

# WA LOCAL GOVERNMENT GRANTS COMMISSION

ANNUAL REPORT - 2007



Department of Local Government  
and Regional Development  
Government of Western Australia

[www.dlgrd.wa.gov.au](http://www.dlgrd.wa.gov.au)

**ANNUAL REPORT 2007**  
For the year ended 31 August  
2007

**WESTERN AUSTRALIAN  
LOCAL GOVERNMENT GRANTS COMMISSION**

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**ISSN 0818-9099**

Issue: October 2007

## **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

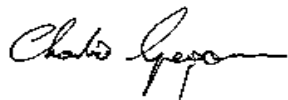
It is my pleasure to present the 2006/07 Annual Report of the Western Australian Local Government Grants Commission (the Commission).

The role of the Grants Commission is to determine the General Purpose and Local Roads Grants for each local government in Western Australia.

The Commission held 28 public and special hearings during the year and I acknowledge the respective local governments for their input and cooperation.

I extend my appreciation to fellow Commissioners for their valuable contribution and to the staff of the Department of Local Government and Regional Development for their support to the Commission during the year.

I would also like to acknowledge Mr John Lynch and Cr Rob Walster for their valuable contributions during the year. John was appointed Deputy Chairman in 1992 and served as Chairman from 2001 to 2007. His commitment and professionalism during this time, was highly valued by local government and the members of the Commission. Cr Walster served on the Commission from 2005 to 2007 and his knowledge and experience were invaluable to the Commission.



Charlie Gregorini  
CHAIRMAN  
October 2007

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Commission wishes to express its appreciation for the assistance, advice and support received from the following organisations during the past year:

- ☞ Australian Bureau of Statistics
- ☞ Department of Health and Aging
- ☞ Department of Local Government and Regional Development
- ☞ Department of Planning and Infrastructure
- ☞ Department of Transport and Regional Services
- ☞ Department of Treasury and Finance
- ☞ Heritage Council of WA
- ☞ Main Roads WA
- ☞ Valuer General's Office
- ☞ Western Australian Local Government Association

As in previous years, local governments responded in a timely manner to the Commission's requests for information. Without this level of cooperation, the Commission would not be able to attend to the many tasks that are essential to the grants determination process.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### THE COMMISSION

Constitution and Role .....	6
Membership of the Commission.....	6
Current Member Profiles .....	7
Commission Officers .....	7

### THE YEAR IN REVIEW

Financial Assistance Grants – 2007/08 Grant Allocations .....	8
General Purpose Grants .....	9
Minimum Grant Councils.....	9
Local Road Funding .....	10
Grants Determination Process .....	10
Publication of Grant Calculations .....	10
Data.....	10
Public and Special Hearings .....	11
Submissions.....	11
Grants to Indian Ocean Territories.....	12
Local Government Finance .....	12

### CHANGES TO THE COMMISSION'S METHODOLOGY

Changes in Population .....	13
Averaging of Equalisation Requirement.....	13
Maximum Reduction .....	13
Minimum Grant Councils.....	13
Revenue Standards .....	13
Expenditure Standards.....	14
Disability Factors.....	14
Local Road Funding .....	14
Special Projects - Roads Serving Remote Aboriginal Communities .....	14
Special Projects - Bridges .....	15
Distribution of the 93% Component via the Asset Preservation Model.....	15

### LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

#### TABLES

Table 1 – General Purpose and Road Funding by State.....	8
Table 2 – Minimum Grant Councils.....	9
Table 3 – Public Hearings .....	11
Table 4 – Submissions Received.....	12
Table 5 – Allocations made to Indian Ocean Territories .....	12
Table 6 – Sources of Local Government Revenue .....	12
Table 7 – Local Government Expenditure.....	13

#### FIGURES

Figure 1 - National Distribution of Financial Assistance Grants .....	8
Figure 2 - Federal Funding Allocated to Western Australia 1986/87 – 2007/08 .....	9

## THE COMMISSION

### Constitution and Role

The establishment and constitution of the Commission is provided for in the *Local Government Grants Act 1978* and requires that a Commission be appointed comprising a Chairman, Deputy Chairman and three other members representing local governments in Western Australia.

