic advisory officers who work from the Neighbourhood Centre. A range of services includes issuing emergency relief vouchers, transporting frail aged and disabled people to specialists' appointments out of town and to functions in town, acting as a referral point for the community and assisting elderly people living in camps on the opal fields with a range of services that allow the person to remain independent and to retain dignity.

### **Community Organisations**

Community organisations, clubs and associations exist throughout the Shire. Each community organisations has a particular focus and consists of members with similar interests or beliefs. While each organisation, club and association is contributing to the social infrastructure of the community, it is suggested that more interaction and communication would reduce the duplication of services and polarisation of individuals.

Many informal local networks exist between service providers who refer clients to the most appropriate avenue of assistance. Lightning Ridge Service providers and Walgett Service Providers hold regular meetings. These networks offer opportunities for information sharing, a networking communal approach to planning and lobbying for services, advocacy and support.

In order to sustain effectiveness, these networks need to continually self evaluate their direction and purpose.

### **Community Halls**

Walgett Shire Council owns Community Halls in Collarenebri, Rowena and Carinda, which are available for community purposes.

*For further information please contact the Customer Service Officer – Lands on 6828 6117*

# EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT

## *Current Services in Walgett Shire*

### Education

Education provides the opportunities for our children, youth and individuals at large, to have the opportunity to have equal bargaining power, to enter the labour force with equity.

A wide variety of school environments exist across the Shire. It is important that education is seen as a lifetime job and that acquisition of skills, formally or informally acquired, is conducive to an improved quality of life.

The Council strives to provide adequate facilities and works with other agencies to encourage all families to maximise their educational potential.

Available educational facilities:

Burren Junction Primary School	Kindergarten to year 6
Carinda Primary School	Kindergarten to year 6
Collarenebri Central School	Kindergarten to year 12
Lightning Ridge Central School	Kindergarten to year 12
Rowena Primary School	Kindergarten to year 6
Walgett St. Joseph's Primary School	Kindergarten to year 6
Walgett Community College High School	Years 7-12
Walgett Community College Primary School	Kindergarten to year 6
TAFE Campuses are located at Lightning Ridge and Walgett	

Many children in Walgett Shire travel long distances by bus to attend school and for those for whom this is not possible, Distance Education is available. Distance Education is offered by the Community College - Public School (through the Bourke Campus), and Walgett Community College -High School

After completing Primary School, some young people leave to attend Boarding Schools for High School education. The reasons given for this are family tradition, better education and broader curriculum available at larger schools. This can then impact on the overall results of the High Schools in the Shire.

Educationalists find it difficult to convince many students that formal educational qualifications are important because of the lack of local employment opportunities and the belief that opal mining and other labouring employment opportunities do not need formal qualifications.

To gain tertiary qualifications and some trades, students have to go to a city or larger towns. Many students do not have the necessary financial and familial support to take up education, training and employment opportunities outside the Shire. This means that the students who remain in the Shire must be educated to live a better quality of life within their community environment.

Both Walgett Community College and Lightning Ridge Central School offer programs and opportunities to encourage young mothers and mature age students to further their education.

Best Employment assist job seekers to find work and that helps employers find suitable staff.

The Department of Employment, Workplace Relations and Small Business is located in Orange. The Walgett Aboriginal Education Unit a part of this department.

Barwon Darling Alliance was born out of a desire of the Murdi Paaki Regional Council of ATSIC and the Shires of Bourke, Brewarrina, Central Darling, Coonamble, Moree Plains and Walgett to address their common regional concerns regarding high unemployment and serious quality of life issues including education. The Alliance includes 24 towns and covers almost 20 per cent of NSW

# HEALTH

## ***Current Services in Walgett Shire***

Health Services in Walgett Shire are part of the Castlereagh Sector of the Greater Western West Area Health Service. The administration for the Castlereagh Sector is in Coonabarabran.

The area is subdivided into sectors for management purposes.

### **Walgett Hospital and Health Service**

The Walgett Health Service is the major Health Service in the Shire and Walgett District Hospital is a second schedule hospital under the provisions of the Public Hospitals Act 1992. The Service provides health care for all residents and visitors in the Shire with most patients coming from Walgett and the surrounding districts. When necessary, the hospital accepts referrals and patients from the Lightning Ridge, Collarenebri and Goodooga Health Services.

