



**Annual Report  
2008/2009**

**Warrumbungle Shire Council**



# ANNUAL REPORT

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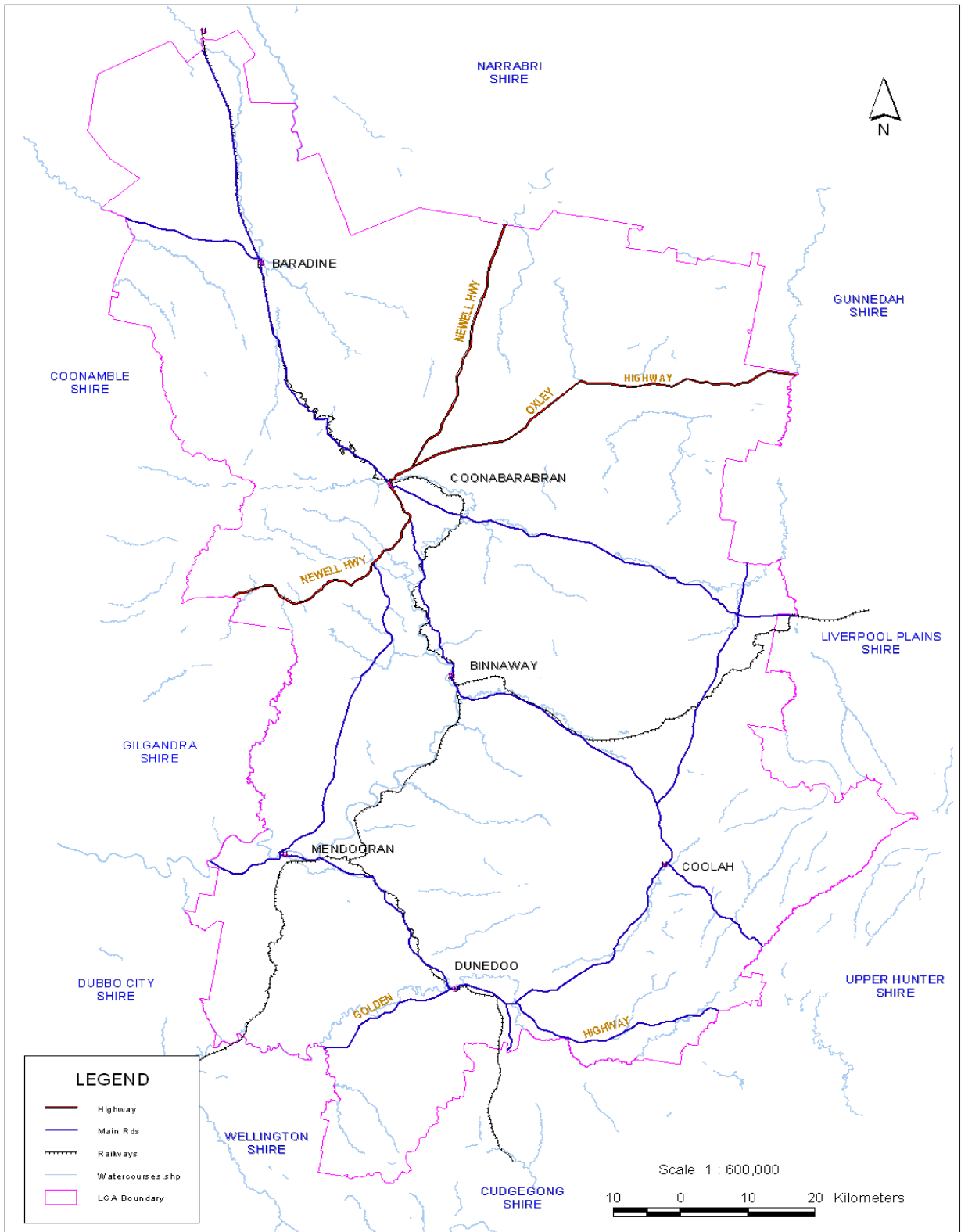
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*(Photos in this publication have been provided by  
Robert Geraghty)*

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Map of Shire



## Snapshot of Warrumbungle Shire

	Shire	Baradine and District	Coonabarabran and District	Binnaway	Mendooran and District	Dunedoo and District	Coolah and District	Australia
Total persons	9,808	940	3,422	494	514	1,653	921	19,855,288
Males	4,977	492	1,688	255	267	832	456	9,799,252
Females	4,831	448	1,734	239	247	821	465	10,056,036
Indigenous	746	70	477	31	25	63	30	455,031
Age 0-4	641	58	218	20	39	93	83	1,260,405
Age 5-14	1,517	134	488	77	63	290	143	2,676,807
Age 15-24	908	105	370	41	61	140	68	2,704,246
Age 25-54	3,492	314	1,185	173	172	572	337	8,376,751
Age 55-64	1,392	135	447	84	85	256	102	2,192,675
65 and over	1,859	196	714	99	93	303	189	2,644,374
Median age	43	43	43	44	44	42	41	37
Median individual Income \$/w	326	282	327	278	315	344	371	466
Median Household Income \$/w	609	550	606	494	567	632	678	1,027
Median family Income \$/w	751	630	776	571	639	789	889	1,171
Median \$ weekly/rent	100	85	105	90	100	90	100	190
Median house \$ monthly/loan	693	462	780	499	570	693	650	1,300

**Snapshot Interpretation** – The above table provides considerable information about the Warrumbungle Shire. The Shire figures include the individual town figures and additional populations. The Table indicates the following:

- Population of the shire, each of the towns and surrounding district.
- Population breakdown showing the number of males, females and indigenous people of the towns and surrounding district including the age group breakdown.
- Median Age indicating that the area is reflecting an aging population with the Median age 16% above the national figure.
- Individual weekly Median income figure \$140 or 30% below the National figure.
- Household weekly Median income figure \$418 or 40% below the National figure.
- Family weekly Median income figure \$420 or 36% below the National figure.
- Rent is a positive with rent \$90 or 47% lower than the National figure.
- House loans a big positive with them \$607 or 46% lower than the National figure.

Source ABS Warrumbungle Shire 2006

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## Message from the Mayor

This year saw Local Government Elections with Councillors Coe, Lewis, Sullivan and Todd and me being re-elected with new Councillors Campbell, Dissanayake, Powell and Schmidt. I was privileged to be elected as Mayor of this new Council and Councillor Murray Coe was again elected as Deputy Mayor.



The year saw many challenges for the new Council; fluoridation again being raised as an issue and after a Community survey run by the Western Research Institute, the decision was made to introduce fluoride to all town water supplies where possible. A consequence of the planned Mendooran water treatment plant was a suite of Best Practice Policies being introduced into both water and sewerage schemes in all towns within the Shire and included a new “user pays sewerage charge”.

The introduction of the suite of Best Practice Policies was incumbent on receiving Government funding for the Water Treatment Plant at Mendooran. The Council received Government funding and borrowed \$1 million to undertake this most necessary project.

The new Council has also been involved in the NSW Water Reform debate where our Council’s decision has been to form an alliance with Gilgandra and Coonamble Shire Councils. We have also had workshops with consultants and planning department staff to progress our new LEP, however progress has been very slow on this project.

The Council was also fortunate to receive \$568,000 from the first ACLG Summit and a further \$224,000 from the second to spend on infrastructure upgrade or replacement.

During the year both State and Federal Governments contributed \$230,000 and \$340,000 respectively to purchase the closed Coonabarabran Long Day Care Centre. That now refurbished and upgraded facility was opened as Yuluwirri Kids, a combined long day care, pre-school complex.

The Shire as a consequence of this, the purchase of the pre-school building in Dunedoo and auspicing of Connect Five won a CEE Award for their continuous support of young children services.

Local community organisations set some longevity milestones with Coonabarabran Rotary celebrating 60 years of service and the Girl Guides and Apex turning 50 and in Baradine the CWA turned 80 and the UHA 70.

On Siding Spring Mountain new investments were made firstly with the installation of a Wide Field Spectrograph (WIFES) at the ANU 2.3m telescope and later in the year the Governor of NSW Marie Bashir AC opened a new telescope “Skymapper” which will automatically map the Southern Heavens.

The planning for a new Shire Chambers has been a tedious process. Different plans have been considered some encompassing a library facility and both a single and a two storey concept. No plan has been unanimously supported at this stage.

The financial collapse has affected our financial position with some investments not paying interest and Councillors were surprised when they found that we also had

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exposure to CDO's. This situation will ultimately affect our ability to carry out some works in the future.

The Council also has to contribute an extra \$300,000 per annum to the Local Government Super Fund which has announced a shortfall of \$350 million in their scheme.

Towards the end of the financial year Council was informed of planned "wind farms" in the Coolah area and an open cut coal mine for a large area south of Dunedoo – Cobborah. At this stage no concrete plans for either project have been made public.

I would like to acknowledge our hard working Council staff, especially the Directors and General Manager and thank them for their support and advice during the year.

**Peter Shinton**  
**Mayor**



New bridge over Castlereagh River

## **General Manager's Message**

I have pleasure in presenting the Warrumbungle Shire Council's Annual Report for the year 2008/2009. This report is provided to communicate the achievements that have

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been made by Council during the year as well as highlighting the major demands confronted during the year. Overall the year has been a mixed one with many positives but also many negatives.

Generally the 2008/2009 financial year will be seen as one of the most difficult years faced. These difficulties arise from the “Global Financial Crisis” and a very sharp down turn in the economy. The long term impact is unknown but I expect that it will be a long and hard recovery. While the impetus for the down turn came from the US economy the fragile basis of our overall monetary system left us exposed.

In the early stages of the down turn we expected with our conservative approach to investments and with the principle being protected it looked like we may have been protected from the large hits that other Councils suffered. We would have expected that our returns would be substantially reduced because that was the price we would pay for the principle protection. The protection however in several instances is not as robust as we expected and we could in addition to losing the interest also be exposed to losses of up to \$2M. This outcome will not be known until each of the investments come to maturity. But we should not underestimate the effects.

The year also saw the conclusion of a bridge building programme that has seen 14 bridges constructed and completed since the amalgamation in 2004. To achieve this outcome Council had an allocation of \$1M towards these projects being completed in 2008/2009. This conclusion will add to the quality of our roads network and allow it to be much more resistant to flood events. There are certainly a number of critical causeways that will still need to be looked at in the future. The decision is a farsighted one and worth the additional expenses incurred. The Director of Technical Services (Kevin Tighe) and his team are to be commended on achieving this outcome. Although the construction of the bridges was contracted out the excellent work done by the outdoor staff in bridge approach works and ancillary works has added to Council’s positive reputation.

In November 2007 the private child minding centres (ABC Learning) closed their operations in Coonabarabran at very short notice leaving many working families without any options for childcare. Rebecca Ryan (Director of Community Services) was able to very quickly gather together a community response and within weeks of the closure had established a temporary solution. This saw the children aged 3 and above being brought into the local Preschool and the children under 3 being cared for through Councils Connect 5 service. This was a country community at its best under crisis.

From the temporary solution the group were able to negotiate funding in partnership with the Federal and State Governments for Council to acquire the ABC Learning Centre premises, create a new model for delivering community based care for children and managing a smooth transition to a fully operational centre again. The efforts of the Council staff and community members ensured this outcome. It is possibly the only one that has been achieved following on from the ABC Learning Centre closures.



It is now approaching 5 years since the amalgamation and time to take a critical look at how we deliver our services. Public meetings have been held over the last year in all six towns on several occasions. The general matters of a new LEP and user pay sewerage were the main topics of separate meetings. The user pay sewerage will be the last step in moving towards a fully complying regime for water and sewerage. There will be a shift in the burden of paying rates within each community and for sewerage charges this is being phased in over 5 years.



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The Local Environment Plan has been a disappointment as after all the hard work has been done the Department of Planning has now decided it will not proceed with LEPs in low growth areas.

A series of meeting in all towns except Coonabarabran were held to review the level of services provided in each town and the rates paid for the services. These meetings were well attended with some strong debate taking place. These issues will continue to be reviewed.

A long planned treated water supply scheme for Mendooran was commenced this financial year and should be commissioned by September 2009. The project is worth nearly \$4M and has a 49% contribution from the State Government. This still means that there will be a dramatic increase in the water rate charge for Mendooran. It is interesting to note that this project has been under discussion for nearly 25 years.

The drawing together of Council's accounting systems continues to be a concern. We have been unable to complete our Annual Statements for 2007/08 which are supposed to be delivered to the Department of Local Government by 7<sup>th</sup> November each year. The valuation of assets took much longer than expected. It is hoped that we can get this aspect better managed in the future.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all staff for their commitment and dedication to bringing the ambitions of Council to reality. As well I commend Council for its continued commitment to the concepts developed and its foresight in allocating the funds to achieve the many ambitious programs it has set. The Warrumbungle Shire Council relies on the efforts and vision of its people both elected and employed to be successful in its undertakings and this synergy is being achieved.

I encourage residents to read this annual report which outlines many of Council's achievements and services. In depth reports from each division of Council are detailed in this publication and offer a clear overview of Council's performance and future direction. Additionally the regular ordinary meetings of Council are held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month and the community is encouraged to attend and keep abreast of issues from within the Shire. The meetings alternate between Coonabarabran and Coolah.

**RJ Geraghty**  
**General Manager**



**Bread Knife**

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## Shire Profile

Population:	9,808 (2006 Census)
Area:	12,380 sq kls
Towns:	Baradine, Binnaway, Coolah, Coonabarabran, Dunedoo, and Mendooran
Villages:	Bugaldie, Kenebri, Merrygoen, Neilrex, Leadville, Cobbora and Uarbry
State Seat:	Barwon
Federal Seat:	Parkes

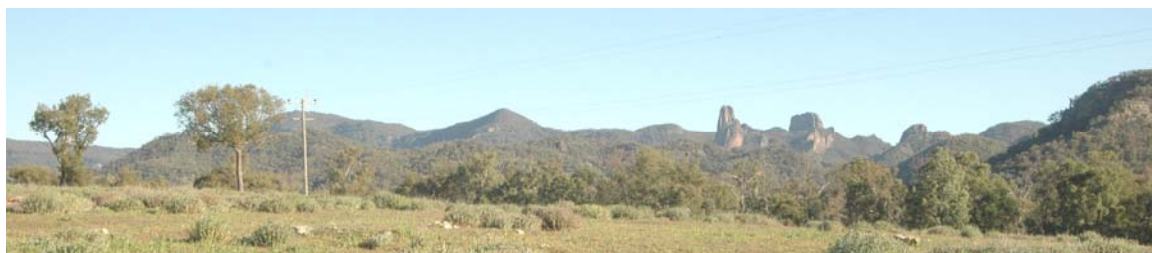
The Warrumbungle Shire is strategically positioned on the Newell Highway mid-way between Brisbane and Melbourne. A number of highways and main roads traverse the shire providing links with surrounding regional centres.

The landscape ranges from extensive plains to undulating hills, from the high basaltic plateau of the Coolah Tops in the east to the rugged mountainous peaks of extinct volcanoes of the Warrumbungle Range to the west of Coonabarabran.

The geography, flora and fauna of the Shire is where east meets west. The mountainous terrain of the Great Divide gives way to rolling hills then the inland plains. The flora and fauna of the wide open plains mix with coastal animal and vegetation progressively across the Shire. A striking example of this is on the eastern boundary of the shire we have the large grey kangaroo and on the western boundary of the shire the large red kangaroo.

The shire is also a meeting place for the nations of our traditional owners and custodian of the land. The northern part of the shire is home to the Gamilaraay people while the southern part of the shire is home to the Wiradjuri people. Also the nations of the Weilwan and Kawambarai (Werriri) come into the Shire on the western border. The history, traditions and culture are being recognised as an important part of the Shire's history.

The stunning night skies, formed by a combination of low pollution, very low humidity and limited cloud cover have drawn astronomers and researchers to Coonabarabran in their search for what lies beyond the confines of the visual night sky. Siding Spring Observatory, located 25kms from Coonabarabran is the site of a number of internationally owned and operated optical telescopes where major research has recorded amazing truths of the universe, supporting Coonabarabran's claim to the name "Astronomy Capital of Australia".



The towns and villages of the shire comprise Coonabarabran, Baradine, Binnaway, Coolah, Dunedoo and Mendooran; all provide wonderful opportunities to experience real

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country Australian lifestyles. Each of the communities has their own special claim to fame. Bush Poetry Festivals, rivalry over ownership of the name The Black Stump, a Steamrail Village, The Oldest town on the Castlereagh, The Gateway to the mighty Pilliga or the Astronomy Capital of Australia – each of our villages reflects the personalities of its residents and the lifestyles.

The shire was traditionally built on agricultural pursuits with the early establishment of wool growing and beef cattle production followed by cereal cropping and today a burgeoning vine growing and horticultural industry.