The Chairman is appointed on the nomination of the Minister for Local Government. The Deputy Chairman is an officer of the Department of Local Government and Regional Development, nominated by the Department's Director General. The three other Commissioners are elected members selected by the Minister from panels of names submitted by the Western Australian Local Government Association.

Every financial year, following receipt of advice of the level of Commonwealth funding available to local government in Western Australia, the Commission is required to make recommendations to the Minister for Local Government on the amount of these funds to be allocated to each local government. Once approved, these recommendations are then forwarded to the Commonwealth Minister for Local Government for approval.

Members of the Commission are required to consider the general interest of all local governments in the State when exercising their powers. The Commission met twelve times during the year under review.

### Membership of the Commission

For the period under report, 1 September 2006 to 31 August 2007, the members of the Western Australian Local Government Grants Commission were:

#### Members:

Mr Charlie Gregorini <i>OAM JP</i>	Chairman (Appointed on 1 August 2007)
Mr John Lynch	Chairman (Term expired on 31 July 2007)
Mr Quentin Harrington	Deputy Chairman
Cr Linton Reynolds <i>AM JP</i>	Member
Mayor Sally Higgins <i>JP</i>	Member
Cr Rob Walster <i>JP</i>	Member (Term expired on 31 July 2007)

#### Deputy Members:

Mr Ross Weaver	Deputy to Mr Harrington <i>JP</i> (Appointed on 1 March 2007)
Dr Christopher Berry	Deputy to Mr Harrington <i>JP</i> (Term expired on 28 February 2007)
Mr Ronald Hoffman	Deputy to Cr Reynolds <i>JP</i> (Term expired on 31 July 2007)
Mr Milton Evans	Deputy to Cr Higgins <i>JP</i> (Term expired on 31 July 2007)
Cr Laurie Graham	Deputy to Cr Walster <i>JP</i> (Term expired on 30 April 2007)

## Current Member Profiles

### Charlie Gregorini OAM JP

(Appointed as Chairman to the WA Local Government Grants Commission from 1 August 2007, for a term expiring on 31 July 2008.)

Cr Charlie Gregorini was elected to the Shire of Swan in 1977 and held the office of President for 16 years. In 1988 he was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in recognition of his personal contribution to local government. Cr Gregorini became the inaugural Mayor of the City of Swan in April 2000 and also served as Chairman of the Local Government Advisory Board from 1998 to 2007.

### Quentin Harrington

(Appointed as Deputy Chairman to the WA Local Government Grants Commission in 2002. Appointment expires on 31 July 2008.)

Director, Governance and Statutory Support, Department of Local Government and Regional Development. Has held a senior position within the Department of Commerce and Trade in areas of regional development, infrastructure development and industry development.

### Linton Reynolds AM JP

(Appointed to the WA Local Government Grants Commission 1995. Re-appointed in 2006 for a term expiring on 31 July 2008.)

Elected to the Armadale City Council in 1989. He has played an active role in local government service and was elected to the LGA Executive in 1992, the WAMA Executive in 1993, and was LGA President from 1994-96. He was elected Mayor of the City of Armadale in May 2001 and is also a member of the Armadale Redevelopment Authority.

### Sally Higgins JP

(Appointed to the WA Local Government Grants Commission 5 September 2003. Re-appointed in 2006 for a term expiring on 31 July 2008.)

Elected to the Narrogin Town Council in 1997 and elected as the Mayor of the Town in 1999. A small business proprietor, she has had extensive community experience, including involvement as chair and president of various sporting and community groups.

## Commission Officers

Officers of the Department of Local Government and Regional Development provide administrative, secretarial and research support to the Grants Commission.

During 2007/08, officers assisting the Commission's were:

Ross Earnshaw	Manager (Statutory Support Branch)
Nick Markostamos	Research & Policy Officer (Statutory Support Branch)
James Harmer	Administration & Research Officer (Statutory Support Branch)
Clive Shepherd	Consulting Engineer (Part-time)

Janet Morrison and Caroline Korda also assisted the Commission in an administrative capacity at different times.

## THE YEAR IN REVIEW

### Financial Assistance Grants – 2007/08 Grant Allocations

The Western Australian share of Commonwealth funding for 2007/08 was \$205,000,624 being 11.6% of the national allocation of \$1.766 billion. Western Australia's share consisted of \$122,016,044 for the general purpose component and \$82,984,580 for the roads component.