Walgett Health Service Comprises of 31 beds, 23 acute and 8 aged care (Peg Cross Nursing Home). Other services provided are general medical, pathology, radiology, paediatrics, midwifery, palliative, respite, 24 hour accident and emergency and a 3 bed high dependency unit. The Walgett Hospital and Health Service includes an operating theatre that is used by visiting specialists for minor surgery. Nursing staff care for patients in both aged and community areas.

*For further information please contact the Walgett Health Service on 6828 6000*

### **Lightning Ridge Multi Purpose Centre and Health Service**

2006 saw the completion of a multipurpose service facility in Lightning Ridge under the Rural Hospitals and Health Services Program with 24 beds – meeting acute care, aged care and respite needs.

There are 4 holding beds for patients being transferred to a referral centre. Emergency patients currently are transferred to Walgett for minor conditions, and usually to Dubbo if further treatment is required. The Emergency Department operates from the Multi Purpose Centre and is open from 7.30 to 10.30 with a call out service provided after hours.

*For further information please contact the Lightning Ridge Health Service on 6829 9900*

Goodooga (which is situated in the Brewarrina Shire) has its own community health service and low level hospital. However its residents access Walgett and Lightning Ridge Health Services for specialist and other services.

Visiting medical specialist services including ophthalmologist, surgeon, gynaecologist, obstetrician, podiatrist, physiotherapist, pathologist, occupational therapist are provided on a regular basis at both Walgett and Lightning Ridge

### **Collarenebri Multi Purpose Centre and Health Service**

2006 saw the completion of a multipurpose service and facility under the Rural Hospital and Health Service Program, incorporating acute, aged care and allied health, outpatients, emergency, community and Aboriginal Health Services. There is usually one medical officer in town who provides a general practice and on call services. Radiology services are provided by licensed registered nurses. Regular visiting health staff come from Walgett, Dubbo, Lightning Ridge and Moree.

*For further information please contact the Collarenebri Health Service on 6756 4888*

The Villages of Burren Junction, Rowena, Pokataroo, Carinda, Come By Chance, Cumborah, and opal mining areas of Grawin, Glengarry, Sheeppark are communities within the Shire who access services in the larger centres or have access to visiting Community Health Services.

### **Walgett Aboriginal Medical Service (WAMS)**

WAMS is a community controlled organisation Members vote for the nine directors annually. WAMS charter is to provide high quality pro-active health care in includes Post Natal Clinics, General Practitioner Clinics, Dental, Eye, Family, Ear, Men's, Public, Mental, Sexual, Diabetes Health and Drug and Alcohol Counselling. WAMS has an Aboriginal Health Workers based in Collarenebri, operates the Goonimoo Mobil Children Services, Vacation Care Programs and manages the Brewarrina Aboriginal Medical Health Service. Many of these services are provided on an outreach basis to more remote towns and villages. Specific program funded services also travel to other locations beyond the Walgett Shire

*For further information please contact WAMS on 6828 1611*

### **Outback Division of General Practice**

Outback Division of General Practice offers support to service providers in the Walgett Shire through general health promotion and exercise activities for residents to attend.

*For further information please contact the Division's office on 6828 2133*

Rural and Remote Medical Services and Ochre Health Services provide and support medical practitioners who work in Collarenebri, Lightning Ridge and Walgett.

# RURAL

## ***Demographics***

Walgett Shire is recognised as a major grain growing area in Australia. In good seasons it can be the biggest chick pea growing region in the world and have the largest grain receival sites in the Southern Hemisphere. Cattle feedlots, and to a lesser extent, sheep feed lots also operate in the Shire. Walgett Shire has suffered ongoing drought conditions for the past six years which has caused economic, physical and mental health issues in all communities in the Shire.

When detailing the problems and lifestyle difficulties that are faced by a rural and remote community, the people who live out of town on properties need to be included. These people contribute as much to the whole community as do the people in town though their problems and requirements may differ.

Walgett Shire Council Rate Assessments show that currently there are 903 rural properties in the Walgett Shire that usually contribute approximately \$2,822.462 in general rate revenue i.e.72.30 % of total general rates.

Agricultural activities have historically been the major income producer in the Shire. However, the ongoing drought has severely reduced all agricultural activities and potential income.