The communities enjoy the services of quality schools and health services. The shire boasts a broad range of cultural, sporting and recreational activities.

Retailing in each centre provides services to those communities and the provincial centres of Tamworth and Dubbo, located within 2 hours of the centre of the Shire complements local level services.

### **How We Operate**

Warrumbungle Shire Council has approximately 210 staff full and part time delivering services with a budget between \$34M and \$40. Such services as Community Transport, Meals on Wheels, Family Day Care and Libraries all complement the usual array of Local Government services.

Council has five divisional areas to deliver these services and are responsible for the implementation of Council's principal Activities.

The programmes are:

**Executive** – responsible for Governance, Management, Human Resources and Economic Development and Tourism.

**Corporate** – responsible for Corporate Management, Financial Services, Administration Services, IT Support, Supply Services and Bush Fire.

**Technical** – responsible for Design , Road Operations, Urban Services, Fleet Services, Road Contracts, Warrumbungle Waste and Water and Sewerage Services.

**Environmental** – responsible for Environmental Management, Health Services, Regulatory Services and Building Services.

**Community** – responsible for Community Care, Emergency Services, Social Services, Family Day Care, Connect Five, Libraries and Information Services.

**The following section of the Annual Report provides an overview of the achievements in each of the Principal Activity categories during 2008/2009.**



**Flannel Flowers – Pilliga Forest**

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## Councillors 2008-2009

Council has nine (9) councillors with the Mayor elected annually by his or her peers. Local Government elections were held in September 2008. The current Councillors are listed below:

**Councillor Peter Shinton  
(Mayor)**

Phone: (02) 6842 2055

**Councillor Murray Coe  
(Deputy Mayor)**

Phone: (02) 6375 0265

**Cr Kerry Campbell**

Phone: (02) 6843 1145

**Councillor Tilak Dissanayake**

Phone: (02) 6377 1002

**Councillor Ray Lewis**

Phone: (02) 6886 3517

**Councillor Mark Powell**

Phone: (02) 6377 1676

**Councillor Victor Schmidt**

Phone: (02) 6842 1500

**Councillor Ron Sullivan**

Phone: (02) 6842 8226

**Councillor Denis Todd**

Phone: (02) 6843 1831

## Senior Management Team

**General Manager**

Robert Geraghty

**Director Corporate Services**

Carolyn Upston

**Acting Director Environmental Services**

Tony Meppem

**Director Technical Services**

Kevin Tighe

**Director Community Services**

Rebecca Ryan

## Auditors

**Forsyths**

Chartered Accountants  
Armidale

## Solicitors

**Clarke & Cunningham**

Coonabarabran



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## Public Meetings

Ordinary meetings of Council are usually held on the third Thursday of each month commencing at 1.00 pm. Monthly Council meetings are held at either Coonabarabran or Coolah (on an alternating basis). Monthly meetings of Council are advertised and attendance by members of the public is encouraged.

Special meetings are held for the consideration of specific issues as required. Both ordinary and special meetings (with the exception of matters which are considered to be of a confidential nature) are open to the public and public attendance at these meetings is invited.

An open forum time is provided at the commencement of monthly meeting to allow community members to address Council and senior staff on issues of concern. The opportunity to speak at these public forums is advertised regularly and participants are advised that they may speak for 5 minutes. Councillors are encouraged to ask questions at the time of the forum presentation and the Mayor accepts written information that may be provided at that time for distribution to each Councillor.

Business papers are available on the Tuesday preceding the council meeting from the Administration Centre in Coonabarabran and can be accessed on Council's website [www.warrumbungle.nsw.gov.au](http://www.warrumbungle.nsw.gov.au).

## Committees of Council

### *External Committees*

These committees are part of this Council's wider involvement in the region. The majority of these committees have legislative powers creating them or formal agreements between us and other Councils. It is essential that all of these committees have active elected representative involvement.

<b>Castlereagh Macquarie County Council</b> Crs Shinton and Coe	<b>Macquarie Regional Library</b> Crs Powell and Campbell	<b>Traffic Advisory Committee</b> Cr Lewis, Council staff, RTA, police representatives and one community member
<b>Warrumbungle Bushfire Management Committee</b> Cr Shinton, Council staff and bushfire personnel	<b>Local Emergency Management Committee</b> Cr Dissanayake and emergency personnel	<b>The North West Weight of Loads Group</b> Cr Todd, Council staff, group transport and farming representatives from area
<b>Warrumbungle Shire Liquor Accord</b> Cr Schmidt	<b>Catchment Management Authorities</b> Councillor Sullivan and Senior staff represent Council	<b>Central West Explorer Country Tourism Committee</b> Councillor Schmidt and a Staff member represents Council

<b>Police Accountability and Consultation Committee</b> Mayor and General Manager represent council	<b>Central Ranges Natural Gas Association</b> Mayor and General Manager represent Council	<b>Orana Regional Organisation of Councils</b> Mayor and General Manager represent Council
<b>Golden Highway Consultative Committee</b> Cr Coe	<b>Inland Rail Committee</b> Cr Todd	<b>Central Orana Regional Arts Steering Committee</b> Director of Community Services

### ***Internal Committees***

<b>Plant Advisory Committee</b> Crs Sullivan, Lewis, Powell and Coe and staff representatives	<b>Occupational Health &amp; Safety Committee</b> Cr Schmidt and staff representatives	<b>Consultative Advisory Committee</b> Cr Schmidt and staff representatives
<b>General Manager's Review Committee</b> All Councillors	<b>Finance Committee</b> All Councillors	<b>EEO Advisory Committee</b> Cr Sullivan and staff representatives

### ***Community Committees***

These committees are made up either in part or in full of community members and are set out below.

<b>Warrumbungle Aerodromes Advisory Committee</b> Crs Powell and Campbell, Council staff and community members	<b>Roads Review Committee</b> All councillors	<b>Warrumbungle Shire Tourism and Economic Development Advisory Committee</b> Crs Schmidt and Campbell, Council staff and community members
<b>Medical Services Advisory Committee</b> Crs Dissanayake and Todd, Council staff and community members		<b>Warrumbungle Shire Council Social Services Advisory Committee</b> Councillor Campbell
<b>Binnaway Town Committee</b> Cr Lewis		<b>Baradine Town Committee</b> Cr Campbell
<b>Coolah Town Committee</b> Cr Powell	<b>Dunedoo Town Committee</b> Cr Coe	<b>Mendooran/Merrygoen Town Committee</b> Cr Lewis

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## Contacting Council

Council's Administration Centre is located at 20 John Street, Coonabarabran and is open weekdays from 9.00am to 4.00pm (excluding public holidays).

Council can be contacted by telephone on 6849 2000 (or from calls within the Shire on 1300 795 099) or by facsimile on 6842 1337.

Correspondence is to be directed to Council at P O Box 191, Coonabarabran NSW 2357 or you can email us at [info@warrumbungle.nsw.gov.au](mailto:info@warrumbungle.nsw.gov.au)

Visit our website at [www.warrumbungle.nsw.gov.au](http://www.warrumbungle.nsw.gov.au)

Council's office located at 59 Binnia Street, Coolah is open weekdays from 9.00am to 4.00pm (excluding public holidays).

### Media

Council news and information is regularly reported in the local media and council notices are published in the Coonabarabran Times, Coolah District Diary, Dunedoo District Diary and Mendooran, Merrygoen and Neilrex Lions Pride.

## Financial Statements

LGA s.428(2)(a)

The Operating Statement and Statement of Financial Position are part of the external reporting requirements on Council and are in a format which meets external reporting requirements under the Local Government Act 1993. These reports are independently audited by Council's Auditors, Forsyths of Armidale. For further details on Council's audited Annual Statements, a copy can be viewed at Council's offices and on the website when available. (Note: Relevant sections of the Statements will be attached at the end of this Report when available.)

## Rates and Charges written off

(Reg cl. 132)

Set out below are details of Rates and Charges written off during the 2008/2009 rating year.

Rates and charges have been written off in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1993 and Regulations. Individual details of amounts written off are contained in Registers maintained by Council.

Type	General Fund	Water	Sewerage	Total
Pension Rebates	260,656.53	74,110.38	53,871.82	388,638.73
Postponed Rates	858.96	479.76	530.20	1868.92
Other Write Offs	12,324.40	459,858.94	426.11	472,609.45
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>273,839.89</b>	<b>534,449.08</b>	<b>54,828.13</b>	<b>863,117.10</b>

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# Performance in Review 2008/2009

LGA s.428(2)(b)

In accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act, 1993, reports have been submitted to Council on a quarterly basis as to the extent to which the performance targets set by the 2008/2009 Management Plan have been achieved during the year.

The following pages provide an overview of the achievements for the principal activities listed below:

<i>PROGRAMME</i>	<i>PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES</i>
1 EXECUTIVE	Council General Manager Human Resources Services Economic Development and Tourism
2 TECHNICAL SERVICES	Design Projects Road Operations Urban Services Fleet Services Road Contracts Warrumbungle Waste Water & Sewerage Services
3 ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES	Environmental Management Health Services Regulatory Services Building Services
4 CORPORATE SERVICES	Corporate Services Management Financial Services Administration Services IT Support Supply Services Bush Fire
5 COMMUNITY SERVICES	Community Care Emergency Services Social Services Family Day Care Connect Five Libraries Information Services



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## EXECUTIVE SERVICES

The Executive Services component of Council's activities has essentially the umbrella role of establishing the direction and supervising the outcomes for the whole organisation. The direction is set by Councillors through policy and the management plan while the delivery and supervision of outcomes is undertaken by the General Manager. As well, a number of functional activities that Council sees necessary and critical to the welfare of the Council and community are retained in this portfolio and achieved by the direct actions of the General Manager.

This Executive Services section now has four objective areas one relating to Councillor activities, another relating to the General Manager's supervisory activities, the third Human Resources Services and the fourth Economic Development and Tourism. To understand the detailed purpose of the executive functions I have listed the activities within each of these objectives and they are:

### **Councillor Objective: -**

<b><i>Civic activities</i></b>	Civic functions, Australia Day functions and donations to organisations
<b><i>Councillor activities</i></b>	Councillors fees and travelling, membership of the Shires Association, conferences and Councillor training costs

### **General Manager Objective: -**

<b><i>Organisation Structure Activities</i></b>	Staff training, organisation change, resource sharing and implementing changes to the Act
<b><i>Public Relations Activities</i></b>	To keep community informed of Council activities through all available avenues
<b><i>Economic Promotions Activities</i></b>	To promote and foster at every opportunity the unique advantages of Warrumbungle Shire to potential developers
<b><i>Management Activities</i></b>	To ensure that all Council programs are met, subject to available resources. That new management practices are considered to improve efficiency and effectiveness

Within the Executive Services area all the targets set within the Management Plan have been met with several continuing programmes needing to be considered by Council to bring forward. In the donations area the Coolah Radio Station project is yet to be completed and the Field Family cemetery project is yet to commence.

During 2008/09 there was a Local Government election held with the original budget being \$70,000 with the final expenditure coming in under budget with a total cost of \$60,506 being incurred.

As mentioned in my earlier "General Managers Message" there have been major economic upheavals in the international and local financial markets. In response to these impacts the Federal Government made additional monies available to Councils across Australia as part of a stimulus package – Warrumbungle Shire Council was fortunate to receive \$568,000. That was a significant amount more than any of our neighbours received. In developing a priority list Council sought submissions from across the Council area. There were a large number of submissions with a selected group of projects getting the green light. All these projects must be completed by the

end of September 2009. The projects selected were spread across the six towns and were the following projects”

<b>BARADINE</b>		
	Baradine Bore	68,250
<b>BINNAWAY</b>		
	Castlereagh Avenue and River Park	45,700
<b>COOLAH</b>		
	Coolah Swimming Pool	37,500
	Bowen Oval	46,250
<b>COONABARABRAN</b>		
	Coonabarabran Youth Club	31,500
	VRA Headquarters	52,500
	Coonabarabran Swimming Pool	36,750
	Coursing Club No2 Oval	15,750
	Coonabarabran Town Hall - Amenities , Court Yard	110,000
<b>DUNEDOO</b>		
	Bolaro Street & Milling Park	91,799
<b>MENDOORAN</b>		
	Mendooran Pool	32,000
		567,999

In the latter part of June the Federal Government also brought forward the payment of the Financial Assistance Grant and while this has to be carried forward into the financial year 2009/10 it was of great assistance in Council managing its short term cash flow.

Overall this part of Council's operations showed a saving (or surplus) against projections of \$34,094.

**R J Geraghty**  
General Manager



Grass Trees Coolah Tops

Tourism and Economic Development Objective:-

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In the 2008-2009 financial year, Warrumbungle Shire Council's Tourism and Economic Development Unit continued its involvement in a variety of projects for the benefit of the shire and its residents.

During the year there have been two staff changes in the Unit – both the Team Leader and Tourism Promotions Officer positions were vacated and new staff commenced in February 2009.

The Tourism & Economic Advisory Committee continues to meet quarterly and progress elements of the Tourism and Economic Strategic Plan within budget.

**Economic Development Highlights:**

- The development of a cluster project with five surrounding shires for a Skills Audit and Attraction Strategy; Stage 1 was successfully funded by DSRD for the appointment of a consultant to gather and analyse information (statistical, business/industry trends) for each local government area to identify the gaps and opportunities for employment within the participating shires. This project continues into the 2009-10 year.
- The establishment of Greyhound Australia in Coonabarabran and the reinstatement of a 7 day interstate bus service linking Coonabarabran to Melbourne and Brisbane and points beyond; the establishment means that Coonabarabran will now have a professionally staffed full reservations and service office and that a freight service will be commenced in the next financial year.
- Co-ordination of the Warrumbungle Shire Galaxy Business Awards in partnership with the Coonabarabran & District Chamber of Commerce and the subsequent success of several shire businesses at the Orana Regional Business Awards held in Bourke.
- Council approval of the plan for development of the Industrial Estate in Coonabarabran

Other actions and achievements for the period include:

- The provision of services to assist local businesses was undertaken with business focussed workshops for the community including an eCommerce Seminar part funded by AusIndustry under the Travelling Experts Program; assistance with the co-ordination of Business Breakfasts including those provided by New England Credit Union; the distribution of funding information to community groups, development co-ordinators and businesses; consultation with prospective business developers for a number of significant business ventures and assistance with submissions for events.
- Meetings with business related agencies and organisations included: DSRD, Orana ACC, Mudgee BEC, Economic Development Officers Forums, Central Ranges Natural Gasline and Commonwealth Rehabilitation Services. The Team Leader also attended Liquor Accord Meetings, Chamber of Commerce Meetings, Film Central, SEGRA Conference, DECC Meetings on the establishment of the Pilliga Forest Discovery Centre at Baradine and Plan of Management for the Warrumbungle National Park. Meetings have also been held with Santos, Greyhound and State and Commonwealth Local Members.
- Promotion of Warrumbungle Shire as a place to live, to invest and develop new businesses has been undertaken utilising several forms of media including:
  - the publication of a set of individual town brochures to promote Warrumbungle Shire towns were designed and printed to complement a Shire information pack targeting potential new residents (primarily families) and business;

- 
- the design and printing of two additional shire banners for use at consumer shows and Council-sponsored or supported events, community events, meetings etc.
  - the participation of the shire in Country Week at Rose Hill in partnership with GO WEST saw a positive level of enquiry;
  - a series of targeted advertising into eastern suburb newspapers over two periods;
  - advertising in the Australian Senior newspaper;
  - famils for journalists from the Coast to Country Magazine and subsequent advertising and editorial
  - Community and business grants information distributed to community development officers and groups and assistance provided to groups submitting for funding.
  - As a members of Film Central we have been invited to propose locations for a number of feature films and advertisements and while we may not have been successful this provides an opportunity to profile the area to a new market.

#### **Tourism Highlights:**

- New attractions, events and activities build confidence and have an impact across the whole of the tourism industry. The recently completed Pilliga Forest Discovery Centre at Baradine provides us with a new attraction which is attracting visitors at a level higher than projected; the Goanna Tracks MotoX complex at Bugaldie, while not yet complete has already created interest in the motoX world and is promoting for national level competition. The ongoing success of the Warrumbungle Crooked Mountain Concert, Warrumbungle Festival of the Stars and the Hartwood Campfires and Country Music Festival attracted visitors from all eastern states, many of whom stayed for an extended period and visited the region.
- A funding submission to Tourism NSW/DSRD for a Cluster Marketing campaign was successful; the cluster comprises Warrumbungle, Gilgandra, Coonamble and Narrabri Shire and targets South East Queensland with a direct mail, television advertising and face to face consumer show for Spring.