Figure 1

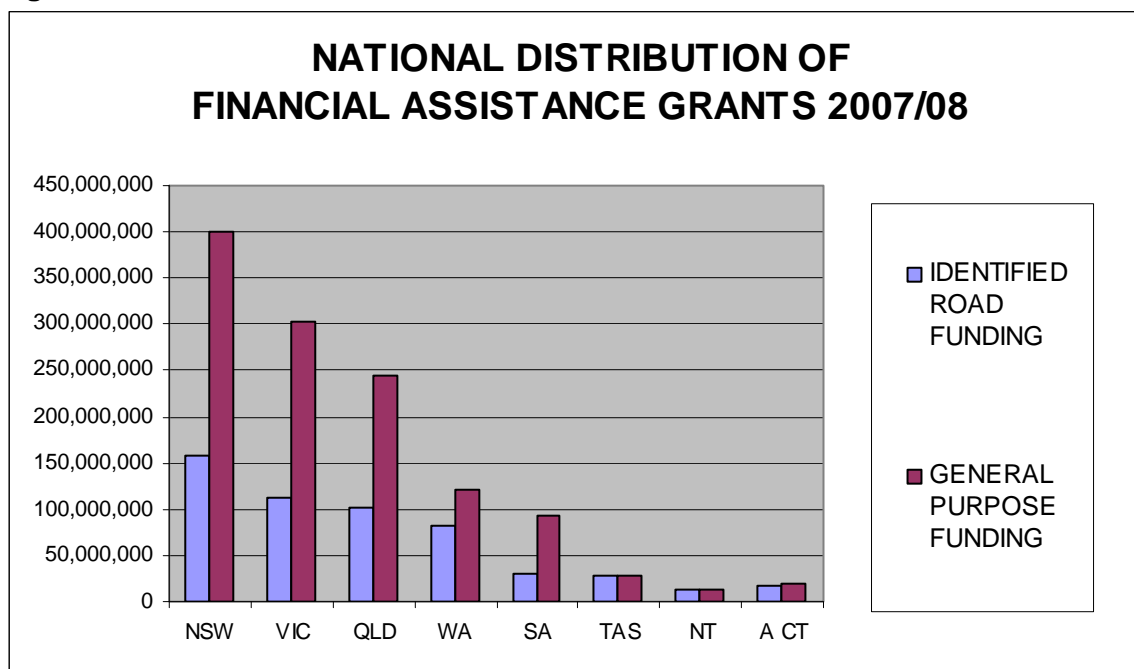


Table 1. General Purpose and Road Funding by State

STATE	GENERAL PURPOSE %	ROADS %
New South Wales	32.66%	29.01%
Victoria	24.82%	20.62%
Queensland	19.95%	18.74%
Western Australia	9.98%	15.29%
South Australia	7.58%	5.50%
Tasmania	2.35%	5.30%
Northern Territory	1.03%	2.34%
Australian Capital Territory	1.63%	3.21%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>

### General Purpose Grant

The national distribution of the general purpose component of the financial assistance grants is determined by the Commonwealth Government on a per capita basis. This results in the more populated States receiving a greater proportion of the available funds. Western Australia received 9.98% of the national general purpose funding (up from 9.92% in 2006/07).