## ***Current Services in Walgett Shire***

There are numerous rural agencies located in the three major towns offering service provision and information across the Shire. These include:

- Grain trading
- Agronomy
- Livestock trading
- Wool Trading
- Shearing and livestock contractors
- Rural Transport
- Cotton related industries
- Rural contractors
- Rural Counsellor
- Machinery Traders and contractors

Government departments include:

- Department of Primary Industries
- Department of Lands
- Western Catchment Management Authority
- Namoi Catchment Management Authority

# HOUSING

## Walgett

Walgett township is situated on a black soil flood plain with the town perimeter a levee bank. Walgett has both public and private housing and includes housing owned by Aboriginal Housing, Aboriginal Land Council and Murdi Paaki Housing.

Private rental accommodation is very scarce. The greatest call on housing in Walgett is in the rental market for local people, transient professionals and employees, other than teachers and police whose housing is owned by their relevant departments and is rarely available for other rental opportunities.

Because such a large percentage of the Walgett population is in receipt of a pension or benefit, many people find it impossible to save the required deposit for the purchase of their own home.

Aboriginal and Murdi Paaki Housing is specifically for Aboriginal people and have funding to purchase or build further houses to relocate Aboriginal people and relieve the overcrowded conditions in which some people live. Namoi Village and Gingie Mission are two Aboriginal communities outside the levee bank.

The Department of Housing has a limited stock of houses that are fully occupied. An officer from the Department visits Walgett every fortnight for the convenience of tenants.

Centrelink now allows people in receipt of pensions and benefits to elect have rent payments automatically deducted from their payments. This has been greatly appreciated by both tenants and landlords.

## Lightning Ridge

Housing in Lightning Ridge includes housing in the township with supplied amenities and houses and camps on mining leases with no available running water or electricity. There are no Department of Housing homes in Lightning Ridge.

Private rental accommodation is also scarce and expensive. This adds to the difficulty of attracting professional staff to Lightning Ridge.

Barriekneal Housing Corporation is an Aboriginal owned and controlled housing company that builds and manages housing stock specifically for Aboriginal people.

Providers of human services in Lightning Ridge are anticipating an additional shortage of housing suitable for elderly people in the next few years as individuals who are at present just coping with living independently, will soon no longer be able do so.

## Collarenebri

*Housing and land in Collarenebri is currently cheaper than in other centres in the Shire. Rental accommodation again is scarce. Services are limited in the town and unless an individual has access to private transport, life can become very restrictive. Wollie, an Aboriginal Reserve is situated one kilometre from Collarenebri.*

## Other villages

Housing and land are cheaper in all villages than they are in the three major centres in the Shire. Again rental accommodation is very scarce. All services are very limited in villages. Residents need to be able to access private transport to be able to visit other areas.



# ARTS AND CULTURE

## ***Current Services in Walgett Shire***

Culture and the arts need to be recognised as playing an essential role in the well being of sound communities.

The identification of arts and cultural issues within a community needs to be seen as a key aspect of Walgett Shire Council's responsibility.

Aboriginal Art and Culture is a large feature in the Shire.

The Shire recognises there are many local talented artists and performers living within its boundaries. The people in a culturally diverse rural and remote Shire such as ours would benefit profoundly if the community had an equitable opportunity to participate in arts and crafts. It is recognised that arts and crafts offer a powerful tool in developing self esteem for our geographically as well as culturally isolated community.

The youth in the Shire, in particular, experience cultural isolation, and need to be offered an opportunity to participate in the arts and develop a better awareness of the arts.

Arts and crafts offer people an opportunity to new ways of thinking and expression. The opportunity of self-expression through the arts is very rewarding for individuals, groups and communities and the community as a whole benefit from recognizing the value of arts and culture within it.

The arts and cultural industries are to be defined as including the following activities:

*Museums, antiques and collectables, environmental heritage, libraries and archives, literature and print media composition and publishing, theatre, music, visual arts and crafts, design, film, television and other electronic broadcasting and distribution.*

### **Outback Arts Council**

Walgett Shire Council makes a contribution to the Outback Arts Council towards the development of arts and culture and the enjoyment of the arts and culture.

Outback Arts Incorporated offers and establishes innovative and operational plans for the continued development of arts and culture in the Walgett Shire.