Other actions and achievements in tourism include:

- Familiarisation tours have been undertaken to ensure that staff and volunteers at the Visitor Information Centre are aware of the tourism product within the Shire.
- Ongoing accreditation of the Coonabarabran Visitor Information Centre and the servicing of information distribution points across the shire ensure a good level of information is available to visitors.
- Promotion of the Shire has included the purchase of advertising in regional and national publications (including Style Magazine, The Wanderer, Port Stephens Times, Illawarra Mercury), the participation in marketing initiatives of Newell Highway Promotions and the Central Tourism NSW, the tourism consumer shows in Sydney, Hunter Valley, Penrith, Melbourne, Adelaide, Canberra and Brisbane. The updated Datatrax unit in the VIC is a means of ensuring afterhours information service delivery. Several media opportunities have presented to us at no cost - World's Largest Virtual Solar System Drive featured in two editions of Australian Road Rider, a half page editorial featured in Qantas Inflight Magazine and a two page editorial and pictures featured in the Sydney Morning Herald Traveller.
- Visitor Centre staff maintain the warrumbungleregion.com.au website as well as the STDW website to ensure currency of information. Staff from the Unit



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represent on a number of internal council committees as well as regional tourism committees.

- The design brief for the 2009-10 Warrumbungle Shire Tourism Brochure was let in April for a new brochure to be available for distribution in October.
- Coonabarabran and other towns within the shire have attracted interest from charity rallies and staff have provided information and assistance to promote the region as a great place to visit and hold such events.
- The development of a travel loop through Baradine to Narrabri and the design and publication of a brochure specific to the drive.
- The design was finalised for information boards for southern shire communities and boards ordered

**Aileen Bell**

**Team Leader Economic Development and Tourism**

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# CORPORATE SERVICES

## Director's Overview

The Corporate Services Division primarily provides services to the other divisions of Council to enable them to provide their services to the community.

Following on from my report for 2007-2008, there were and continue to be a lot of challenges in the Corporate Services Division, mostly in the finance department.

### **Administration**

The administration area of Council is working well and delivering all the required outcomes.

#### Performance Target

To develop and maintain cost effective and operationally efficient secretarial services and an operationally effective records management system to meet the defined needs of the organisation whilst ensuring a customer focused administration service meeting the needs of the community through quality customer service.

#### Result

With a full complement of well trained staff, Administration Services met their targets:

- correspondence and reports prepared as required for internal customers;
- registration of incoming mail and emails into the electronic document management system (EDMS);
- business papers distributed to Councillors and senior staff on the Monday prior to each Thursday Council meeting with copies to the media and public available two days prior
- four hundred and seventy three (473) resolutions of Council have been recorded during the year as a result of the Council meetings together with two hundred and nine (209) committee resolutions.

#### Future Challenges

1. Council's EDMS requires replacement in the immediate future. This will allow Council to move to an industry standard EDMS and Email program.
2. Following on from that, data will need to be migrated, records staff trained to a high level of competency and all staff introduced to new software and trained to an adequate level.

### **Finance**

The Finance Department remains under resourced in terms of human resources which means other staff have been under pressure to deliver the required outcomes.

At the end of the 2008-2009 financial year the Annual Financial Statements for 2007-2008 remained outstanding. This has been a failing of the finance department for a number of years but hopefully with the steps taken to sort out issues resulting from:

- the fallout over amalgamating the accounts from the two previous councils;

- 
- the implementation of new finance software and
  - other matters impacted by the two previous issues
- we are now moving forward in a positive direction.

Work on the 2008-2009 statements commenced immediately the 07-08 statements were submitted and it is expected that these will be lodged without problems before the end of 2009. Again they will be a little late but expectations are that this is the last time we will be late with our statutory obligations.

### Achievements

- *Investments:*

Whilst the Global Financial Crisis severely impacted many Councils across Australia, the primary loss to Warrumbungle Shire Council was the loss of income from investments. Our investments have been written down in value according to the state governments guidelines (\$2.2M in 2007-2008 and a further \$460,000 for 2008-2009) although we may not actually realise those debts.

As markets recover our investments are recovering and since most of them are long term and were made with the intention of holding them to maturity, we may actually recover most of our initial investment.

The loss of projected income of \$460,000 for 2008-2009 has impacted on our cash flows for the year, but in summary Warrumbungle Shire Council has fared far better than many others.

- *Rates and User Charges:*

Unpaid rates in 2007-2008 was 14% and has improved to 9% in 2008-2009.

The unpaid rates percentage is one of the factors by which the Department of Local Government measures Council. This improvement is as a result of taking a very proactive approach to debt recovery. Frequently the initiation of legal proceedings has resulted in negotiation of arrangements for those in debt which they are realistically capable of meeting. Council staff have been and continue to be, very compassionate and reasonable in making arrangements for those experiencing financial difficulty.

For the first time in many years Council commenced the process to sell properties for unpaid rates in 2008-2009. The sale will take place in December 2009 and this should further reduce our unpaid rates percentage.

In 2008-2009 we improved our level of service delivery in the issuing of water usage charge notices with all of them being delivered on time.

This year there has been a joint effort between the Technical Services Division and Corporate Services to meet the challenge of creating a charging regime for "user pays sewerage", deemed by the state government to be implemented so that Council complies with "best practise" guidelines.

### Challenges

There are further challenges ahead for the 2009/2010 year:

- 
- Completion of 2008-2010 Annual Financial Statements, but as stated earlier progress has been made and we are not expecting problems;
  - Replacement of staff for vacant positions – it should be noted that there is a world-wide shortage of skilled finance staff and it is very difficult to attract people with high skill levels to rural areas;

### **Property Services Management**

The targets for maintenance and repairs to Council properties managed by Corporate Services were carried out within budget and within designated time frames.

### **Communications and Information Technology.**

The telephone system is currently working well as is Council's Virtual Private Network as supplied by Telstra.

There have been some problems with Council's computer network mostly caused by the frequent "blackouts and brownouts" in Coonabarabran which because of the lack of a UPS (uninterrupted power supply) impacts on the networks primary server. Budget recommendations for the 2010/2011 year will be to purchase a UPS adequate for our current needs and the new building when it is completed.

#### Achievements:

Staff were finally provided with internet access in 2008-2009 and the implementation went very well.

#### Challenges for 2009-10 and 2010-11

- Council's IT equipment will need replacement in 2010-11; our current equipment is now four years old which is considered the life expectancy of IT equipment.
- Similarly the telephone system which is a similar age will require some upgrading.
- Some software upgrades will also need to be considered to keep up with industry standards and maintain compatibility.

### **Stores & Supplies**

There are stores in Coonabarabran, Coolah and Dunedoo and they continue to meet the operational needs of staff. However, the management of fuel continues to be a problem and the wide range of issues associated with accounting for fuel are being investigated.

### **Rural Fire Services**

#### Targets



- 
- *Fire protection*
    - Maintain quality of community and volunteer safety standards by providing competency based training for brigade personnel and Fire Control staff
    - Provide appropriate equipment to enable firefighters to safely and efficiently carry out their duties
  - *Hazard Reduction*
    - To protect the natural and man-made environment within Warrumbungle Shire by limiting the impact of wildfire through reduced fuel loadings.

All targets achieved.

**Carolyn Upston**  
**Director Corporate Services**

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# TECHNICAL SERVICES

## Director's Report

### OVERVIEW

2008/2009 has set a new benchmark in terms of expenditure on infrastructure projects for Warrumbungle Shire. Throughout 2008/2009 a number of major projects were either commenced, were in progress or were completed and when combined represents a level of expenditure not yet seen by Warrumbungle Shire Council and may not be seen for some years to come.

The projects that head the list of capital expenditure include; the new Mendooran water treatment plant, bridge construction, major road development and rehabilitation works. Also, Council undertook many works associated with road and waterway repairs following flooding in December 2007. All the major projects were jointly funded by Council and either the State or Federal Government.

### Roads and Bridges

During the year bridge construction works commenced on Saltwater Creek No1 (Purlewaugh Road), Ulindah Bridge(Binnaway Road) and Yearinan Creek (Baradine Road). Construction works also continued on the bridge over Castlereagh River near Ulamambri, the Talbragar River Bridge (Cassilis Road) and Bomera Creek Bridge (Purlewaugh Road). These bridges are all located on regional roads and they will make the overall road network more reliable and safer for all road users.

The busiest regional road in the Shire is the Black Stump way and during 2008/2009 another 2.5km section of this road was widened and strengthened with an overlay of road base. Towards the end of the financial year Council commenced a significant road widening project for the RTA on the Castlereagh Highway between Mendooran and Dunedoo. Council provides significant road maintenance services to the RTA and during the year, Council also undertook a condition and risk assessment of all drainage structures on the Golden Highway, Castlereagh Highway and Mendooran Road within the Shire area. The nature of the contract with the RTA changed during the year, which required Council to change the way that it accounts for costs incurred while working on State Roads.

During the year a change in project scope occurred on the rail bridge project on the Baradine Road and works commenced on this project towards the end of the year. This work will significantly improve road safety at the rail bridge site. Many local rural roads were resurfaced with gravel and with bitumen, while Council also undertook capital improvements on a number of roads including; Munns Road, Pandora Pass and Piambra Road. Town Streets didn't miss out with improvement road improvement works being undertaken in each town and in particular road shoulder sealing in Dunedoo, new footpath in Baradine and a major culvert structure and approaches in Reservoir Street Coonabarabran.

### Water and Sewerage

The residents of Mendooran have endured water quality problems for as long as anybody can remember and it is with much anticipation that construction of a new water treatment plant commenced in 2008/2009. By the end of the financial year, a new river intake was constructed and most of the treatment plant. Under construction was relining of the town reservoir and construction of a roof for the reservoir and duplication of the delivery main to Coolabah estate.

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Council is required to demonstrate to the State Government that it is supplying water and sewerage services efficiently and effectively and this means that Council is required to develop and implement management plans and pricing policies in accordance with Best Practice Guidelines'. Significant resources were utilized to develop an Integrated Water Catchment Management Plan and a user pay pricing policy for sewerage services. During the year Council also made submissions to the State Government on their proposal to amalgamate the management of water and sewer services with four adjoining Councils. The State Government is yet to respond to Council's submission and this issue could well dominate throughout the coming financial year.

Council is also required to demonstrate to the NSW Environment Protection Authority best practice in relation to managing the various sewerage systems. In this regard, a new sewer line was constructed in Coonabarabran between Horsley Street and Drummond Street to reduce the frequency of overflows from the sewer reticulation. Similarly, the sewer pump station in Dunedoo received a major overhaul during the year.

### **Parks and Gardens**

The parks and gardens staff work within a very limited budget to maintain 28 parks, 14 toilets and keep the roadside grass and gardens throughout each of the six towns to an acceptable standard. This maintenance work has been undertaken effectively, however there are ongoing challenges for the park in Baradine and in Mendooran.

Much planning work was undertaken for a proposed new toilet block in the Coonabarabran CBD. Construction of the toilet block is likely to occur in the coming year.

With funding assistance from the Central West Catchment Management Authority, more vegetation rehabilitation works were undertaken in the riparian area on the Castlereagh River in Coonabarabran.

### **Waste**

The cost of collecting and processing recyclable and non recyclable waste over the year again exceeded budget expectations. The primary reason for cost over runs is the lack of recycling that is occurring at each of the transfer stations. In particular, the frequency of collection of bulk bins at Baradine and Dunedoo is higher than expected. Operating costs could be reduced if more waste was sorted by users and rather than being dumped into the bulk bins. The 'global financial crisis' has impacted on the waste operations as income from recycled products such as steel, paper & cardboard and plastic all dropped significantly.

On a brighter note, the Coolah waste depot has been transformed from an eyesore into a work of art thanks to a community effort in cleaning up the site and erecting various sculptures. A key to improving the effectiveness of the waste operation is communicating the benefits of recycling and this message is now being given to users of the Coolah transfer station in positive manner.

### **Fleet**

The budget outcome for in the fleet services section was better than expected, however a number of plant items were not replaced due to low trade in values being offered. New computer systems are being introduced to better manage various

aspects of fleet management including fuel consumption, preventative maintenance and repair history.

A new shed was constructed at the Coonabarabran depot and internal roadworks were completed. Such improvements are needed if service delivery by Council staff is to continually improve.

### Staffing

Staffing issues were again a major issue for the Technical Services Department in 2008/2009. Throughout the year many positions in the outdoor staff became vacant and are yet to be filled. Of particular concern is some of the plant operating positions in the southern area as well as water and sewer operators and plumbers in the southern area. Also, there is concern that professional positions in the water and sewerage area and the design area remain vacant and while these positions remain vacant Council's ability to undertake maintenance and construction works is severely constrained

The performance of the various principle activities within Technical Services in terms of budget outcome is reported in Table 1.0, while performance in terms of accomplishment is reported in Table 2.0.

**Table 1.0 – Financial Performance of Technical Services in 2008/2009**

<b>Total Income</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Difference %</b>
Technical Services Management	\$0	\$0	0
Design Projects	\$10,770	\$4,268	-60%
Road Operations	\$9,789,086	\$9,784,110	0%
Road Contracts	\$2,570,368	\$3,276,784	27%
Fleet Services	\$3,849,378	\$4,227,104	10%
Urban Services	\$45,643	\$20,128	-56%
Waste Services	\$1,159,026	\$1,109,490	-4%
Village Water	\$44,249	\$30,541	-31%
Combined Water	\$5,177,230	\$4,489,304	-13%
Combined Sewerage	\$1,177,046	\$1,144,690	-3%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$23,822,796</b>	<b>\$24,086,419</b>	<b>1%</b>

<b>Total Income</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Difference %</b>
<b>Total Expenditure</b>			
Technical Services			
Management	\$126,000	\$105,514	-16%
Design Projects	\$375,579	\$257,937	-31%
Road Operations	\$13,781,318	\$12,694,466	-8%
Road Contracts	\$2,557,910	\$3,012,271	18%
Fleet Services	\$4,575,942	\$4,269,970	-7%
Urban Services	\$1,173,473	\$1,081,765	-8%
Waste Services	\$1,317,682	\$1,406,331	7%
Village Water	\$70,966	\$31,424	-56%
Combined Water	\$5,928,032	\$4,661,350	-21%
Combined Sewerage	\$1,354,366	\$983,119	-27%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$31,261,268</b>	<b>\$28,504,147</b>	<b>-9%</b>

**Table 2.0 – Accomplishment Performance of Technical Services**

**DESIGN SERVICES**

<b>Principal Activity</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Result</b>
Traffic Management	To ensure that adequate facilities are in place for the safe movement of vehicular and pedestrian traffic.	Recommendations from Local Traffic Committee were implemented as required.
Survey Investigation and Design	Preparation of construction plans and specifications.	Completion of the design program is still around 6 months behind schedule, however a significant improvement on previous year.
Asset Management	To develop and update asset registers and report on asset condition in accordance with statutory requirements.	Some work undertaken on updating location of road, water and sewer infrastructure on GIS.

## ROAD OPERATIONS

Principal Activity	Objective	Result
Regional Roads	Undertake maintenance and construction works to ensure safety and reliability of regional road network.	Pavement widening and rehabilitation works undertaken on MR55 (Black Stump Way) south of Coolah. Also, bridge approach works undertaken on new bridges over the Talbragar River, Castlereagh River and Bomera Creek.
Rural Local Roads	Undertake maintenance and construction works to ensure safety and reliability of local road network.	Rehabilitation works were undertaken on a section of Coolah Creek Road. Major improvement works undertaken on Piambra Road and drainage structures completed on various roads. Several projects were not completed due to available resources being employed on other road projects, particularly bridge projects and RTA projects. Maintenance of sealed and unsealed roads completed in accordance with budget constraints. Repairs to flood damaged roads continued throughout the year.
Urban Local Roads (Town Streets)	Undertake maintenance and construction works to ensure safety and reliability of urban road networks.	Drainage improvement works were completed in Mendooran and Dunedoo. Shoulder sealing undertaken on some streets in Dunedoo. Major road improvements in Reservoir Street Coonabarabran.
Carparks	Maintain well organized and convenient parking areas that are easily accessible for all users	No significant improvements to carparks. Maintenance works including cleaning undertaken as required.
Private Works	To maximize the use of Council owned plant and labour and provide a profit to Council while servicing the community	Private works undertaken as required.

## CONTRACT SERVICES

Principal Activity	Objective	Result
State Roads	To provide competitive services to the RTA in a contract environment.	New contract arrangements were entered into with the RTA. Council commenced a major road widening project for the RTA on the Castlereagh Highway
Bitumen resurfacing Program on Regional Roads, Local Rural Roads and Town Streets.	The approved annual bitumen resurfacing program is completed efficiently and effectively.	Specifications developed and annual tenders called. Approved program of sealing completed in accordance with budget allocations.
Major Contracts	Major road and bridge contracts completed in accordance with budget allocations	A contract was let for the construction of three bridges; Yearinan Creek, Ulindah and Saltwater Creek No 1.