Figure 2

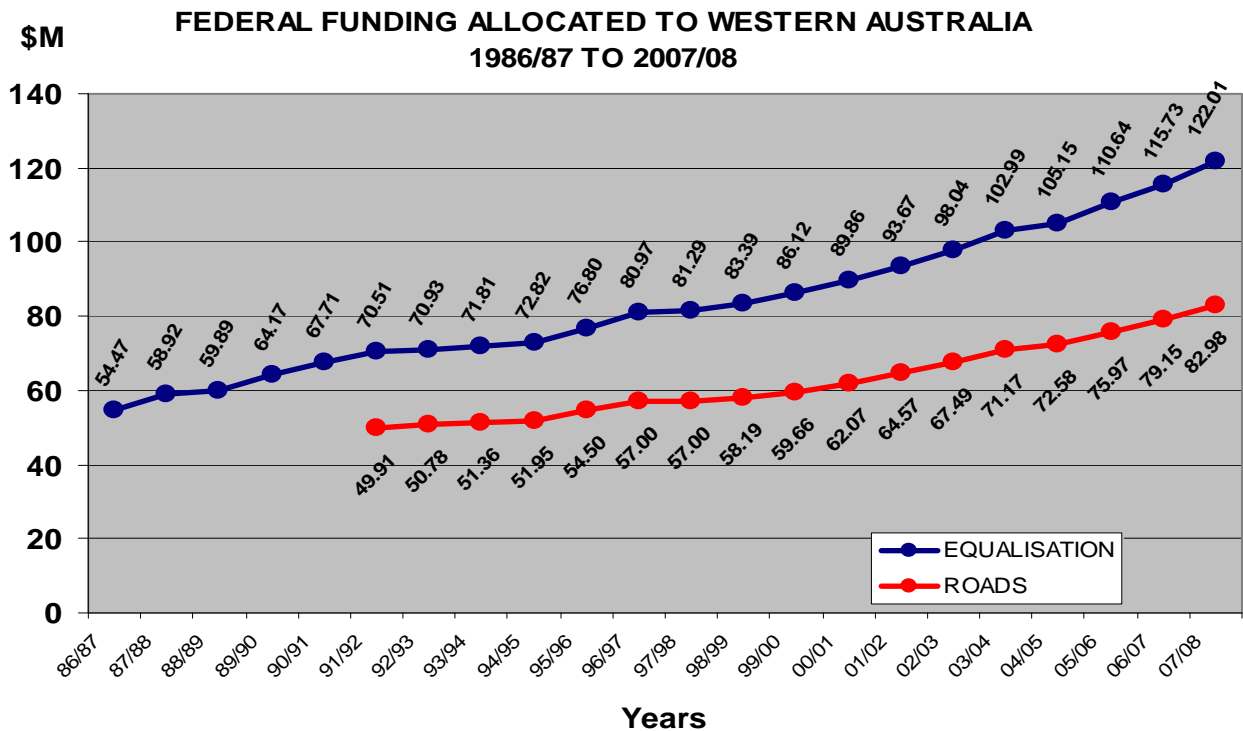


Table 2. Minimum Grant Councils

The 2007/08 determinations resulted in 31 local governments receiving the minimum grant entitlement (being \$17.71 per head of population). Together, these local governments account for \$27.4 million (22.6%) of the general purpose funding pool (and 75.28% of the State population).

Shire of Augusta-Margaret River	City of Melville	Shire of Peppermint Grove
City of Bayswater	City of Nedlands	Town of Bassendean
City of Belmont	City of Perth	Town of Cambridge
City of Bunbury	City of Rockingham	Town of Claremont
City of Busselton	City of South Perth	Town of Cottesloe
City of Canning	City of Stirling	Town of East Fremantle
City of Cockburn	City of Subiaco	Town of Kwinana
City of Fremantle	City of Swan	Town of Mosman Park
City of Gosnells	City of Wanneroo	Town of Victoria Park
City of Joondalup	Shire of Kalamunda	Town of Vincent
City of Mandurah		

## Local Road Funding

The Commonwealth distributes local road funds using a specific methodology that has been in place since 1995.

For 2007/08, Western Australia received \$82.99M of the total funding pool of \$542.7M which represents 15.29% of the national total.

## Grants Determination Process

The Commission maintains its administrative processes so as to provide for timely notification of grants to local governments.

The Minister approved the notional allocation on 22 June 2007.

After the grants were approved, the Commission met with the President and Executive Director of the Western Australian Local Government Association to provide a briefing on the main elements of the year's allocations.

The Commission advised local governments of the final grant allocations on 20 August 2007.

## Publication of Grant Calculations

In keeping with its commitment to transparency and accountability, the Commission made information available in the form of the Balanced Budget calculations, which details each local government's grant. The Balanced Budget was made available to all local governments in September 2007 on the Commission's web page ([www.dlgrd.wa.gov.au/lggc](http://www.dlgrd.wa.gov.au/lggc)).

The Balanced Budget contains all the information relating to each local government's financial assistance grant.

Local governments are also provided with detailed calculations relating to the asset preservation model, which is used to determine the local road funding component of the financial assistance grant.

