

TRAINING OR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

Voluntary or Mandatory?

The SSS Taskforce believes the role of the Association and therefore *The Journey* is to promote Elected Member professional development without proposing that it be compulsory. Councils should be required to adequately resource the participation of Councillors in professional development. A number of elected members have made comment that some Councils do not provide funding for Councillors to participate in training.

Feedback from members in relation to the issue of 'Councillor Training' has been mixed, but clearly there are many people who are opposed to mandatory training.

The Taskforce has acknowledged the concerns of members and has further determined that *The Journey* should describe training for Councillors as Professional Development. "Say it for what it is" - and that Recommendation 47 in the Draft recommending amending the *Local Government Act 1995* be amended to require Local Governments to **resource** the participation of Councillors in professional development. The Taskforce further directed that Recommendation 48 in the draft be amended to state that "**Councillors be encouraged to undertake four core units for professional development in a Councillors first term**"

Recommendations 47 and 48 have been amended to reflect feedback and submissions. In

particular, the amended recommendation is seeking to require Councils to **allocate resources** for Councillors to attend professional development. Attendance at professional development will remain **voluntary** for individual Councillors.

New recommendations have also been added to address elements of feedback and to specifically address issues of remuneration in the context of increased professional development and responsibilities. Referral to Salaries and Allowances Tribunal is a matter of existing policy of WALGA State Council.

There is a new recommendation in respect to the number of councillors. The draft report made reference in the Regional Model concept to reducing the number of Councillors, however there was no specific recommendation. The new recommendation **encourages** Local Governments to undertake regular reviews of the number of Councillors required to conduct the governance functions required. This change follows feedback from the SSS forums held around the State, the SSS Taskforce believes that the issue of the number of Councillors is an issue for individual councils. The new recommendation encourages local governments to undertake regular reviews of the number of Councillors required in undertaking the governance functions.

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