## URBAN SERVICES

Principal Activity	Objective	Result
Parks and Gardens	Provision of parks and gardens	Parks and gardens in all areas maintained in accordance with generally accepted standards. However, some ongoing concern with lack of water in Mendooran Park and in the Lions Park at Baradine.
Street Cleaning	Urban streets cleaned to generally accepted standards	Very few complaints received about cleanliness of urban streets.
Toilets	Clean and maintain public toilets to generally accepted standard	Minimal complaints received about the toilets. However, significant vandalism to the toilet at the Black Stump Rest Area and to the toilet at the rear of Council office in Coolah.
Waste Services	Provide weekly garbage collection service to urban and rural areas and minimize use of landfill through provision of recycling services	The volume of waste being recycled continues to steadily increase. Expenditure on waste services not fully recovered, partly due to downturn in market for recyclable products and partly due to lack of recycling at the transfer stations.

## FLEET

Principal Activity	Objective	Result
Depots	Provision of safe, secure and effective work depots in Baradine, Binnaway, Coolah, Dunedoo, Coonabarabran and Mendooran	Improvements undertaken as programmed.
Plant and Equipment	Provision of a modern and safe plant fleet and downtime is minimized.	Most items of plant replaced as programmed. Plant income higher than expected, however plant expenditure also higher than expected. Overall a better than expected budget result.
Workshop	Provision of an efficient and effective workshop in Coolah and Coonabarabran	Workshops provided repair services in accordance with budget constraints
Radio Communications	Provision of reliable two way radio system with coverage of the whole Shire.	Some problems experienced with radio system, however generally working well.

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## WATER AND SEWER

<b>Principal Activity</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Result</b>
Water supply and distribution	Provision of a consistent supply of potable water urban areas that meets consumer demand.	Generally, across all six water supplies the budget income was received. However, operating expenditure exceeded budget allocations in Baradine, Binnaway and Coonabarabran. Staff vacancies kept expenditure below budget in Coolah and Dunedoo. On ground works commenced for the Mendooran water treatment plant project. Work continued on the Integrated Water Cycle Management Plan.
Sewage collection and treatment	Provision of sewer collection reticulation system and treatment and discharge in accordance with licence conditions.	There were non compliance issues with all four sewerage systems, however the issues are being addressed with the assistance of the EPA. Actual income generally in accordance with budget, however recurrent expenditure exceeded budget in Coonabarabran and Baradine and below budget in Coolah and Dunedoo. Development of a user pay sewerage pricing policy was a major feature of the year.

**K Tighe**  
**Director Technical Services**

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# ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

## Director's Report

### Management Objectives

- To effectively manage and promote an efficient Environmental Services division attuned to the needs of the built and natural environment.
- To establish a consistent set of contemporary policies and procedures across the department to ensure a high standard of customer service and legislative compliance.
- To ensure all projects are completed in accordance with their outcome objectives and within the allocated budget.

### Principal Activity Co-ordinator

Mr Anthony Meppem, Acting Director Environmental Services

### Achievements in 2008/2009

#### ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SERVICES

- Completion of the first Land Use Strategy for the Warrumbungle Shire Local Government Area. This will set the strategic development direction for the Shire for the next 15 - 20 years and form the basis of Council's new Principal Local Environmental Plan.
- Council has progressed the amalgamation of all of its Development Control Plans into one document for the whole shire. The work has progressed slowly with the confusion created by the introduction of the Code SEPPs.
- All community-based heritage work within the Shire completed within NSW Heritage Office requirements. Heritage work in 2008/2009 focused principally on the Ulamambri Hall.
- Advancement of the reclassification of Council land parcels from "community" to "operational" in line with Council's Land Use Strategy.

#### TOWN PLANNING

- A total of one hundred and forty-six (146) Development Applications were approved which had a total value of \$6,089,569. This included seventeen (17) new residential dwellings with a total value of \$2,968,091.
- A total of five hundred and thirty-nine (539) Section 149 Certificates were issued.
- Completion of the Salisbury Estate, Johnston Estate Schiemer Estate re-zoning projects.
- Worked with stakeholders to ensure compliance with the Regional Environmental Plan (Light Emissions) necessary to safeguard the operations of the Siding Spring Observatory.

#### BUILDING SERVICES

- A total of seventy-two (72) complying development certificates were issued.
- A weekly average of eight (8) critical stage inspections were carried out.
- Efficient transition into the new assessment process for Places of Public Entertainment.
- Completion of the connection to sewer project in Baradine.

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## ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

- Completion of the Comprehensive State of the Environment Report for 2008/2009. A successful regional reporting framework was established in partnership with the Central West Catchment Management Authority for collating comparative and meaningful data annually. The report uses environmental indicators to assess the main themes of air, biodiversity, land, waste, water and human settlement.
- Lawful removal of abandoned and derelict buildings in urban areas to enhance public amenity and ensure the health and safety of neighbouring dwellings.
- Obligations under the NSW Food Regulation Partnership satisfied.
- Establishment of a Shire-wide risk-based food premises inspection register.
- Shire-wide Food Handling education program undertaken including on-site education at time of inspection and a formal Food Handler Hygiene Training School sponsored by Council, with a total of 396 participants successfully completing this training.
- 198 food shop inspections were carried out and 25 other health related inspections.

## PUBLIC CEMETERY MANAGEMENT

- Public cemetery records maintained in accordance with legislation.
- Cemetery projects undertaken across the Shire in addition to general maintenance.

### *Completed Projects*

- New bay and extension at Native Grove Cemetery, Coonabarabran
- New mobile shoring equipment provided for each end of the Shire.
- Road sealing works and tree pruning at Baradine Cemetery.
- Dunedoo fence and signage project.
- Stage 3 of the erosion control strategic project at the Coonabarabran Old Cemetery.

## PUBLIC POOLS MANAGEMENT

- Public Pools maintained in accordance with health and safety regulations.
- New volunteers program and lifeguard training initiative launched successfully for the 2008/2009 Season.
- Public Liability audit undertaken this year in which Council scored 80%.
- A full operational review of the Public Pool policies and procedures and manuals was undertaken. Research was conducted with the assistance of Council's insurer, a neighbouring public pool tour was undertaken with the assistance of Council's Workplace Safety Officer.
- A series of projects addressing Occupational Health & Safety issues were undertaken in addition to general maintenance.

### *Completed Projects*

- Baradine Pool: new first aid room, signage, tripping hazards reduction, electricity upgrade and safety ladder.
- Binnaway Pool: new first aid room, signage, tripping hazards reduction, chemical shower installation and safety ladder.
- Coolah Pool: new chemigem installation, signage, tripping hazard reduction, chemical shower installation and hand rails.
- Coonabarabran Pool: new filter cover, bench seating, signage, chemical shower installation and playground equipment soffit as well as tripping hazard reduction.
- Dunedoo Pool: electricity upgrade, tripping hazard reduction, new signage, first aid room upgrade and ladder enclosure.

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- Mendooran Pool: new first aid room, tripping hazard reduction, hot-water installation, signage and community landscaping project.
  - Commencement of Council's RLCIP Funded projects at the Coolah, Coonabarabran and Mendooran Pools.

#### REGULATORY SERVICES

- Micro-chipping and registration Companion Animals Public Education Project project completed successfully with over 50 participants Shire-wide. The project was conducted at Council's leash-free areas to promote their recent establishment (2007/8) in each town.
- New public awareness and voluntary compliance resulting from focus on education.
- In 2008/9 one hundred and forty-nine (149) companion animals were seized (being 17 cats and 132 dogs). Twenty-seven (27) animals were surrendered by owners and twenty-two (22) animals were euthanased at the owner's request. Twenty-eight (28) animals were released to their owner however one hundred and twenty-one (121) animals were euthanased as they were unable to be re-housed. Five (5) dogs were successfully re-housed.
- Provision of stock and companion animals pounds.

#### **Priorities for 2009/2010**

#### ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SERVICES

- Completion of the Warrumbungle Shire new Principal Local Environmental Plan.
- DCP Document
- All community-based heritage work within the Shire completed within NSW Heritage Office requirements.
- Completion of the reclassification of Council land parcels from "community" to "operational" in line with Council's Land Use Strategy.

#### TOWN PLANNING

- Delivery of consistent and high quality approvals.
- Ensuring continued compliance with the Regional Environmental Plan (Light Emissions) necessary to safeguard the operations of the Siding Spring Observatory.
- Updating of policies, forms and hand-outs.

#### BUILDING SERVICES

- Delivery of quality and consistent building inspection service.
- Places of Public Entertainment assessment.
- Continued monitoring of fire-safety compliance.
- Commencement of a Shire-wide risk-based Onsite-Sewage Management System inspection register.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

- State of the Environment Reporting.
- Lawful removal of abandoned and derelict buildings in urban areas to enhance public amenity and ensure the health and safety of neighbouring dwellings.
- Compliance with Council's obligations under the NSW Food Regulation Partnership.
- Establishment of the online "I'm Alert" Food Handlers program link to Council's website which provides access to free Food Handler Hygiene Training 24 hours a day.

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## PUBLIC CEMETERY MANAGEMENT

- Public cemetery records maintained in accordance with legislation.
- Cemetery projects undertaken across the Shire in addition to general maintenance.
- Row-marking and bench seating project at the Binnaway Cemetery.
- Final stage of the Coonabarabran Old Cemetery erosion control project.

## PUBLIC POOLS MANAGEMENT

- Public Pools maintained in accordance with health and safety regulations.
- New volunteers program and lifeguard training initiative launched successfully for the 2008/2009 Season.
- Public Liability audit undertaken this year in which Council scored 80%.
- A full operational review of the Public Pool policies and procedures and manuals was undertaken. Research was conducted with the assistance of Council's insurer, a neighbouring public pool tour was undertaken with the assistance of Council's Workplace Safety Officer.
- A series of projects addressing Occupational Health & Safety issues were undertaken in addition to general maintenance.
- Baradine Pool: new first aid room, signage, tripping hazards reduction, electricity upgrade and safety ladder.
- Binnaway Pool: new first aid room, signage, tripping hazards reduction, chemical shower installation and safety ladder.
- Coolah Pool: new chemigem installation, signage, tripping hazard reduction, chemical shower installation and hand rails.
- Coonabarabran Pool: new filter cover, bench seating, signage, chemical shower installation and playground equipment softfall as well as tripping hazard reduction.
- Dunedoo Pool: electricity upgrade, tripping hazard reduction, new signage, first aid room upgrade and ladder enclosure.
- Mendooran Pool: new first aid room, tripping hazard reduction, hot-water installation, signage and community landscaping project.
- Commencement of Council's RLCIP Funded projects at the Coolah, Coonabarabran and Mendooran Pools.
- Applications to be lodged for Second Round RLCIP Funded Projects: Shade for the Baradine Pool baby pool, Shade for the Coonabarabran Pool Play Equipment, Shade for the Binnaway lawn area, Solar heating for the Coolah Pool, Shade for the Dunedoo baby pool and supervision area, Seating for the Mendooran Pool.

## REGULATORY SERVICES

- Micro-chipping and registration Door-Knocking Project.
- Reduction in nuisance dog complaints.
- Continued promotion of Council's leash-free areas and responsible pet ownership practices.
- Decreased euthanasia numbers through increased co-operation with other government bodies to re-house animals and increased efforts to return animals to their owner where possible.

## **Planning Agreements**

- There were no planning agreements in force this year.

## **Conclusion**



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Council's Environmental Services Department has a significant role in a diverse range of activities and services to the community. The department's staff are committed to excellence in these activities which is confirmed by the minimal numbers of complaints received. The department has met all of its legislative requirements this year, and completed all the capital projects undertaken within the allocated budget and timeframes.

**Tony Meppem**  
**Acting Director of Environmental Services**

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# COMMUNITY SERVICES

## Director's Report

### **Children's Services**

Coonabarabran children's services continued to be a feature of the Community Services division, with short term childcare arrangements that had been implemented at the Preschool and Connect 5 continuing into the 2008-2009 year. The purchase of the former Coonabarabran Long Day Care (LDC) Centre came to a halt as the liquidation of ABC Learning impacted on sale negotiations. Despite these delays planning continued with Coonabarabran Preschool and stakeholders for the new Childcare Centre refurbishment and organisational management structure. Consultation with; Preschool Management Committee, staff of Preschool and Connect 5 LDC, Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) and NSW Department of Community Services (DoCS) was paramount to establishment of the organisational structure, staff positions and draft budget, fee structure, centre philosophy and operations.

The finalisation and settlement for purchase of the land and buildings was effected on 15 December 2008. Contractors and volunteers completed the refurbishment project in time for the first day of term on Monday 2 February 2009. Yuluwirri Kids is operating well and is receiving good community support. Utilisation Rates have increased for Preschool in February 2009 at 57% to June 2009 at 98%. Long Day Care; utilisation rates increased from 72% to 86% for same period. An Advisory Committee was established and meetings are conducted every two months; which has retained important parent and stakeholder feedback and input. A number of staff changes and hours of work rearrangements implemented as operations and systems progressed. The Preschool bus transport issue was resolved and will be implemented in Term 3, with Ministry of Transport approval for route changes sought by local school bus operators and approval granted for a Bus Zone by Council's Traffic Committee. All Funding Agreements for programs were received for new organisational management structure of Council holding the childcare centre licence. The former Preschool Management Committee by the end of this reporting period was in the last stages of ceasing incorporation status and finalising audit process.

Council has had a long history as an advocate for community based childcare services within the Shire. Preschool premises in Binnaway, Coonabarabran, Coolah and Dunedoo are provided rent free in Council owned facilities. The most recent strategic acquisition by Council in February 2008 was of the former Dunedoo Masonic Lodge, with the official handing over of keys ceremony conducted in October 2008. This decision has secured this building for sole purpose of the Dunedoo community Preschool. Council is committed to supporting community based childcare by providing these facilities under long term free rental lease agreements, and views this involvement and partnership with volunteer management committees as positive.

Warrumbungle Shire Council has been a quiet achiever in supporting Community based Child Care and a highlight was being recognised with a NSW Childcare Cooperative Cee Cee's Advocate Award in July 2008. This provided deserved recognition for what a rural Council, faced with general decline in economic trends and loss of population, can be achieved for early childhood education when a solid working relationship and partnership is developed between volunteer Management Committees and Councils.

### **RLCIP Projects**

As a result of the global financial crisis, the Australian Governments economic stimulus package provided \$568,000 for community infrastructure projects. Council sought community input into the allocation of these funds and in January 2009 nominated 11 projects for funding. These projects were spread throughout the shire and included;

Baradine Bore	New Bore	\$ 68,250
Binnaway Camping Ground	BBQ/Walkway	\$ 45,700
Coolah Swimming Pool	Fence/Shade	\$ 37,500
Bowen Oval Coolah	Grandstand extensions	\$ 46,250
Youth Club Coonabarabran	Shutters	\$ 31,500
VRA Coonabarabran	Addition to new Headquarters	\$ 52,500
Coonabarabran Swimming Pool	Solar Heating	\$ 36,750
Town Hall Coonabarabran	Refurbishment	\$110,000
Coursing Club Coonabarabran	Addition to Amenities Block	\$ 15,750
Dunedoo Mainstreet Beautification	Footpath/Paving and Park	\$ 91,800
Mendooran Swimming Pool	Shade	\$ 32,000

Whilst Council staff provided the project management and financial control of these projects, many involved local organising committees contributing volunteer labour and input into employment of sub contractors.

### **Orana Arts**

Orana Arts is a professional Regional Arts organisation funded by both NSW and Local Government working together to connect arts, culture and heritage with local communities.

Orana Arts Inc's third year of triennial funding from Arts NSW; is supported by the Regional Development Board's members Warrumbungle, Narromine, Dubbo and Gilgandra Shire Councils. 'Though this investment, Orana Arts is able to provide targeted arts and cultural services to the Warrumbungle Shire and wider region, progress partnerships with a number of different stakeholders, provide advice and support to community groups and achieve a vibrant level of arts and cultural activity in the community;' (Orana Arts, 2009). Board representation is delegated to the Director of Community Services who attends the quarterly Orana Arts meetings. Highlights for 2008 in Warrumbungle Shire included; arts and cultural projects funded to the value of \$16,925; for Baradine, Binnaway and Coolah arts projects and a sculpture project in Dunedoo and in 2009 Country Area Support Program (CASP) alone a total of \$5,818 to Mendooran (Singers), Dunedoo (Woodland Learning Centre), Coolah (CoolArt Project) and Baradine (Step Back in Time).

Orana Arts continued to include towns within the Shire for focussed professional development workshops for community group including; Museums Connect, Marketing/publicity and Governance/business. And travelling ARTstreet youth programs throughout the year including; Hip Hop, Face Painting, Circus Skills and the Box o'Tricks school tour and the Moorambilla Music Festival. The publication of the 2008 Cultural Directory includes arts and cultural services, individual artists; with continued assistance and facilitation provided to artists and community groups seeking grants and support.