### **Art**

- Arts and Crafts produced by local people are offered for sale through local businesses and tourist facilities located across the Shire.
- Art Galleries situated in Lightning Ridge offer works of art for sale and viewing.
- Aboriginal Artwork and crafts are for sale in Lightning Ridge while limited sale opportunities exist in Walgett.
- Museums, Historical Societies and libraries are situated in Walgett and Lightning Ridge.
- 'Waste to Art' competitions are conducted in Walgett and Lightning Ridge.

## **Historical Societies**

Museums are located in Lightning Ridge and Walgett and are operated by committees and volunteers.

### Lightning Ridge

- The museum is located in Morilla Street
- Opening hours are 10am-4pm - Monday, Friday and Saturday

*For further information please contact the Chairman of the Historical Society on 0419 639 120*

### Walgett

- The museum is located in the Old Council Chambers in Fox Street
- The museum is open limited hours

*For further information please contact the Chairman of the Historical Society on 6828 1252*

## ***Walgett Shire Council operated services***

### **Libraries**

- Libraries are operated by Council in Lightning Ridge and Walgett
- Library Deposit stations are available in Burren Junction, Carinda and Collarenebri

*For further information in Library Services please refer to the next section in the document*

# LIBRARY SERVICES

## *Current Services in Walgett Shire*

TAFE offer a mobile library service to Grawin up 3 times per year.

## *Walgett Shire Council Operated Services*

### Library Services

The Walgett Shire is a member of the Northern Regional Library and Information Service, located within and managed by Moree Plains Shire Council.

The Northern Regional Library and Information Service provide an informational and recreational resource to the residents of the shires of Brewarrina, Moree Plains, Walgett and Gwydir.

The Northern Regional Library and Information Service (NRL) aims to develop, maintain and conserve a range of collections, resources and services in order to satisfy the Northern Region community, educational, informational and recreational needs. Staff training and expert advice are provided by the Northern Regional Library to Branch Staff, Council Managers and Councillors.

Walgett Shire pays an annual fee to Moree Plains Shire for provision of library related services and resources. However, Walgett Shire employs the library officers and operates and maintains the two library facilities located in Walgett and Lightning Ridge.

The NRL Library Manager and support staff regularly visits the libraries. NRL also provides support for the library officers, by means of phone support, regular book exchanges and IT support. NRL provide activities such as Story Time for children.

The Walgett Library is located in Wolseley House beside the Walgett Visitor Information Centre. The Lightning Ridge Library is situated next door the Arts and Crafts Shop adjacent to the Sporting Complex. These two libraries are open 15 hours per week.

There are also three library deposit stations in the Shire operated with volunteer support.

- Collarenebri Deposit station is situated in the CWA Rooms and is open either Saturday mornings or on request.
- Burren Junction Library Deposit Station is located in the Burren Junction Post office and is open business hours.
- The Carinda Deposit Station is located in the Carinda Store and is open business hours.

The library services aim to provide a high standard and quality library service that adequately meets the needs of all sections of the community.

Strategies for effective community involvement in Libraries:

- Promotion of exciting changes in Library services.
- Literacy programs.
- Relationship with educational institutions
- Promotion of youth and children's programs

*For further information please contact:*

<i>Lightning Ridge Library</i>	<i>6829 0005</i>
<i>Walgett Library</i>	<i>6868 6103</i>
<i>Walgett Shire Council</i>	<i>6828 1399</i>

# INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

## *Current Services in Walgett Shire*

Never before has so much information been available to so many people. Print and electronic media can provide information on any subject. Unfortunately many people do not have the skills to access IT information. This may be due to shortcomings in their education or because technology is not available, accessible or affordable.

Four categories cover the main issues, concerns and needs raised by residents of the Shire.

### **Cooperation and Networking**

The amount of information available is so vast that is impossible for any one organisation to know everything. In order to maintain an acceptable level of service provision to local communities it is necessary that cooperation and sharing of resources, collective development and maintenance of community information resources, and strong links to specialised services and between local services be encouraged.

### **Information Needs of Clients**

It is essential that information is given to people in ways that make sense to them. The delivery of information to the community needs to be conducted in appropriate language and documentation that meets the divers communication skills within the community and is easy to understand and is user friendly.