## Data

The calculations used by the Commission to determine grant allocations are based on statistical and financial data compiled over a number of years and updated annually. Rating data and other information are supplied by local governments to the Commission via an annual information return. The Commission also obtains an extensive amount of data from other sources such as Main Roads WA (road data), the Australian Bureau of Statistics (population and employment demographics) and the Valuer General's Office (land valuations).

For the 2007/08 grant allocations, expenditure data for the financial years, 2003/04, 2004/05 and 2005/06 were used. The three year's data was averaged before being used in the calculation of standards.

## Public and Special Hearings

In accordance with the *Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995*, the Commission undertakes public hearings with local governments. The hearings consist of a formal presentation about the operations of the Grants Commission. During the hearing, local governments are given the opportunity to present submissions to the Commission on their grant determination and any issues relevant to the grants determination process.

The hearings facilitate discussion between local government elected members, staff and the Commission. The Commission holds public hearings with each local government at least once every five years.

Through these hearings, the Commission is able to gain a greater understanding of the issues impacting on local governments and their capacity to provide services and facilities to their communities.

The Commission is also keen to provide all local governments and other interested parties with an opportunity to understand the grant determination process and to present their views on any aspect of the process.

The Commission held 28 public hearings during the year.

**Table 3. Public Hearings for 2006-07**

Eastern Goldfields – 14 to 16 September 2006	Coolgardie, Dundas, Esperance, Kalgoorlie-Boulder, Laverton, Leonora, Menzies, Ravensthorpe
Eastern Wheatbelt – 21 to 24 November 2006	Dowerin, Goomalling, Koorda, Mt Marshall, Mukinbudin, Wongan-Ballidu, Wyalkatchem
Upper Great Southern – 28 Feb to 2 March 2007	Dumbleyung, Gnowangerup, Katanning, West Arthur, Woodanilling
Eastern Great Southern – 14 to 16 March 2007	Corrigin, Kent, Kondinin, Kulin, Lake Grace, Narembeen
Indian Ocean Territories – 16 to 23 April 2007	Cocos (Keeling) Islands, Christmas Island

In addition to the public hearings, local governments may also request a special hearing with the Commission. This allows those local governments not on the annual schedule of public hearings with an opportunity to present a submission on the grant determination process.

This year the Commission held one special hearing with the Shire of Laverton.

## Submissions

Each year, local governments are given the opportunity to highlight particular disabilities they face in the provision of local government services. To facilitate this process the Commission distributes guidelines to assist councils in the preparation of submissions.

This year, 23 submissions were received from the following local governments and contained 95 claims on 41 issues:

**Table 4. Submissions Received**

Coolgardie (S)	Corrigin (S)	Dowerin (S)
Dumbleyung (S)	Dundas (S)	Esperance (S)
Gnowangerup (S)	Irwin (S)	Kalgoorlie-Boulder (C)
Katanning (S)	Kent (S)	Koorda (S)
Kulin (S)	Lake Grace (S)	Laverton (S)
Leonora (S)	Menzies (S)	Mukinbudin (S)
Wanneroo (C)	Wongan-Ballidu (S)	Woodanilling (S)
Wyalkatchem (S)		

Each local government was informed of the outcome of its submission at the conclusion of the grants determination process.

### Grants to Indian Ocean Territories

The Commission was requested by the Commonwealth Department of Transport and Regional Services (DOTARS), to provide advice on the level of financial assistance to be provided to the Shires of Christmas and Cocos (Keeling) Islands.

The Commission assesses the funding requirements of these two Shires in accordance with its methodology applied to mainland local governments. Special disability factors are applied to allow for the unique service environment of the Territories. The outcomes for 2007/08 were as follows:

**Table 5. Financial Assistance Grants for Indian Ocean Territories 2007/08**

2007/08	Population (30 June 2006 est.)	General Purpose Funding	Road Funding	Total Financial Assistance Grants
<b>Christmas Island</b>	1,349	\$2,265,100	\$267,042	<b>\$2,532,142</b>
<b>Cocos (Keeling) Islands</b>	572	\$1,413,516	\$93,225	<b>\$1,506,741</b>

The funding for both Shires is provided by DOTARS. It does not form part of the Western Australian allocation of financial assistance grants provided by the Commonwealth.