### **Indigenous**

Warrumbungle local government area encompasses three Aboriginal language areas; the largest being the Gamillaraay, in the northern half of the Shire; Waridjuri in the south west (Mendooran, Dunedoo area) and to a smaller extent at the very south the Wallay peoples. The Aboriginal population is predominately distributed in the northern half of the Shire and in total represents nearly 8% of the Shires population (ABS Census, 2006). There are active Local Aboriginal Lands Councils in Baradine and Coonabarabran; and a Coonabarabran Community Working Party (CWP). The CWP has extended an invitation

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to Council to attend meetings, and Council continues to administer the support provided by DEEWR for this program.

Council provides an annual financial contribution to support NAIDOC week celebrations; and coordinates the compilation and promotion of the community's event program and facilitation of Council celebrations and official Flag raising ceremonies. Reconciliation Week was also celebrated; and support provided to local organisers of community events.

### **Aerodromes**

Each of the shires three Aerodrome's are maintained to comply to CASR Regulations with both Coolah and Coonabarabran having regular CASR inspections and aerodrome maintenance undertaken according to statutory requirements. Statutory Obstacle Limitation Surveys were completed in October 2008. Due to conditions and landing requirements of Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) an operational procedure for Volunteer Emergency Services personnel undertaking Feral animal runs at night time prior to landing and takeoff has been implemented and training undertaken by Council's Emergency Services Coordinator.

The new PALC emergency lighting at Coolah had some some minor operational issues that were quickly addressed by supplier and the system is operating well. Baradine Remote Aerodrome Safety Program Round 2 (RASP) project totalling \$24,000 to seal the western end of runway and refurbish the lights and PALC unit was implemented; with a small part of the project to be completed as at the end of June 2009. This project involved an electrical engineering and lighting specialist to rebuild and reconfigure the replacement units. A successful RASP Round 3 project was submitted for the fencing upgrade and installation toilet/tank at Baradine which will commence soon.

### **Library Services**

Each of the shire's six libraries are performing to Macquarie Regional Library (MRL) Strategic Management Plan targets. The Baradine and Mendooran Libraries online book requisition system was implemented; which has enabled staff to loan, return and order books utilising the MRL system.

The annual MRL inspection of library buildings for OH&S issues was undertaken and where applicable matters have been addressed. Holiday programs were provided at all branches and there are active book clubs which meet at most branches on regular basis. All branches included in MRL service delivery, and involvement in regional activities such as Youth Week, Law Week and book clubs. Yoututor online program was rolled out in stages, literacy programs, younger readers and talking books. New book votes expended and items distributed to branches.

A review of Mendooran and Binnaway Service Points was presented to Council May meeting and the outcome caused significant community concern. Reassurance was given to each community that Council is committed to the provision of Library Services be that a suitable alternative, and prior to no alternative arrangements being agreed to, Council to be presented with outcomes of the consultation process. A number of issues being identified by the community are being worked through with MRL and Council to improve utilisation.

### **Westpac Instore**

Council is management auspice of the Westpac Instore in Dunedoo and a new three year agreement was entered into in July 2008. The agency is operated according to Westpac management schedule and the service continues to meet 100% operational targets and gains high scores for Mystery Shopper and customer service results. In addition the agency provides rates collection and front counter support to Council

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operations. The service is meeting the needs of community and supporting Council office functions.

### **Ovals/Sport and Recreation Facilities**

Warrumbungle Shire Council is committed to providing safe and accessible recreational facilities for residents and visitors alike to enjoy healthy and active lifestyles. Ovals are provided free of charge to individuals, local sporting groups and schools for weekly and regional competitions. A number of capital improvement projects were identified during the year which included the Baradine and Binnaway canteen/kiosk's and Council worked with the local sporting committees to complete funding submissions to NSW Sport and Recreation which were unfortunately unsuccessful this time.

Stage 2 of the No 1 Oval upgrade which last financial year saw the installation of the competition grade Sports Lighting was completed; being the Canteen and Amenities block. This required valuable volunteer hours by local sporting and football clubs who assisted with pouring of the concrete slab and painting.

The arrangements for the Shire's Tennis Courts use was standardised and new Licence Agreements for 2009-2010 sent to all Clubs. Council resolved to fund infrastructure charges including rates, water and sewerage charges, building insurance costs. The individual Clubs Sporting Insurance and Public Liability, day to day cleaning, minor R&M related to those activities and sporting equipment remain the responsibility of the individual tennis club.

The Shire's ovals continue to have good patronage for a range of activities including; football, touch football, training, athletics and recreational use.

The Robertson Oval toilets connection to sewerage project was completed; which will remove the environmental concerns of a septic system near the waterway.

Mendooran Sports Ground NSW Sport and Recreation capital assistance grant application submitted by Trust for ground improvements; however was unsuccessful. Spraying and mowing by Council has assisted with weed control and provided at least a usable playing area for seasons cricket.

### **Halls**

All Halls are licenced with the Phonographic Performance Company of Australia as Public Places of Entertainment (PPE) with Council being licence holder to enable the public use of sound recordings and music vidoes protected by copyright.

Each of the halls has individual needs and involvement by community groups interested in maintenance and refurbishment programs. Baradine Hall plans created for refurbishment and extension project – sports gym, music rooms, multipurpose room. Council staff worked with schools and community organisations to develop concept plans that provided the basis for a Federal Local Schools Working Together Project which was unsuccessful. Amenities remain substandard and are a maintenance issue for this hall. It however is supported by the community and has good usage; and the community management group received small grant facilitated by Development Coordinator for improvements to the kitchen.

Binnaway Hall and Coonabarabran Town Hall had projects submitted to NSW Hall Renewal Fund which were also unsuccessful in Round 1.

The Coonabarabran Town Hall was closed mid June to enable RLCIP project works that included the refurbishing of toilets and installation of disabled amenities, emergency lighting and installation of a new floor in courtyard area.

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The Dunedoo Hall is continued to be used by the Dunedoo Youth Club. A Workplace Health and Safety inspection by Council's Safety Officer brought issues concerning the stage being lifted for basketball use were to Council's attention. These could not be resolved with a cost effective solution so the basketball rings were removed. The Mendooran Mechanics Institute Conservation Management plan was placed on public exhibition and adopted by Council in October 2008. This has provided a good strategic document from which refurbishment projects and planning was able to be completed for funding applications. The Goolhi Hall tennis courts project remains uncompleted due to contractor availability and is scheduled for July/August.

The Purllewaugh Hall refurbishment Stage 2 that has been funded from a local jobs employment agency continued. This project that was initiated by the local hall committee is being managed by Council and in excess of \$20,000 of improvement works has been undertaken.

### **Youth**

In addition to Youth Week, support of the Coonabarabran Youth Club operations and committee has continued. The Uniting Church funding of the Youth workers who operate the Drop in Centre remained in place, which secured this much needed activity into 2009.

Capital expenditure commenced as the amenities refurbishment was implemented in two stages; with the first of the toilets and showers completed. The squash courts were repainted and lights replaced by Youth Club Committee volunteers. The second set of toilets refurbishment funded by both Council and NSW Sport and Rec funds works commenced in the latter part; with final works to be completed in 2009-2010.

The Youth Club Committee has been addressing the issues of cleaning and user groups concerns. The Facility used for basketball, indoor netball, indoor soccer competition, boxing, gym, karate, squash, youth club and school sports. Contract cleaning utilising Cornerstone group supports Youth Drop in Centre operations. A Sports Coordinator role has been identified as a need for the Youth Club facility. Concept and funding support being investigated by Council.

The Coonabarabran Youth Club committee has extended membership to now include Coolah Youth Club as a new subcommittee. This arrangement provides the smaller youth clubs with an incorporated body for insurance and governance processes.

### **Development Coordinators**

Development Coordinators have collectively facilitated grant submissions for period July 2008 – June 2009 grants totalling \$490,000 comprising of over 60 applications facilitated and submitted throughout the year. Notifications of successful funding received approximately \$270,000. Major ones of interest include \$227,000 for Baradine Progress Association Briquette Manufacturing Project, \$10,000 Baradine Retirement Unit Project, \$14,000 Mendooran-Merrygoen Memorial Club Honour Wall and \$5,000 for the Coolah Mens Shed.

The awarding to Binnaway of a NSW Tidy Town achievement award was a great confidence boost to this community. The Pumphouse Camping ground has been utilised on an increased basis as signage is installed, new toilets completed and completion of Stage 2; electric BBQ and shed and installation of power supply for caravan sites which was RLCIP funded.

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Each of the community's organised and coordinated Christmas carnivals and events. Coordination and point of contact for many Shire activities; including Australia Day, Town Committee Meetings, Youth Week and Seniors Week. Council provides support to the Development Coordinators and a number of sessions were facilitated that offered training and networking opportunities.

## **Emergency Services**

The Emergency Services Coordinator is responsible for assisting the General Manager as Local Emergency Management Officer (LEMO) in all major emergency incidents that may occur within the Warrumbungle Shire.

To facilitate this the Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC) chaired by Council allows emergency issues to be discussed and rectified through regular meeting in an atmosphere that allows social interaction to the members that usually only meet at accidents or incidents. Council's assistance to these agencies both at a community level and statutory level require us to work closely with a variety of Governments departments and volunteer organisations

Council's management role is to facilitate the development of a Local Disaster Plan (DISPLAN) and the update contact lists for the whole shire. Council's DISPLAN has been completed and together with the SES Flood Plan and the RFS Bushfire Operations Plan and provides a framework for managing emergency incidents.

## **SES and VRA Volunteer Organisations**

Council provides assistance, guidance and support to encourage volunteers and their safety in all aspects of an emergency. Council provides financial support to aid these agencies in their day to day expenses. The Emergency Services Coordinator supervises and monitors both VRA and SES budgets.

Council has played an active role in helping the VRA at Coonabarabran in their endeavour to construct a larger more modern facility to house their equipment and vehicles.

The Mendooran VRA which has been in-operational of over 12 months has recently indicated that with a new membership of 12 people will most likely become operation in the new future. Council will endeavour to support this unit as personnel are trained and the unit becomes operational.

## **Emergency Risk Management Project (ERMP)**

The Emergency Risk Management Project (ERMP) was a statutory requirement placed on Council a few years ago and with the help of the LEMC and a consultant was completed in January 2008.

The study was to identify all hazards that are likely to create an impact on the quality of life in our shire, and the ranking, treatment and management of these hazards if and when they may occur. The ERMP remains a permanent agenda item at LEMC meetings requiring active participation of all members in maintaining an up to date document.

## **Grant Applications**

The Coordinator has an active involvement to facilitate and promotes any relevant emergency management State and Federal Grants that becomes available to both Local Government and volunteer groups.

## **Community Awareness**



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Emergency Services Coordinator communicates regularly with the community and to Emergency Service Agencies and distributes the DISPLAN and other emergency information (including electronic versions). This has included the addition of an Emergency Information section onto Councils Web Page providing Bushfire and Flood information and links to other Emergency agencies.

### **Timor Dam Safety Emergency Report**

A Statutory requirement from the NSW Department of Water and Energy requires Council to develop a Dam Safety Emergency Plan (DSEP) for Timor Dam; which is the water supply for Coonabarabran. Together with Technical Services a report on Council's responsibilities with regards flooding of the upper reaches of the Castlereagh River and downstream of Timor Dam is currently being undertaken and will be a significant project for 2009-2010. The outcome will provide staff a clear role in managing any flood, earthquake or terrorist incident with regards this dam.

### **Hazard Reduction Database**

A statutory requirement for Council is to maintain a Hazard Reduction database has resulted in Councils participation in the 'BRIMS' internet based database system. Council provides information on the planning and progress of Hazard Reduction burns conducted on Council managed land throughout the shire

### **Training**

The Emergency Services Coordinator has attended two training sessions, 'Working in an Emergency Operations Centre' and 'Managing an Emergency Operations' both conducted last year at Dubbo under the supervision of district Emergency Management Officer (DEMO)

### **Neilrex Fire Shed Land Acquisition**

After an extended period of time the extinguishment of native title and thus the acquisition of a block of land from the Department of Lands was effected, that allow the RFS to now proceed with the construction of a new Fire Shed for Neilrex.

## **Road Safety Officer Report**

### **Overview**

The Road Safety Officer (RSO) Program is jointly funded by the Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA) and Warrumbungle Shire Council. The objectives of the program are to:

- Increase the priority of road safety within our Local Government Area (LGA)
- Increase the road safety expertise of council road safety officers and other local government personnel
- Improve the coordination of local government road safety initiatives with state and national road safety initiatives including participation in Western Region and Newell Highway initiatives
- Facilitate the development and involvement of local level road safety networks and partnerships including working in partnership with neighbouring Councils
- Demonstrate the impact and effectiveness of community-based road safety programs

### **Road Safety Program 2008/2009**

Warrumbungle Shire Council has 2972 kilometres of roads. This includes 1270 kilometres of sealed roads and 1702 kilometres of unsealed roads. This extensive network of roads requires a large funding demand for maintenance and construction. A large proportion of the roads in the shire are financially controlled by Warrumbungle Shire Council.

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The Shire has 59 bridges and major culverts on local roads and 36 bridges on regional roads to maintain. The Shire has 4 major highways traversing it – Newell Highway, Oxley Highway, Golden Highway and Castlereagh Highway. Consequently a large majority of traffic passing through the shire are heavy vehicles. Many major roads throughout the Warrumbungle Shire are classed as B-Double routes.

The social and environmental issues considered when looking at the factors that influence Road Safety in our shire include:

- A large proportion of Indigenous population compared to the rest of the region
- An aging population
- A higher percentage of people aged under 20 years and aged between 40 – 59 years.
- A major network of State Highways
- A high incidence of speeding and driver fatigue crashes
- A rural agricultural based population
- A high occurrence of Heavy vehicles

An analysis of crash data shows that the priority road safety issues for the Warrumbungle Shire are:

- Addressing speed, alcohol and fatigue for all driver classes
- Passenger safety
- Pedestrian safety (particularly school zones)
- Motorcyclist safety
- Enforcement and deterrence
- Truck Safety
- Awareness of animals on the side of roads

The key road user groups living and working in the Shires that the program targets are:

- Drivers aged 30-59 years
- Young people aged 17 – 25 years of age.
- Motorcyclists
- Drivers and operators of trucks
- Warrumbungle Shire Council staff
- Older drivers and pedestrians (including motorised wheelchairs, commonly known as gophers and scooters)
- Indigenous drivers and pedestrians
- Tourists

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## **Statement of Actions**

### Establishment of Local Road Safety Steering Committee

The RSO attends Warrumbungle Shire Council monthly Traffic Meetings which involves NSW Roads and Traffic Authority, NSW Police Community and Council representatives. The Road Safety Officer provides this committee a monthly report and contributes to providing behavioural based solutions when issues arise.

The RSO has interacted with NSW Police on a number of projects such as speeding and other Police campaigns throughout the year. The local Police were involved in an urban speed limit campaign to reduce speeding on residential streets by providing focused enforcement throughout the campaign. Newspaper articles promoting the program and the increased enforcement appeared in local media.

The RSO has liaised with schools regarding P&C meetings, driveway safety education, child restraints and outcomes of Traffic Committee findings. Community consultation was sought on variety of road safety issues including local issues affecting their area including problem speeding areas, drink driving issues and older road users.

RSO has partnered with the RTA, Ministry of Transport, NSW Office of Liquor, Gaming and Racing, Greater Western Area Health Service, Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care other Local Government Areas to address various issues throughout the year.

### Submission of monthly reports and 6 month action plan

Monthly reports have been submitted to Director of Community Services and the RTA along with a 6 month Action Plan.

### Participation at RTA Regional meetings

As part of Councils and RTA commitment to the RSO program the RSO attended RTA Quarterly Meeting in Parkes in August and December, Institute of Public Works and Engineers Association training and a various meetings concerning project development took place.

### Adoption of Council Road Safety Strategic and Action Plan

Warrumbungle Shire Council Road Safety Strategic Plan 2008/2010 has been adopted by Council in October 2008.

### Road Safety behavioural and educational programs sourced and implemented within shire. Regional Road Safety Programs implemented within shire in partnership with RTA and participating LGA's

WSC Road Safety Action Plan 08/09 was developed and projects addressing speeding, young drivers, restraint usage, and cycling were addressed.

You Love Me - Keep Me Safe (Bring the Mob Home Safely) - This project promoted the correct selection and use of child restraint devices and was run quarterly in the northern half of the LGA.

Slow Down – 'In My Street' - A 50 km/h urban speed limit campaign and "Dress Your Wheelie Bin" competition was run involving placement of traffic counters, speed trailer and police enforcement in identified problem areas during September, October and November 2008.