Often people do not access centrally based information services due to:

- barriers to communication.
- fear of stigmatisation and lack of confidence when dealing with accessing particular information.
- not knowing where to look, or whom to approach, for information.
- are too busy to look for the information.

### **Information Technology and Communication Infrastructure**

Most people are endeavouring to modernise their communication system. CDMA and satellite networks now provide mobile phone coverage for most of the Shire, however CDMA will be shut down early 2008 and the NextG network rolled in. Efficient Internet access is limited.

A large percentage of the population of the Shire are denied access to information technology. Reasons for this include:

- computers are too expensive.
- people are computer illiterate.
- people view computers as being 'too complicated' for them to cope with.
- people view the Internet as being too expensive and too complicated.

# LEGAL AND SAFETY

## ***Current Services in Walgett Shire***

Walgett is the headquarters for the N.S.W. Police Force Local Area Castlereagh Local Area Command. The area covered includes Walgett, Lightning Ridge, Collarenebri, Pilliga, Coonamble, Goodooga, Carinda, Gulargambone, Burren Junction and Gwabegar.

In Walgett Shire, Lightning Ridge and Walgett stations have a larger proportion of officers while one or two officers serve the other sectors of the police command.

Crime statistics show a variation in the type of crime with most of the crime in the Patrol being alcohol related and domestic incidents, juvenile petty crime and traffic offences. There is a lower level of property crime in Walgett compared with Lightning Ridge partially due of the 'ratting' of opal mines in that town. Statistics currently show a lowering level of street, anti social and behaviour offences in Walgett.

Local courts operate in Walgett and Lightning Ridge with the District Court sitting in Coonamble.

Anecdotal evidence suggests Domestic Violence and Sexual Abuse as major concerns within the Shire. Unfortunately because of the sensitive nature of these offences, often people are unwilling to report, address or even acknowledge the serious implications arising from these issues. The long slow process of community education and awareness will be the main strategies that help to minimise these social crimes.

### **Crime Prevention Plans.**

A template for Crime Prevention Plans is to be developed by the N.S.W. Attorney General's Department and forwarded to all local governments in N.S.W. for their use in developing new Community Safety Precinct Plans.

Council, in consultation with the N.S.W. Attorney General's Department, the Castlereagh Local Area Command and the Shire Community is to form a Community Safety Precinct Committee who will then develop a Community Safety Precinct Plan for the Shire.

### **CCTV in Walgett.**

The Walgett Crime Prevention Committee believe effective CCTV coverage in areas in Walgett identified by the local Police as potential 'hot spots' should reduce anti-social behaviour and malicious damage and should encourage business house owners to remove the existing bars and grills.

A recent Safety Audit conducted in Walgett by the Walgett Police Force and submitted to Council recommended, in order:

1. Upgrading and expanding the CCTV in identified areas.
2. Upgrading lighting in identified areas.
3. Town beautification.
4. Gradual removal of bars and grills.

As a result of this audit, Walgett Shire Council is currently seeking funding to upgrade and expand the CCTV coverage in Walgett, with the support of both the Police and the community.

# RECREATION

## ***Current Services in Walgett Shire***

In Walgett Shire, residents have access to a wide variety of recreational activities.

Each town in the Shire has an Olympic size swimming pool, though these are closed between Easter and the October long weekend. Carinda and Burren Junction have smaller public pools. Adjacent to the pool in Lightning Ridge is a water theme park and a yet to be completed diving pool.

Lightning Ridge, Walgett and Burren Junction have hot bore baths. The Lightning Ridge Bore Bath is very popular with members of the northern European countries who use the pool as a place for social gatherings. The Bore Bath in Walgett has a hoist for disabled people. The Burren Junction Bore Bath has recently been upgraded.

The Norman 'Tracker' Walford Walkway in Walgett is wheelchair accessible and follows the river bank. The track is used regularly and enjoyed by all users. The track signage highlights local vegetation and bush tucker.

Recreation facilities for active sports are quite well provided for within the Shire. Ovals in each town are used for winter and summer sports as well as for occasional outdoor entertainment events. Walgett has a show ground/race course with pavilions and grand stands. Lightning Ridge has a Racecourse and a Rodeo Arena. Collarenebri has a Racecourse.