### Local Government Finance

Tables 6 and 7 below categorise local government revenue and expenditure. Table 6 shows that rates are the predominant source of income for local government. Table 7 shows that the three largest expenditure categories are Transport, Recreation and Culture, and Governance.

**Table 6. Sources of Local Government Revenue for the 2005/06 Financial year (\$m)**

Source	Rates	Investment Earnings & Loan Income	Fines, Charges, Contributions & Asset Disposals	Operating and Capital Grants	Revenue Not Elsewhere Classified	Total
<b>TOTAL</b>	916.7	73.4	526.8	754.9	58	<b>2,330</b>
%	39.35%	3.15%	22.61%	32.40%	2.49%	<b>100.00%</b>

Source: Local Government Information Returns for the ABS/WA Local Government Grants Commission 2005/06

**Table 7. Sources of Local Government Expenditure for the 2005/06 Financial year (\$m)**

Program	Governance	Law, Order & Public Safety	Education, Health & Welfare	Community Amenities	Recreation & Culture	Building Control	Transport	Other	Total
<b>TOTAL</b>	193.98	48.10	124.12	84.80	437.08	31.10	277.09	674.30	<b>1,870.57</b>
%	10.37%	2.57%	6.64%	4.53%	23.37%	1.66%	14.81%	36.05%	<b>100.00%</b>

Source: Local Government Information Returns for the ABS/WA Local Government Grants Commission 2005/06

## CHANGES TO THE COMMISSION'S METHODOLOGY

### CHANGES IN POPULATION

The Commission has used the latest (30 June 2006) Australian Bureau of Statistics estimates of resident populations (Cat. No. 3218.0), in the calculation of its standards.

### EQUALISATION REQUIREMENT AVERAGING

The 2007/08 grants are based on a four-year average of Preliminary Equalisation Requirement of local governments. This is consistent with the average used by the Commission for the 2002/03, 2003/04, 2004/05 and 2006/07 grants. In using a four-year average, the Commission uses the equalisation requirement for the last 6 years and drops the highest and lowest of the six figures out of the average to lessen the impact of any aberrations.

The Commission believes that this method of averaging provides more long term stability in grant outcomes.

### MAXIMUM REDUCTION

In reviewing the grant allocations derived from the final model, the Commission again decided to limit any decreases to an individual local government to a maximum of 15%.

### MINIMUM GRANTS

For most local governments, the assessed expenditure needs exceed the assessed revenue capacity. In a number of cases, assessed revenue capacity is greater than assessed expenditure needs, particularly in metropolitan local governments. However, these local governments still receive a grant. Commonwealth legislation requires that local governments do not get less than 30% of what they would have received had the funding been distributed solely on the basis of population.

In the 2007/08 assessment, there are 31 local governments (mainly metropolitan) which will receive grants under the minimum grant provision (\$17.71 per capita). Together, these local governments account for \$27.4 million (22.6%) of the \$121.09 million general purpose funding pool (and 75.28% of the State population).

### REVENUE STANDARDS

Revenue standards were adopted by the Commission for Residential/Commercial/Industrial Rates, Agricultural Rates, Pastoral Rates, Mining Rates, Investment Earnings and Other Revenue, as well as Building Control charges and Recreation and Culture charges, consistent with previous years.

## EXPENDITURE STANDARDS

A major change was introduced into the Law, Order and Public Safety (LOPS) expenditure standard. In previous years, four different categories were used to assess local government expenditure, based on the varying levels of protected dwellings across different areas of WA. Since the introduction of the Emergency Services Levy (ESL), the cost of fire prevention for local government has become more standardised across the State and the Commission felt it was appropriate to modify the Standard in a way that assesses all local governments using a single equation. A number of options were presented to the Commission for the revised LOPS Standard and an equation using a combination of population and dwellings data was selected as it provided the best correlation to actual expenditure.

## DISABILITY FACTORS

Once again, a broad range of disability factors were applied. A number of factors have been updated using more current information.

Some minor amendments were made to a number of factors, including the Medical Facilities and the Public Toilet allowances. In general, these amendments affected only a small number of local governments.

The Location factor was revised, with adjustments to the business travel component, to reflect more competitive business environments and higher costs of transportation for local government. This factor remains the most significant of all the Commission's disability factors.