### Apply for alternative funding for Road Safety behavioural and educational programs sourced and implemented within the Shire.

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Additional funding was received to run Bike Week – ‘Excite, Unite & Bike 08’ This successful Bike Week Event was held in Coolah and Coonabarabran in September with an exciting performance by Bike Boy. Over 100 community members attended these events and participated in the community bike rides.

Drinking Kills Driving Skills – ‘What’s the Plan’ - This program aimed to reduce the incidence of alcohol involvement in serious casualty crashes throughout the Warrumbungle Shire via a public awareness campaign showing alternatives to drinking and driving and supporting the development of a local Liquor Accord. The Warrumbungle Liquor Accord was established after a series of meetings initiated and coordinated by the RSO.

## **Community Development Officer**

The Community Development Officer’s position within the Community Services section of Council is externally funded by the NSW Department of Community Services under the Community Services Grants Program (CSGP) and encompasses the whole of Warrumbungle Shire. Community Development seeks to encourage a collaborative, collective action to be taken by local people to enhance the long-term social, economic, and environmental conditions of their community. The primary goal of Community Development is to create a better overall quality of life for everyone in the community. This is undertaken by involvement and working very closely with stakeholders including Town Development Coordinators, Youth and Indigenous Groups, Community organisations, NSW Police and Schools.

Assistance provided to the community to assist with Community Development included:

- ABS Statistics

The information provided by the Australian Bureau of Statistics from the latest Census is detailed and provides a report card about the Shire’s community profile. Provision of ABS Statistical data relating to the latest Census figures to the community is vital information provided by the service. This data is beneficial for providing relevant data for grant applications by community groups that are seeking funding; or in the case of St Lawrence’s Parents and Friends was able to correct some otherwise incorrectly based information.

- Community Services Directory

A Community Services Directory was created a number of years ago for both former Coolah and Coonabarabran shires. The updating of the large data base for the former Coonabarabran Community Services Directory has commenced and information from the other five towns within the Shire has been sourced and updated by the Town Development Coordinators. The local Interagency network has been forthcoming to assist with the process of updating the information however this project is incomplete for this reporting year, and will be programmed for 2009-2010.

- Crime Prevention

The Community Development Officer regularly attends and supports the Neighbourhood Watch group and their meetings held in Coonabarabran. Ongoing support for crime prevention activities is essential as at any time there can be a dramatic change in the status of criminal activity with changes in the population. A copy of the Crime Prevention Checklist compiled by the Community Development Officer for homes and businesses was provided for Baradine to assist residents counter criminal activities. Following break

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and enters and damage incurred at the Coonabarabran Pool, an audit on the Pools security measures was undertaken. The objective was to reduce the incidence of break and enters by proposing Safety By Design solutions for the Coonabarabran's Pool facility.

The Community Development Officer also provided support to the local Domestic Violence Support group and their efforts to raise awareness about and to prevent Domestic Violence; assisting them with funding submissions.

- Events

NAIDOC Week is an important celebration for the whole community. The Community Development Officer brought together a representative group from the Aboriginal community for the purpose of planning and running a series of events for NAIDOC Week 2008. The official opening to NAIDOC Week celebrations in Coonabarabran was a Flag raising ceremony and community BBQ that was well supported by the community.

The inaugural Community Services Expo provided a venue for Community Service Providers within the area to promote their activities and services. The Community Development Officer participated in the Expo with a display stand and with information about the different programs, community support provided and involvement and activities that are available.

- Grants

Raising community awareness to assist with applying for grant funding is an important component in generating local Community Development within the Shire. The Community Development Officer actively promoted the availability of grants and provided information, and assistance to groups applying for funding. This is done in conjunction with the Town Development Coordinators in the other towns within the Shire.

A Project Development and Grant Writing guide to applying for grants was compiled and made available to community groups. This new Guide now is a document that can lead a community group through the process from conception of a project idea to finding funding and provide guidance on how to make a good grant application for the funding.

The Funding Pot is a regular item in the Coonabarabran Times newspaper; with grant and grant funding websites information compiled by the Community Development Officer. The Coonabarabran Times newspaper is acknowledged for their assistance with this promotion. An email data base list has been compiled by the Community Development Officer specifically for disbursing grant funding information. This information is being emailed currently to 81 addresses within the Shire distributed across varying categories and interests.

The Community Development Officer assisted many community members including VRA, Coolah Garden Group and Development Coordinators with submissions made to Council for the Regional Local Community Infrastructure Program (RLCIP). Assistance was provided for a funding application submitted for the NSW Rural Fire Service for Community Education program and the Coonabarabran Golf Club with sourcing information for an environmental restoration project. A successful application was made for obtaining funding for a catering trailer for Rotary.

- Men's Sheds

Men's Sheds have been recognised nationally for the social interaction and health benefits for older men in the community. Support has been provided to the established Men's Sheds in Baradine and Coolah; and a newly formed committee in Dunedoo who have recently secured a former Railway shed. The Community Development Officer has been involved with providing assistance to and attendance at Men's Shed Coonabarabran group meetings which is now meeting in the Wool Pavilion at the Showground on a twice monthly basis.

- Youth Week

Youth Week is an important event within the Shire in recognition of young people. The Community Development Officer promoted Youth Week to community organisations across the Shire and developed a program of activities for Youth Week 2009 across the Shire.

Youth Week 2009 was a great success across the Shire thanks to the involvement of many volunteers giving freely of their time and effort for the betterment of young people. Across the Shire there were 709 young people who attended 27 Youth Week activities. Feedback from young people indicated that the activities were well received. An example of the success of Youth Week activities is that in Dunedoo the recently established Youth Club was asked by young people to conduct a similar program on a monthly basis.

## Social Services

### Overview of Warrumbungle Community Care

Warrumbungle Community Care is a multiservice outlet operating five funded Home and Community Care (HACC) programs and operates from two offices. Coonabarabran which services the northern end of the Shire including towns such as Coonabarabran, Baradine, Binnaway and surrounding districts whilst the Coolah office services the southern end including the towns of Coolah, Dunedoo, Mendooran and surrounding districts.

Warrumbungle Community Care has two main funding bodies, both of which are NSW State Departments. The NSW Ministry of Transport (MoT) provide recurrent funding for the majority of Community Transport operations across the Shire and Department Health and Ageing administer funds to the Greater Area Western Health Service (GWAHS) which provide funds for a Health Related Transport (HRT) program operating in the southern end of the Shire. The Community Transport's target group include the frail aged and younger people with a disability and their carers along with the geographically isolated and special needs groups.

The Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care (DADHC) provides recurrent funding for such programs as Meals Service, Home Maintenance, Respite/Support for Carers and Social Support. The target group for these programs are the frail aged and younger people with a disability and their carers along with special needs groups. Below provides a summary of funding amounts and client numbers for the year 2008-2009. Note: Most clients receive services from both funding sources.

	Recurrent Funding	Other Income incl. Contributions	Total	Client Numbers North	Client Numbers South

DADHC	\$390,137	\$69,653	<b>\$459,790</b>	155	71
Community Transport	\$101,347	\$65,325	<b>\$166,672</b>	378	101

### **Role of Warrumbungle Community Care**

The role of Warrumbungle Community is to operate the HACC funded programs across the shire under the each funding bodies' Funding Agreement; HACC National Standards; policies of Warrumbungle Shire Council and Warrumbungle Community Care; and any legislations and acts that relate to these services. The services are available to those who are eligible to receive service which is determined through an assessment process by trained staff. Staff from both offices are trained regularly relating to industry competencies and attend forums to keep up to date with current issues and information. The Manager oversees all operations of all programs across the Shire.

#### Coonabarabran Office

Coonabarabran, being the busier of the two offices, operates with two part time Social Service Coordinators each day. The trained Coordinators attend to all administrative tasks, assess clients and coordinate the activities of the volunteers. This office can boast a total of 172 volunteers who are a part of Meals On Wheels, Social Support and Community transport.

#### Coolah Office

Coolah operates with part time Social Service Coordinators with at least one Service Coordinator working each day. The Coordinators attend to all administrative tasks, assess clients and coordinate activities of the volunteers. Coolah office is proud to have 96 volunteers giving their time across the three towns in Meals on Wheels, Social Support and Community Transport.

#### Advisory Committees

Warrumbungle Community Care's Manager meets with two Advisory Committees each quarter - the Southern Advisory Committee attached to the Coolah Office and the Northern Advisory Committee attached to the Coonabarabran Office. Each Advisory Committee consists of a small number of volunteers and clients who are given the opportunity to represent clients and volunteers in general, offer feedback and suggestions, ask questions, and generally discuss issues that may arise.

The Social Services Committee consists of representatives from each Advisory Committee. This Committee meet at least twice a year to overview and make recommendations to Council on various matters. The Committee also overviews the budgets, return of acquittals, and program operation in general.

### **Summary of Accomplishments 2008-2009**

#### Integrated Monitoring Framework

Achieving a great result in the Integrated Monitoring Framework process demonstrated the dedication and quality work performed by the Warrumbungle Community Care staff and volunteers across the Shire. This monitoring process was held in September 2008 and covered every aspect of the operation of all the programs. The monitoring investigation and information provision process lasted three days and was conducted in both offices. The outcome of the monitoring resulted in an Action Plan detailing some minor adjustments to be made with a time frame agreed upon for completion.

#### Annual Planning Days



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Each town in the shire was given the opportunity to attend an Annual Planning Day during the months of April and May of 2009. This Planning day is all about community feedback, gaps in service identified, challenges and general discussion. Other service providers, community organisations, clients, volunteers and the community in general were invited to attend a day. A lot of information has been gained which will assist in future planning of services for these towns.

#### Community Services Expo

A partnership between Warrumbungle Community Care, Family Day Care and Connect Five resulted in the inaugural Warrumbungle Community Services Expo being held in October 2008 at the Town Hall in Coonabarabran. This event was very successful with over 30 service providers attending who have funding to operate various projects/programs within the Warrumbungle Shire. Each service provider displayed their program or organisation; held demonstrations and gave talks. Members of the public were invited to be part of this information sharing experience. Approximately 50 or more members of the public attended but the heavy rain kept many more away. Another Community Services Expo will be held in November 2009.

#### Purchase of 12 seater Bus

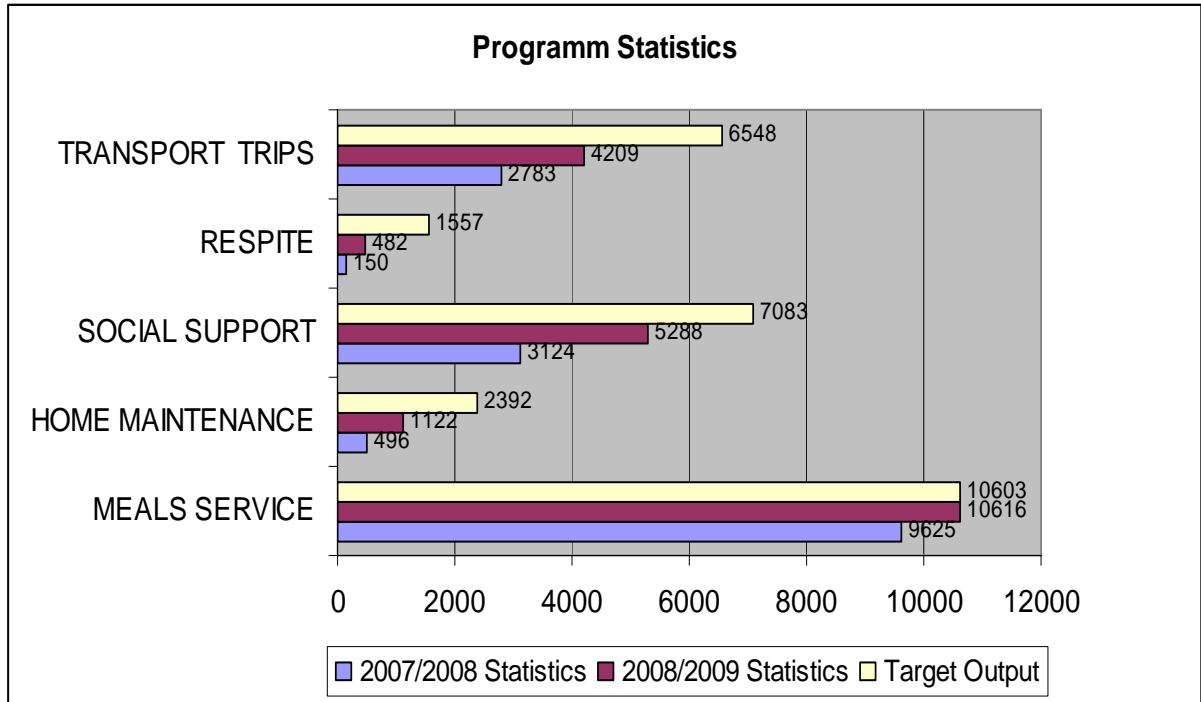
The purchase of a 12 seater bus for use across the shire is hoping to be the beginning of a better community transport structure for those eligible to use the service. The bus will offer group transport to various main centres such as Dubbo. It will also provide group transport from some smaller towns into the main township of Coonabarabran. The position for a casual bus driver has been advertised. The new bus schedule will be operation in a few short months.

#### **Program Overview**

The financial year of 2008-2009 reveals that some of programs are operating well to budget and target outputs whilst others are not. The Respite program is still building up and is being promoted at every opportunity. The Home Maintenance program target outputs have seen an increase over the past 12 months. The Social Support program is not far off target and is operating well. The Meal Service program is just over target. Monitoring of this service is ongoing but is still operating to budget.

The demand for Community Transport is overwhelming across the entire shire. However the per kilometre costs do not match the target outputs so the Transport Program is over budget which is of concern. Note that the following graph shows the target outputs are below target in terms of total number of trips. However, the target outputs set for this program are not related to the unit cost of each trip which is currently set at metro rates and is unrealistic for country/regional services. Negotiation with MoT needs to take place to address this disparity issue.

The graph below demonstrates the growth in the past 12 months across the Shire.



**Challenges and Priorities for 2009-2010 Period**

Transport - Meeting the needs of our target group of the community with the recurrent funding received from Ministry of Transport is an ongoing challenge. The program is unable, with the current resources, to meet the need. Continual lobbying of funding departments at both State and Federal level is needed for rural communities in general to receive more realistic funding to meet community need.

Location of Garage - Warrumbungle Community Care received funding in September 2008 to build a garage to house the Home Maintenance Program plant and equipment. A site for this garage has been suggested which is on Council owned land, however the site needs considerable work carried out before the garage can be built. At this stage this project is at a standstill as funding received does not extend to a clean up cost as well. This non recurrent funding needs to be expended in the 2009/2010 period as permission will need to be sought from the funding body to retain the funds from the 2008/2009 period.

Bus Schedule - The operation of the bus throughout the shire, whilst well needed is logistically very challenging. The cost, time frames of travel and limited budget will require a period of trials to ascertain what works best in terms of meeting community need within the confines of budget, OH&S limitations, and schedules. As a team, Warrumbungle Community Care will rise to this challenge.

The building up of programs such as Respite/Support for Carers and Home Maintenance will be ongoing. Improvement in statistics over the last 12 months indicates that strategies are working and will continue to work. In conclusion, it has been a very successful and challenging year for Warrumbungle Community Care. The monitoring of the operations has now provided a benchmark for staff, volunteers and Advisory Committee members to maintain but also strive for continuous improvement across the programs.

**Children’s Services**

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## **Castlereagh Family Day Care**

Castlereagh Family Day Care coordination unit services the Warrumbungle and Gilgandra shires; and provides carer support, training and administration services from offices in Coonabarabran. The Coordination staff and Carers with parents work together to provide quality childcare in an environment that is safe and friendly, and promotes the health, development and well-being of each child in care. The Family Day Care program is auspiced by Warrumbungle Shire Council and employs a full time Coordinator to manage the service which is licenced by NSW Department of Community Services (DoCS) under the NSW Children's Services Regulations (2004) and is accredited by the National Childcare Accreditation Council (NCAC). The service is funded by the Australian Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) via Child Care Benefit and administration charges from parents and carers.

The Coordinator undertakes home visits throughout the year to Carers in Coonabarabran Baradine Gilgandra, Coolah, Dunedoo and Mendooran and ongoing phone support to all Carers is provided. Visits include routine house checks, new Carer and induction, training and facilitated playsessions. The service participated in NAIDOC Week Celebrations, Community Health Services Day in 2008 and is involved in a number of Children's Services Interagency's in Gilgandra, Dunedoo and Coonabarabran. Family Day Care is a childcare service which provides quality childcare for children aged 0 –12 years in the private homes of registered Carers. Family Day Care offers care covering full time, part time, casual for working / studying parents, respite care, before/after school care, emergency care, extended and flexible hours. All families have access to quality care that is appropriate to their needs. Carers are registered to care for up to seven children, but no more than five not attending school (including their own), at one time.