Council also maintains a number of parks throughout the Shire. With the assistance of a grant, Council is currently establishing a Fitness Track with exercise stations in Apex Park in Walgett

Libraries are located in Walgett and Lightning Ridge. Walgett Shire Council is part of the Northern Regional Library & Information Service and pays an annual fee for the service. Book stock is exchanged every month. Libraries are open for limited hours with paid library officers and volunteers also assist in Lightning Ridge. Library deposit stations are situated in Carinda, Burren Junction and Collarenebri.

# **APPENDIX E**





**EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES  
MANAGEMENT PLAN  
AND  
POLICY STATEMENT**

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# **INTRODUCTION**

## ***EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY***

EEO aims to achieve fair practices and behaviour in the workplace, including:

- Recruitment, selection and promotion practices which are open, competitive and based on equity and merit. Equity is based on the creation of conditions in which all applicants has an equal chance to seek and obtain employment and promotion. This ensures applicants are selected, promoted and treated on the basis of their ability to do the job. Merit is an assessment of an applicant's abilities, skills, knowledge, qualifications and potential, relative to those of other applicants against selection criteria outlined in the position description.
- Assessment of all employees to training and development
- Flexible working arrangements that meet the needs of all employees and create a productive workplace
- Grievance handling procedures that are accessible to all employees and deal with workplace complaints promptly, confidentially and fairly
- Communication to give employees access to information and allow their views to be heard
- Management decisions made without bias
- No unlawful discrimination or harassment in the workplace, and
- Respect for the social and cultural backgrounds of all employees and customers.

## **ELIMINATING DISCRIMINATION**

Discrimination is treating someone unfairly or harassing them because they belong to a particular group.

It is against the law in NSW for an employer, including the Government, to discriminate against an employee or job applicant because of their:

- age
- sex
- pregnancy
- disability ( includes past, present, or possible future disability )
- race, colour, ethnic or ethno-religious background, descent or nationality
- marital status
- carer's responsibilities
- homosexuality, or
- transgender.

In 1977 the New South Wales Government passed the Anti-Discrimination Act. Subsequent amendments to the Act have outlawed discrimination to which Walgett Shire Council is bound.

Both direct and indirect discrimination are against the law.

### ***DIRECT DISCRIMINATION***

Means treatment that is obviously unfair or unequal. For example, if an employer won't hire someone just because the person is a woman is likely to be direct discrimination.

### ***INDIRECT DISCRIMINATION***

Means having a requirement that is the same for everyone but has an effect or result that is unfair to particular groups. For example, not considering an employee's overseas skills and training when determining his level of pay can constitute indirect race discrimination.

Every employee is responsible for helping prevent unlawful discrimination in his or her workplace.

### ***EEO GROUPS***

Are people affected by past or continuing disadvantage or discrimination in employment, As a result they may be more likely to be unemployed or working in a lower paid jobs. These groups are detailed in section 1.2 of this Plan.

## **EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY POLICY**

Walgett Shire Council is committed to a policy of Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) through strategies identified in the EEO Management Plan, as stipulated in S345 of the Local Government Act 1993.

Council will implement policies and procedures that ensure its employment processes are based on merit and encourage the employment of members of disadvantaged groups as follows:

- ✓ Age
- ✓ Sex
- ✓ Pregnancy
- ✓ Disability
- ✓ Race, colour, ethno-religious background, descent or nationality
- ✓ Marital status
- ✓ Carer's responsibilities
- ✓ Homosexuality, or
- ✓ Transgender.

All staff will be encouraged to participate in the equal employment opportunity planning and implementation process through Council's EEO Committee. To ensure that all employees are informed of Council's policy, a copy of the EEO Management Plan, including the policy will be posted on all notice boards. Ongoing consultation with staff and the unions will occur through the EEO Committee.

Overall responsibility for monitoring the effectiveness of this policy and plan is vested with the General Manager. However, all employees of Council have a responsibility in the practical application of the policy. For EEO to be effective in Council there must be a commitment from all Managers, Supervisors and employees responsible for employment practices, for ensuring that this policy is followed and promoted.