## LOCAL ROAD FUNDING

93% of the Commonwealth funds for local roads is distributed according to the Asset Preservation Model (APM). Under the current principles, 7% of the funds are allocated for special projects (one-third for roads serving Aboriginal communities and two-thirds for bridges). Main Roads WA (MRWA) matches these funds on a \$1 per \$2 basis. The amounts involved are:

Roads Serving Aboriginal Communities	\$ 1,918,289
Bridges	\$ 3,836,578
Distributed according to the APM	\$76,457,523
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$82,212,390</b>

### Special Projects – Roads Serving Aboriginal Communities

In 2007/08 the special projects funds for Aboriginal Access roads will be:

Special Project funds from Commission	\$1,918,289
State funds from Main Roads	\$ 959,145
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,877,434</b>

The Aboriginal Roads Committee advises the Commission on procedures for determining the allocations of Commonwealth road funds for roads serving remote Aboriginal communities, and recommends the allocations that are made each year. Membership of the Committee is made up of representatives from each of the following organisations:

- WA Local Government Grants Commission (Chair);
- Western Australian Local Government Association;

- MRWA;
- Department of Indigenous Affairs;
- Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination; and
- Department of Local Government and Regional Development;

The Committee has established funding criteria based on factors including the number of Aboriginal people served by a road, the distance of a community from a sealed road, the condition of the road, the proportion of traffic serving Aboriginal communities and the availability of alternative access. These criteria have provided a rational method of assessing priorities in developing a five year program.

### Special Projects – Bridges

The Commission's policy for allocating funds for bridges recognises that there are some 370 local government bridges that are in poor condition, and that the preservation of these bridges must be given a high priority.

The Special Project funds for bridges are allocated to only preservation type projects, recognising that some of these projects may include some upgrading, and that preservation includes replacement when the existing bridge has reached the end of its economic life.

Main Roads WA (MRWA) contributes a third of the cost of all projects funded under the special projects program. In 2007/08 the funds for the preservation of bridges will be:

Special Project funds from the Commission	\$3,836,578
State funds from Main Roads	\$1,918,289
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5,754,867</b>

A Bridge Committee advises the Commission on priorities for allocating funds for bridges. Membership of the Committee is made up of representatives from the following organisations:

- WA Local Government Grants Commission (Chair);
- Western Australian Local Government Association; and
- MRWA;

The Committee regularly receives recommendations from MRWA on funding priorities for bridges. MRWA inspects and evaluates the condition of local government bridges and has the expertise to assess priorities and make recommendations on remedial measures. As part of the process, local governments make applications to the Commission for bridge funding each year.

### Distribution of the 93% Component

The \$76,457,523 is distributed in accordance with road preservation needs determined by the Commission's Asset Preservation Model (APM). The model assesses the average annual costs of maintaining each local government's road network and has the facility to equalise road standards through the application of minimum standards. These standards help local governments that have not been able to develop their road systems to the same standard as other more established local governments.

The principles of the APM, such as minimum standards and reconstruction standards, have been retained.

## STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

Compliance with Electoral Act 1907 Section 175ZE(1)

Any public agency required to publish an Annual Report under the FAAA or any other law is required under section 175ZE (1) to include a statement in the annual report setting out the details of all expenditure in relation to:

- advertising agencies;
- market research organisations;
- polling organisations;
- direct mail organisations; and
- media advertising organisations

detailing the amount of the expenditure and in relation to each class of expenditure constituted by subsection (1) the amount of the expenditure for the class, and the name of each person, agency or organisation to whom an amount was paid.

In 2007/08 there was no expenditure on the above.

## MORE INFORMATION

More information may be obtained by visiting the WA Local Government Grants Commission's web page at [www.dlgrd.wa.gov.au/lggc/](http://www.dlgrd.wa.gov.au/lggc/) for

- Local Government Grants Principles and Methods for the Distribution of Commonwealth Financial Assistance in Western Australia
- Balanced Budget Detailed Calculations
- Grant Allocations to local governments in WA
- Annual Reports
- Comparative Statistics by Local Government (1999 – 2007)
- List of Services
- Information Paper
- Customer Service Charter



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**ISSN 0818-9099**

Issue:

October 2007