Whilst there is not a current Advisory Committee due to the geographical area that the service covers; all policies, procedures and any service provision issues are canvassed to all Carers and stakeholders for feedback. All policies were reviewed to meet Accreditation and Regulatory requirements. Carer application and induction process was reviewed and a new process implemented in early 2009.

A number of Carer changes occurred; with the total number increased from 14 to the current 17 registered Carers. There are currently 3 In Home Carers in Coonabarabran and Gilgandra.

An inclusion support review on current Service Support Plan was undertaken and continues to accommodate for children with additional needs within the service. The Coordination unit conducted in-service training with Carers attending workshops on Quality Assurance and Timesheets. The Coordinator attended Out of School Hours (OOSH) and Family Day Care Conference in 2009.

The office was relocated with Connect 5; in last week June to the former Coonabarabran Preschool building at 14 Robertson Street. This purpose built childcare centre has been refurbished and now includes office space, an Out Of School Hours (OOSH) and Vacation Care services, plus a permanent play room that is used by Playgroup, Breastfeeding groups and other children's services agencies. The FDC Coordinator resigned in June 2009, and whilst a restructure is being implemented to combine Connect 5, OOSH and FDC sharing a Manager and Administration support, the FDC office is being operated by a Temporary Coordinator and casual Administration Officers.

For 2008-2009 Reporting Year

Number of Children enrolled: 266

Number of Families: 163

Total Earnings: \$461,172

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Fee Relief: \$325,233  
Administration Levy: \$55,454

The number of Carers has reached sustainable levels, and unit duly recognised by DEEWR Family Day Care section for growth of service this year. The Annual Financial Statement for 2007-2008 reporting period remains only outstanding item to DEEWR; who provide Network Support and CCB to Families using Family Day Care service.

### **Connect Five Management**

Connect 5 is a Mobile Children's Service operating in the Shires of Coonamble, Gilgandra and Warrumbungle to assist children 0-5 years to reach their full potential by providing support to them and their families. The service targets groups of children who:

- Are isolated geographically and culturally
- Are of low socio economic background
- Do not currently access (or have limited access to) appropriate services in the community.

Funding is provided by the NSW Government through DoCS Children's Services Rural and Remote funding. The service has been auspiced by Warrumbungle Shire Council and has operated for 10 years from the former Library in King Street, Coonabarabran. An opportunity to relocate to the Preschool Centre building at 14 Robertson Street, Coonabarabran became a possibility in January 2009 when Preschool moved to the new Yuluwirri Kids Pre-school and Childcare Centre. Renovations were undertaken in May which enabled Connect Five to relocate with Family Day Care and the new Out Of School Hours (OOSH) and Vacation Care Service into the new premises. Following an organisation restructure these 3 services have together created the new Warrumbungle Shire Family Support Service.

A highlight for Connect Five was being named a finalist in the photography section at the NSW Childcare Cooperative Cee Cee's Awards for excellence in Childcare in July 2008. Ongoing feedback and service improvement objectives were achieved via Parent Surveys which was conducted in October 2008. 81 completed surveys were returned and results collated and distributed to parents and stakeholders. This information is used primarily to fine tune the play sessions ensuring that parents' needs are met by the service.

### **Staff**

Two permanent staff provides the hands on operation of Connect Five; a Teacher and a job share Child Development Officer (CDO) position. All staff attended Manual Handling training provided by Council in 2008 and further networking and their professional development training at the annual Mobile Meet. This is a conference conducted by the Mobile Children's Services Association and attended by representatives from all over NSW.

### **Long Day Care**

When the Early Learning Centre closed at the end of 2007 Coonabarabran was without a childcare service. Connect Five catered for the 0-3 year olds by operating an In-venue Child Care service for three days a week in the Uniting Church Hall in Coonabarabran. Early Learning Centre staff were employed on a casual basis to operate the service. During this period there were 23 participating families and 32 enrolments with an average attendance of 10-11 children each day. The In-venue care ceased at the end of January 2009 when Yuluwirri Kids – the new community based Preschool and Long Day Care Centre opened.

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### **Play sessions**

Play sessions serve many purposes and include the opportunity for children to socialize and learn new skills through play as well as for parents to interact socially and share their own experiences and knowledge with each other. 12% of parents have used the opportunity to leave their child at a play session in the care of Connect Five whilst they attend to other matters. Parent comments in the 2008 survey were overwhelmingly positive, expressing appreciation for the service and the way it is enjoyed by the children. Parents also said they like the portfolios of photos and samples that are created for each child.

Play sessions operate out of registered venues that may be a local community hall, a pre-school or the home of a family living on a rural property. Play sessions continued at Baradine, Binnaway, Coonabarabran, Coolah, Dunedoo, Gulargambone, Hollywood lane, Mendooran and Tooraweenah. The Weetaliba session which was popular and well attended for 3 years was closed in favour of a weekly session in Binnaway. Some Weetaliba parents have continued to attend Connect Five at the Coolah group. In response to the weekly sessions, the numbers attending Binnaway have picked up and now average around 7-8 children. At the beginning of the year there were low numbers attending both the Tooraweenah and Gulargambone groups. In response to parent suggestions it was decided to swap days with Tooraweenah and Gulargambone. As a result of this change there are now increased numbers in both Tooraweenah and Gulargambone and some parents attend both sessions.

Group sizes vary dramatically. The largest groups this year were Coolah and Gulargambone who each have average attendances around 20 or more children. Mendooran has struggled this year with just 1-2 children at many sessions. The Mobile operates on a fortnightly cycle with one day a fortnight being allocated for cleaning, programming and administration. On average 70 children attend a play session each week. There are approximately 170 participating families. If responses to our survey question regarding plans to increase the family are correct, up to half of our families could continue with Connect Five for the next five years.

### **Resource Library**

16% of parents have used the Toy library. Many parents said they do not like to borrow because they have enough toys at home or they are worried they will break or lose things. Some parents find it too difficult to remember to find things and return them on a regular basis. In response to the survey there have been some adjustments to the way toy library is operated. As a result there has been a growing interest in the Toy Library. There are now 17 parents actively using the library and 8 professionals registered.

### **Interagency Participation**

Connect Five is committed to working with other agencies to deliver the best possible services to the community using all the resources available. Over the years Connect Five has provided leadership in many interagency events. In the past year Connect Five has participated in Interagency meetings working on local projects in Baradine, Coonabarabran and Dunedoo involving the following activities:

- A Community Health Services day and NAIDOC week celebrations in Coonabarabran.
- The Community Services Expo conducted by the Warrumbungle Shire Council.
- Promotion of Barnardos and the Brighter Futures Program
- Centa Care with their 4 day Parenting Course.
- Organising opportunities for children to have interactions with local schools to facilitate the smooth transition to school.

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**Rebecca Ryan**  
**Director Community Services**

## **State of Environment Report**

LGA s.428(2)(c) and Reg cl 217(2) and 218-226

**Report compiled and annexed to this report.**

## **Condition of Public Works**

LGA s.428(2)(d)(i-iii)

The following schedules, sourced from Council's financial reports, provide an overview of the total assets under council's management and includes information on:

- the condition of assets
- estimated cost to bring up to a satisfactory condition/standard
- estimate of funds required for annual maintenance
- estimate of funds for programmed maintenance

Warrumbungle Shire Council

Special Schedule No. 7 - Condition of Public Works  
as at 30 June 2009

\$'000

ASSET CLASS	Asset Category	Cap'n Rate (%)	Dep'n Expense (\$)	Cost Valuation	Accumulated Depreciation & Impairment	Carrying Amount (WDV)	Asset Condition*	Estimated Long-term liability (constant)	Requiring Annual Works	Current Annual Works	
Buildings	Council Offices	2.42%	98	3,645	2,504	1,142	2	275	175	175	
	Council Works Depot	3.02%	70	3,088	1,574	1,514	2	80	118	151	
	Council Hqs	2.73%	281	8,507	5,842	2,665	2	83	28	127	
	Council Houses	2.67%	63	1,580	65	1,515	2	25	5	78	
	Medical Centres	3.19%	47	1,491	1,484	415	2	12	20	37	
	Library	3.32%	48	1,258	587	671	2	-	-	-	
	Recreation & Culture	2.93%	321	9,475	3,516	5,959	2	1,250	118	926	
	Children's Centres(s)	2.82%	39	330	1,668	1,338	2	-	6	5	
	Emergency Centres	2.93%	44	1,533	1,704	584	1	-	48	85	
	Amenities/Chairs	2.73%	34	1,278	546	732	2	15	50	129	
	Other (spec)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	Other (spec)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	Other (spec)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	Other (spec)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	sub total		2.86%	1,047	635	35,862	19,667	2	1,730	517	1,685
Public Roads	Sealed Roads	1.07%	2,491	273,860	122,034	150,926	2-3	1,380	863	662	
	Unsealed Roads	1.09%	458	26,556	0	17,786	2-3	6,927	1,201	3,786	
	Sealed Roads Structure	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	Bridges	1.06%	307	23,675	2,723	21,152	1	-	171	2,129	
	Footpaths	1.08%	18	1,693	350	1,343	3-4	389	25	104	
	Cycle ways	2.30%	5	267	31	236	2-3	-	-	-	
	Verbal and Outlet	2.30%	11	516	51	465	2-3	100	47	122	
	Road Furniture	4.06%	4	280	19	261	1	-	5	16	
	Other (spec)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	Other (spec)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	Other (spec)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	Other (spec)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	sub total		3.29%	3,294	317,377	135,008	182,369	-	8,766	2,302	6,698

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Special Schedules 2009

Warrumbungle Shire Council

Special Schedule No. 7 - Condition of Public Works (continued)

\$'000

ASSET CLASS	Asset Category	Depr. Rate (%)	Dep'n Expense (\$)	Current Valuation	Accumulated Depreciation	Current Annual (2008)	Asset Condition	Current assets less depreciation	Depreciated Annual	Current Annual
Water	Treatment Plants	3.0%	6	7,960	3,000	4,960	2	720	100	100
	Water Conduits									
	Surplus									
	Reservoirs	2.0%		15	15,588	7,738	2-3	124	55	55
	Dams									
	Hydroplants									
	Stop Valves	2.0%	814	89	21,051	16,500	2-4	411	316	516
	Pipelines	3.0%	21	8	1,074	742	2-3	84	87	87
	Pump Stations									
	Other Assets		645	111	43,916	28,536		1,359	564	564
	sub total									
Sewerage	Pump Stations	3.0%	29	5	2,590	1,357	2	45	38	38
	Pipeline	3.0%	141	56	19,590	7,321	2-3	400	82	82
	Mains									
	Air Vent Stacks									
	Treatment Works	3.0%	103	27	5,167	4,143	2-3	123	59	59
	Sewerage Connection									
	Other Reservoirs	3.0%	5	74	60	34	2-3		2	2
	Other - Effluent Re-use	4.0%		211	86	116	2-3		4	4
	Other Assets									
	sub total		276	00	27,502	12,667		612	125	125

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Special Schedule No. 7/08



Warrumbungle Shire Council

Special Schedule No. 7 - Condition of Public Works (continued)  
 as at 30 June 2009

\$'000

ASSET CLASS	Asset Category	Dep'n. Rate (%)	Dep'n. Expense (\$)	Cost Valuation	Accumulated Depreciation A	Carrying Amount (NDV)	Asset Condition*	Estimated Repairs/Replacement	Current Annual Maintenance
Drainage Works	Retaining Easings	per Table 1	per Table 4						
	Outfalls								
	Stormwater Channels	2.0%	95	4,935	1,752	3,045	2	202	70
	Inlet and Junction Pits								
	Head Walls								
	Outfall Structures								
	Stormwater Conduits								
	Other (sewer)								
	Other (sewer)		90	4,838	1,782	3,016		203	78
	sub total								
	TOTAL - ALL ASSETS		5,350	333,049	112,390	247,569		12,670	3,745

Notes:

- (1) - Subclasses table is available to view the asset in a category, condition or domain by Council. It does not include any other asset measurements in the asset's work.
- (2) - Property/zone - Subclasses table is available to view the asset in a category, condition or domain by Council. It does not include any other asset measurements in the asset's work.
- (3) - Current Annual Maintenance is the amount spent in the current year on the asset.

3 Asset Condition "Key" - as per NSW Local Government Asset Accounting Manual:

1	Near Perfect - Ranges from New or Good	6	Asset Unrecoverable - Critical - Beyond Repair
2	Significant Deterioration - Ranges from Generally Good to Fair	7	
3	Deterioration Evident - Ranges from Fair to Marginal	8	
4	Requires Major Reconstruction - Ranges from Poor to Critical		

Special Schedule No. 7

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## Legal Proceedings

LGA s.428(2)(e)

### Rates and Charges

Council retains a debt recovery service for the recovery of outstanding rates and charges. All charges incurred in using the service is recovered as a charge against the ratepayer.

### Legal Action Against Council:

Council has incurred costs in relation to a Freedom of Information application under which action was taken and the matter was referred to the Administrative Decisions Tribunal.

### Legal Action By Council:

There have been no legal proceedings taken by the Council during the reporting period other than for the recovery of outstanding rates and charges mentioned above.

## Elected Members

LGA s.428(2)(f) and REG 217(1)(a1)

Councillors are not paid a salary they are however paid an allowance in accordance with figures set by the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal.

Councillors' annual fees for 2008/2009 were set at \$9,060 per annum and an additional fee of \$19,790 was set for the Mayoral allowance.

Total expenses for Councillors' fees, expenses and facilities for the period 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2009 was made up of the following: -

	<b>Expenses</b>
Mayoral and Deputy Mayor allowance	18,179
Mayoral car expenses	12,740
Telephone – Mobile Mayor	349
Councillors' Allowances	71,519
Councillors' Training and skill development	6,551
Councillors' internet communication contribution	4,520
Travelling Expenses – Councillors	13,419
Administrative Expenses (including dedicated office use and equipment)	8,426
Delegates Expenses – Conferences and seminars	10,815
Council Elections	60,506
Council meetings catering	1,965
Civic Functions	1,466
Expenses of any spouse, partner or other person who accompanied a councillor	Nil
Expenses involved in the provision of care for a child or an immediate family member of a councillors	Nil
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>\$210,455</u></b>

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Council's adopted policy for the Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities to Elected Members is as follows:

**Strategic 1.1**

**Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities to Elected Members Policy**

(Pursuant to Section 248 and 252 of the Local Government Act)

**(i) Councillors' Fees**

Councillors will be paid an annual fee in accordance with the recommended maximum as advised by the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal. The fee is to be paid in monthly instalments in arrears.

**(ii) Travel Expenses**

Travel in own vehicle to Council and Committee meetings, formal or social functions or activities whilst representing Council or other meetings involving the community where attendance is approved by the Mayor - to be paid at the per kilometre rate set out in the Local Government (State) Award.

Where the meeting, function or activity is within the Warrumbungle Shire Council boundary, reimbursement shall be on the basis of the distance from the Councillor's principal place of residence (if it is within the Warrumbungle Shire Council boundary) to the venue or, if the Councillor resides outside the Warrumbungle Shire Council boundary, from the Warrumbungle Shire Council boundary to the venue.

Where the Councillor uses his/her own vehicle to travel to an approved function that is outside the Warrumbungle Shire Council boundary then council's reimbursement will be based on the total distance travelled from residence to venue and return if the Councillor resides within the Warrumbungle Shire Council boundary. If the Councillor does not reside within the Warrumbungle Shire Council boundary, then Council will reimburse the distance either:

- a) from the Councillor's residence to the venue, or
- b) from the Warrumbungle Shire Council boundary closest to the Councillor's residence to the venue, whichever is the lesser.

Claims for the above expenses only require the submission of a claim form detailing date, distance and reason for journey(s), claims to be submitted monthly.

Travel associated with such authorised conferences, seminars and meetings may be undertaken by Council vehicle (where available) subject to prior approval by the General Manager, with fuel expenses etc. to be met by Council.

Elected members using private vehicles will be paid the kilometre rate to a maximum payment, which is not to exceed economy class air fares to and from the particular destination.

All travel by Councillors that involves an overnight stay of one or two nights must be authorised in advance by the Mayor or General Manager.

All travel by Councillors that involves an overnight stay of more than two nights must be authorised in advance by the Council.

Where travel for Council business or approved activities outside of the local government area is to be undertaken – arrangements for both travel and accommodation must be made through the General Manager and will be by the most practical method.

**(iii) Accommodation and meal expenses**

Council will provide reasonable expenses for each night of authorised attendance by elected members and/or General Manager at conferences or seminars on behalf of Council or as participants (or on authorised Council business). Such attendance to be confirmed by Council with allowance for such expenses to be made at the rate of \$350.00 per night in capital cities and \$200 per night in regional and country centres. (Expenses include accommodation, meals and "out of pocket" expenses.)

