

This is the first bulletin in a regular communication process established by the Systemic Sustainability Study Taskforce.

It forms part of a strategy to ensure regular and comprehensive communications are undertaken with Local Government members and other interested parties on the progress of the Taskforce in addressing sustainability issues in the sector.

## THE SYSTEMIC SUSTAINABILITY STUDY

The Systemic Sustainability Study (SSS) represents one of the most comprehensive objective assessments of the condition of Local Government conducted in Australia.

The independent Panel engaged in April 2006 conducted extensive research of the sector, releasing their final report in December 2006.

The SSS Panel, in their final report identified four key challenges that threaten to undermine the strength of Local Government in Western Australia:

- The existing fiscal imbalance within Australia's federation;
- A structure built on outdated social and demographic conditions;
- Asset management practices, past and present; and
- Critical capability issues.

The Panel asserted that these challenges will become progressively worse unless some action is taken to resolve them. Developing the sector's response to these challenges is the key role of the SSS Taskforce.

## THE SSS TASKFORCE

The Taskforce will consider the recommendations made by the Panel and, in conjunction with the sector, will develop an implementation plan on how best to carry out those recommendations.

The Taskforce comprises the following people:

- Cr Bill Mitchell, Chair
- Mayor Troy Pickard
- Mayor Paddi Creevey
- Cr Ian West
- Cr Paul Kelly
- Ricky Burges
- Eric Lumsden (LGMA Representative)\*

- Michael Parker (LGMA Representative)\*
  - Wayne Scheggia as Executive Officer
  - Nathan Taylor as Executive Officer
- \* subject to approval by State Council

## SSS PANEL RECOMMENDATIONS

The SSS Panel made 41 recommendations and presented a five point plan for the future:

- Leadership in the process of change by Councils, Councillors, senior management and the Association;
- Securing better revenue outcomes for the industry from government and from the sector itself;
- Strengthening practice and technique in all authorities to improve financial and planning disciplines using a best practice approach;
- Strengthening the focus by government and the industry on new models for efficient service delivery at regional and zone levels; and
- Securing talent and investing in expertise to ensure Councillors, Management and Staff are well equipped for the challenges of 21st century Local Government.

The first aim of the SSS Taskforce is to consider these recommendations and prepare them for industry consultation.

## CRITICAL ISSUES

The Taskforce has developed a Business Plan that describes its objectives and the processes it will use to achieve them.

It will undertake deliberations on the recommendations between February and April of this year; engage with the sector between May and November; and propose final implementation plans at a Summit to be held in November 2007.

Outlined below are four key initiatives of the Taskforce from the Business Plan:

### 1. Regional and Metropolitan Workshops

A series of forums will be held in regional and metropolitan locations (dates and locations to be announced)

These workshops will give Local Government representatives an opportunity to question,



discuss and provide input on the models, options and issues that are being developed. The issues raised and results of each workshop will be communicated via regular Bulletins.

## 2. Implementation plan

A plan, *The Five Point Plan for the Future*, will be created on how each of the recommendations will be addressed, including guidelines on how industry groups can progress specific recommendations and an outline of timeframes for the sector to adopt the recommendations.

The Plan will contain:

- Prioritisation of the recommendations and issues that may arise;
- A timeline for the Taskforce to address each of the 41 recommendations and stages for acting on each of them;
- Ways in which input from the Local Government sector can be included;
- Representative models, and protocols to be considered; and

- Reporting requirements for any industry groups providing input to the process.

## 3. Industry Forum – Cost Shifting: a Five Point Plan for the Future

The cost shifting forum, requested from Councils in a resolution at the 2006 AGM, will also publicly launch the SSS Taskforce project.

This forum will allow the sector an opportunity to commit to the implementation of the endorsed SSS recommendations.

The forum is scheduled for **Friday, April 20**. Prior to the Forum, the Taskforce will prioritise recommendations as well as developing the protocols and processes for industry groups.

## 4. The SSS Special Summit

The SSS Special Summit, to be held in November 2007 will represent the culmination of the Taskforce's work in addressing the recommendations of the SSS.

At this summit the final industry plan will be presented for the endorsement of the Local Government sector.

### Taskforce Workflow Diagram



The third Taskforce meeting was held on Monday, 19 February  
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