## STRATEGIES

Objective	Target group/s	Actions	Timeframe	Responsible Officer	Measurement
1 To implement strategies in Walgett Shire Council based on EEO principles	All staff and potential staff	1.Regular revision of the EEO Policy, which includes the following commitments:	4 May 2008	DCCS	Policy is revised annually using plain English; non discriminatory language, has the endorsement of Council and General Manager; and is translated into languages other than English if appropriate.
		A positive commitment by Council to implement the EEO Management program and incorporate EEO principles into all Council operations;			
		Brief explanation about EEO and the positive benefits it will bring to Council and all Council employees;			
		A statement in relation to Council's responsibility under the Anti-Discrimination Act;			
		A concise statement of the responsibility of Managers and Supervisors in preventing discrimination and promoting EEO;	4 May 2008	DCCS	

		Ways in which the views of staff will be obtained	7 May 2008	DCCS	Policy is referred to Executive Team
		2. Refer EEO Policy to the Executive Team for endorsement.	16 May 2008	DCCS	Policy is referred to Consultative Committee.
		3. Refer EEO Policy to the Consultative Committee for endorsement	13 June 2008	HR Manager/ Consultant	Policy is submitted to Council.
		4. Submit Policy to Council for adoption.			
		5. The Human Resource Officer will distribute information to all staff on the Policy by the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• memo/circular ;</li> <li>• with pay advice;</li> <li>• Policy to be placed</li> <li>• On notice boards;</li> <li>• include in Staff Induction Manual.</li> </ul>			Ensure Policy is distributed to all employees and included in the Staff Induction Manual.

2 Undertake an EEO survey to gather statistical information on the workforce of Council to identify members of EEO groups.	All Staff	Develop and undertake an EEO survey of all staff (or as many as possible)	July/August 2008	HR Manager/ Consultant	Survey is completed by all staff
		Analyse information received and report to Exec Team and Consultative Committee (CC).	September/ October 2008	HR Manager/ Consultant	Information is collated and reported to Exec Team and CC

		Include information in the Annual EEO Report.	November 2008	Consultant/DCC S	Informationis included in Annual Report 2007/08
3 To ensure that management and all employees understand the principles of EEO and their responsibilities in relation to them.	All staff	1.Develop EEO awareness for all employees by using a selection of the following:	All ongoing	HR Manager	Ensure actions become part of Council's corporate calendar.  Check awareness through Employee Survey.
		(a)Include segments on EEO in: Job specific induction training; Staff Induction Manual; Generic staff training.			
		(b)Incorporate statement in job advertisements that Council is an EEO employer.			Check that all workplaces receive material on EEO.
		2.HR Manager to review all Council literature to ensure it conforms to EEO principles.			Monitor progress to assess understanding of EEO by Management and Supervisors and progress of EEO implementation.
		3.HR Manager to identify any barriers to staff having access to EEO information in Council (including aspects such as literacy, use of visual aids, status/job type).			

<p>4. To review recruitment policies and practices to ensure that they conform with EEO principles and demonstrate fair practices.</p>	<p>All staff</p>	<p>Review and/or establish formal policies and procedures where necessary, based on EEO principles for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-job descriptions;</li> <li>-job advertisements;</li> <li>-advertising medium;</li> <li>-establishing Selection Committees;</li> <li>-reviewing applications;</li> <li>-interviewing;</li> <li>-pre employment medical examinations;</li> <li>-post selection support;</li> <li>-placement and induction; and</li> <li>-career path planning.</li> </ul>	<p>July 2008</p>	<p>HR Manager/Consultant in conjunction with DCCS</p>	<p>Policies reviewed and updated where necessary</p> <p>Ensure all actions are achieved by the target date.</p> <p>Set specific strategies for implementation, to address and correct any problem areas</p>
		<p>2.Ensure that all advertisements conform to EEO principles and merit based recruitment. HR Manager/Consultant identifies all relevant HR policies and reviews</p>			
<p>To encourage an increased representation of EEO groups in positions/areas in which they are currently under represented within Council.</p>	<p>Women, members of non-English speaking background groups, Aborigines and physically impaired.</p>	<p>Identify positions /areas in which target groups are currently under represented within Council.</p> <p>Identify access barriers for target groups to these positions/areas.</p> <p>Develop training opportunities to increase the representation of target groups.</p>	<p>September 2008</p>	<p>General Manager and Directors</p>	<p>Increased representation of target groups in identified positions/areas.</p>



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