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Council will meet the cost of return economy air travel or equivalent payment for attendance at authorised conferences/seminars. - see item (ii) regarding use of private vehicles.

**NOTE:** Where the attendee is accompanied by his or her spouse/partner, the attendee will be required to meet all costs associated with their spouse/partners travel and attendance.

**(iv) Incidental Expenses**

Incidental expenses (outside iii above) such as taxi or public transport fares, phone/fax expenses and small purchases (eg a book relevant to a function or activity of Council) and expenses incurred as the result of the purchase of light refreshments during meetings related to council business will be reimbursed by Council on production by the Councillor of the relevant receipts (or Statutory Declaration attesting to expenditure of such incidental expenses) together with an approved claim form.

Council will not meet any expenses for alcohol, cigarettes or personal requirements. Council will not fully fund any activity where the Councillor is not in attendance for at least 90% of the specified activity. Other than in the most exceptional circumstances, where Councillor's expenses have been met by Council but the Councillor does not attend at least 90% of the activity, that Councillor will be required to show cause why they should not reimburse Council for any costs incurred.

The costs of attendance at a function on behalf of the organisation by the Mayor, Deputy Mayor or General Manager will be reimbursed.<sup>(a)</sup>

Except as otherwise set out in this policy, Council will not reimburse Councillors for telephone expenses incurred in using their private/mobile phones for Council business. Phones are available for Councillors' use at the Coolah and Coonabarabran offices of Council.

<sup>(a)</sup> The intention of this amendment was that attendance by the spouse or partner of the Mayor, Deputy or General Manager would also be reimbursed.

**(v) Requirement for receipts**

Council will not reimburse any expenses unless a receipt is produced (or duly executed statutory declaration produced).

**(vi) Payment of Reimbursed claims**

Councillors are to submit all claims for reimbursement, including all travel expenses, on a monthly basis and these will be paid with their monthly allowance. All payments to Councillors will be via direct deposit to their nominated bank account.

**(vii) Registration fees**

Registration fees for attendance at Council approved conferences and seminars will be paid by Council.

**(viii) Mayoral Expenses and Facilities**

The Mayor will be entitled to receive the following benefits:-

- a) Mayoral allowance – eighty per cent (80%) of the maximum fee as determined by the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal, to be paid monthly in arrears.
- b) Payment of annual fees in accordance with Section 248 and 249 of the Act.
- c) Provision of a Council vehicle for appropriate use by the Mayor to carry out his duties as Mayor. Council to meet all costs associated with the provision of the vehicle. The Mayor will have no right of private use of this vehicle.
- d) Secretarial services relating to the discharge of his/her civic functions, including use of official stationery, writing pads, pens, diaries, folders and postage of official correspondence.
- e) Administrative assistance associated with civic functions, meetings and the like.

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- f) Office refreshments
  - g) Internet compatible computer and Broadband internet connection or provision of \$50.00 per month to cover Councillor's costs of communications via computer (internet) or provision of a facsimile.
  - h) Supply of Name Badges, Business Cards and Attache Case.

**(ix) Elected Members - Expenses and Facilities**

The Councillors including the Deputy Mayor are entitled to receive the following benefits:-

- a) Payment of annual fees in accordance with Section 248 and 249 of the Act.
- b) Deputy Mayoral allowance – twenty per cent (20%) of Mayoral allowance
- c) Use of Council Chambers, telephone and limited hospitality facilities (tea and coffee) for Council business or functions or community consultation.
- d) Secretarial services relating to the discharge of his/her civic functions, including use of official stationery where authorised by Mayor or General Manager.
- e) Postage of official correspondence dealing with Council business.
- f) Access to facsimile and photocopying facilities for Council related business.
- g) Transport to official functions when deputising for the Mayor. (ie) Use of Mayoral vehicle if required.
- h) Provision of internet compatible computer, Broadband internet connection or facsimile machine or in place of the foregoing provision of \$50.00 per month to cover Councillors' costs of communications via internet.
- i) Supply of Name Badges, Business Cards, Diaries and Note Books.

**(x) Bluetts Handbook**

To provide all Councillors with a copy after their election.

**(xi) Policies**

To be provided with a full and up to date copy of policies and manuals.

## Overseas Travel

LGA s.428(2)(r) and REG 217(1)(a)

No overseas travel was undertaken by Councillors or others representing Council during the year.

## Senior Staff

LGA s.428(2)(g)

The General Manager is the only designated Senior Staff member (as prescribed by Section 332 of the Act) employed by Warrumbungle Shire Council during the twelve month period.

The senior staff member's total remuneration package which includes all costs associated with his employment is as follows:

<b>Position</b>	<b>Total Remuneration Package for period 1/7/2008 to 30/6/2009</b>
<b>General Manager</b>	
Total Value of salary component of package	149,714.36
Total amount of any bonus payments, performance or other payments not forming part of salary component	0
Total payable superannuation (salary sacrifice and employers contribution)	25,000.00
Total value non-cash benefits	1,482.14
Total payable fringe benefits tax for non-cash benefits	5,612.00
<b>TOTAL COSTS</b>	<b>\$181,808.50</b>

## Contracts Awarded by Council

LGA s.428(2)(h)

Council has awarded the following contracts during the financial year that are required to be reported. (Note: Employment contracts and contracts valued at less than \$150,000.00 are not required to be detailed).

Purchased from	Description	Amount
Boral Country Concrete	Supply and delivery of Pre-coated aggregate and crusher	\$237,276.71
Cemex Australia Pty Ltd	Supply and delivery of Pre-coated aggregate and crusher	\$130,248.59
Pioneer Road Services Pty Ltd	Supply and spray of bitumen	\$1,363,283.13
Rosmech Sales & Services Pty Ltd	Purchase of Scarab Merlin Street Sweeper (Plant 186)	\$272,353.00
Fulton Hogan	Design and construction of Saltwater Creek No 1 bridge	\$764,500.00
Fulton Hogan	Design and construction of Ulindah bridge	\$731,350.00
Fulton Hogan	Design and construction of Yearinan Creek bridge	\$598,350.00
Westrac Dubbo	Purchase of Caterpillar 12M articulated motor grader	\$300,000.00

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# Bush Fire and Emergency Services

## Hazard Reduction

LGA s.428(2)(i1)

### Road side Slashing

Council conducts road side slashing on all sealed local and main roads throughout the Shire at least once per year.

Warrumbungle Shire Council is a member of the Warrumbungle Bushfire Management Committee.

As part of the Service Agreement between Council and the NSW Rural Fire Service, the RFS inspected reported fire hazards on Council's behalf.

### Bush Fire Hazard Reduction.

The 1,687 hectares of scheduled hazard reduction for 2008-2009 year was severely reduced by a wet autumn and winter period with only limited success obtained. These burns were rescheduled for the 2009-2010 period. Of the burns rescheduled the Shire Council has 64ha planned mostly along the Oxley and Newell Highways north of Coonabarabran and Rocky Glen. The Department of Lands has 28ha, the Department of Environment and Climate Change (National Parks) has 52ha and private land owners with in the Warrumbungle Shire have 1,492ha to burn.

### Asset Protection Zones

The Bush Fire Management Committee, of which Council is a member, has recommended that additional Asset Protection Zones (APZ) be included in the Castlereagh Bush Fire Risk Management Plan. These Zones include a strip of land between the urban interface of Hagan, Ann, Jubilee, Margaret, Dalgarno and Camp Streets. Land managed by Council to the western side of buildings on Clark Street and Council land along East and Tannabah Streets will also be included.

These APZ's will increase the ability of the land managers to do hazard reduction works when required and increase the protection of property along the urban interface of Coonabarabran.

### Community Engagement

The Rural Fire Service has an ongoing commitment to protect, educate and advise the community in a sustainable way. Members of brigades and RFS staff visited primary and preschools through the Shire engaging with children on a range of topics from playing with matches to home evacuation and calling "000" if they have an emergency.

Brigade members and RFS staff also undertook property inspections, participated in the Health and Community Services Expo, local agricultural shows and gave advice on local community radio and in community newsletters. Programs such as the SWS (Static Water Supply) and Bush FireWise Action Plan were rolled out. These programs encourage property owners and householders to identify and mark static water supplies and also plan their preparation and action during a bush fire.

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## **Programs to promote services for People with Diverse Cultural and Linguistic Backgrounds**

LGA s.428(2)(j)

Across the shire there are a large number of cultural, sporting and recreational groups providing for a variety of activities and lifestyle pursuits for the community.

There are many active sporting organisations in Warrumbungle Shire to suit any resident or visitor. The shire has infrastructure and support services which includes an excellent health service, access to top quality primary, secondary and tertiary education, police and emergency services, social and community services and community service organisations.

The shire offers diverse communities with many professionals, government workers, teachers, trades people and scientists. The nature of the agricultural and business sectors throughout the region's history has provided for a diverse and multicultural community that readily accepts new residents.

## **Services for Needs of Children**

LGA s.428(2)(r) and Reg cl 217(1)(c)

Council provides significant support for children's services, particularly through the provision of community buildings for Preschools, Library Services and meeting rooms that are available for children's groups include the Children Services building and Youth Clubs. The library service, which is part of the Macquarie Regional Library Service, maintains branches or services in each of the six (6) communities. There are dedicated children's section providing a range of children's fiction and picture story books, audio cassettes and posters and weekly story time for children. Some branches also have a range of children's toys available for loan. Schools, children's services and community groups can arrange class visits.

Connect Five mobile children's service, provides play sessions, toy library and parent education across the Warrumbungle and Gilgandra Local Government Areas . Connect Five also conducted a short-term long day care for children aged 0-3 years whilst a longer term solution for long day care in the Warrumbungle LGA was developed. This program was funded by Department of Community Services.

Castlereagh Family Day Care provides coordination and support across the Warrumbungle and Gilgandra LGA's. Family Day Care is a registered child care service that operates in the private homes of registered carers for 0-12 year olds. The coordination is funded by Department of Family and Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaCSIA)..

Further information regarding services for Children are in individual sections within this Report.



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## Access & Equity Activities for Residents

LGA s.428(2)(r) and Reg cl 217(1)(d)(i)

The Local Government (General) Amendment (Community and Social Plans) was introduced in 1998 to help local Government to promote a more inclusive community by ensuring that government services are responsive to community needs and diversity.

In 2005 Warrumbungle Shire Council commenced a process to undertake the development of a Social/Community Plan to both satisfy legislated requirements, and to ensure that:

- Fairness is considered in the distribution of resources
- The community is consulted in decisions that affect their daily lives
- People have fairer access to economic resources and services essential to meeting their daily needs

In February 2008, Council adopted the Warrumbungle Shire Social/Cultural Community Plan 2008. In the Identified Needs, Gaps and Issues section of the Plan, the known needs, gaps and issues for each target group of the Warrumbungle LGA are identified as well as other local issues for each group.

There are wide variety of support services available in the Warrumbungle Shire however, Council staff, residents and service providers identified a number of gaps in service provision. Currently many services are unable to meet the demand and people requesting assistance find that the services has 'closed its books' and they are placed on a waiting list. Consultations, community organisation feedback and householder surveys found many gaps.

Focus groups were undertaken in Coonabarabran, Baradine, Binnaway, Coolah, Mendooran and Dunedoo in preparation of the Warrumbungle Shire Council Community Social Cultural Plan in order to identify needs and gaps, issues and concerns of residents. Consultations were also held with local service providers, government agencies, community organisations and interested local people. Community organisation and householder surveys were also completed.

That section of the Warrumbungle Shire Council Community Social Cultural Plan provides a summary of the identified needs and gaps, issues and concerns for each of the target groups in the Warrumbungle Shire that surfaced from the consultations and surveys. Many of the issues identified by groups other than those involved with each of the target groups, particularly those relating to the physical and cultural environment, are shared by the target groups, however, this discussion relates more specifically to issues likely to directly affect the target groups and their service providers.

The Community Development Officer provides a community development, advocacy, and support role for services for all target groups. This position is funded by Department of Community Services and auspiced by Warrumbungle Shire Council. The Community Development Officer also provides support in sourcing and applying for funding opportunities that could benefit all target groups in the Warrumbungle LGA.

The Social Services Manager and unit is another Council auspiced program that provides Home and Community Care services to older people in the area, including people with a disability according to the National HACC program guidelines. This includes; Meals on Wheels, Neighbour Aid, Handyman Service, Social Support, Respite for Carers program and community transport. This unit has various funding bodies

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including; the Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care, NSW Department Health and Ministry of Transport.

Warrumbungle Shire Council funds five (5) Community Development Coordinator positions by a direct grant of \$15,000 per annum to each of the following organisations:

- Coolah District Development Group
- Dunedoo and District Development Group
- Mendooran District Development Group
- Binnaway Progress Association
- Baradine Progress Association

The role of the Community Development Coordinators is to provide support in sourcing and applying for funding opportunities that benefit the individual communities. The coordinators have established a network with each other, and are key communication channels between Council and the Community.

The Community Services Department is responsible for the planning and development of services for all target groups living in the Warrumbungle LGA and for the development and implementation of the Warrumbungle Shire's Community Social/Cultural Plan.

The Environmental Services Department is responsible for the regulations that affect developments and services accessed by all target groups living in the Warrumbungle LGA.

The Technical Services Department is responsible for the planning, development and construction of roads, footpaths and town streets that are used and affect all target groups living in the Warrumbungle LGA.

The Community Services Department are an advocate for residents and services of the Warrumbungle LGA.

Warrumbungle Shire Council coordinates projects, services, activities and special events of interests and relevance to the various target groups in the Warrumbungle LGA including Children's Week, Youth Week, NAIDOC Week, Seniors Week and International Women's Day celebrations.

## **Private Works**

LGA s.428(2)(k)

In March 2008 Council adopted a Private Works Policy and in June 2009 Council adopted amendments to that policy.

### **The Policy objective states that:**

*Council owns and maintains a wide variety of plant and equipment to enable it to undertake its service obligation functions. When not utilised in the provision of service functions, Council plant and equipment may be hired out to undertake private works. Council expects that private works are undertaken on a commercial basis and that a profit is made. However, it is not the intention of Council to undertake private works in direct competition to local contractors and in this regard, private works are generally undertaken when local contractors are not available.*

### **Authority**

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*Council has authority to undertake private works through Section 67 of the Local Government Act 1993. Fees charged for private works shall be in accordance with fees as published annually in Council's Management Plan. Section 67 of the Local Government Act places responsibility on Council to publicly report any private works undertaken where the fees charged are less than those published in the Management Plan.*

*The procedure for undertaking private works and recovering costs are categorised into either external private works or internal private works. The procedures for internal private works relate to staff members and they are different to procedures for external private works*

*Private Works*

*In accordance with Section 67 of the Local Government Act 1993, Council may, by agreement with the owner or occupier of any private land, carry out on the land any kind of work that may lawfully be carried out on the land including the following types of work:*

- Paving and roadmaking*
- Kerbing and guttering*
- Fencing and ditching*
- Tree planting and tree maintenance*
- Grass planting and maintenance*
- Waste collection*
- Demolition and excavation*
- Land clearing and tree felling*
- Water, sewerage and drainage connections*

**Private Plant Hire Rates**

Council will hire out the items of plant listed in the Revenue Policy (Fees and Charges) forming part of the 2009/2010 Management Plan, subject to the conditions and pricing factors contained in that section.

No subsidised private work was carried out by Council during the period 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2009.

# Contributions and Donations

LGA s.428(2)(l)

## Rates Contributions

Group	Contribution \$
Coonabarabran CWA	1,179.83
Baradine CWA	549.63
Masonic Lodge Timor	1,516.32
Baradine Masonic Lodge	549.63
Coonabarabran Boy Scouts	299.65
Coonabarabran Pre-School	366.40
St Vincent De Paul – Dalgarno St	299.65
Coonabarabran Girl Guides	116.50
Binnaway Showground	116.50
Catholic Church – Baradine Tennis Courts	116.50
Baradine Presbyterian Church	116.50
Baradine Anglican Church	349.43
Baradine Uniting Church	116.50
Baradine Catholic Church	116.50
Binnaway Anglican Church	116.50
Binnaway Roman Catholic Church	116.50
Coonabarabran Jehovah's Witnesses	299.65
Coonabarabran New Life Centre (Assemblies of God)	299.65
Coonabarabran Roman Catholic Church	299.65
Coolah St Andrew's Anglican Church	304.05
Coolah St James Presbyterian Church	304.05
Coolah Sacred Heart Catholic Church	304.05
Dunedoo All Saints Anglican Church	304.05
Dunedoo St David's Presbyterian Church	304.05
Dunedoo St Michael's Catholic Church	304.05
Dunedoo Uniting Church	304.05
Mendooran St Chad's Anglican Church	240.00
Mendooran St Mary's Catholic Church	240.00
Leadville Memorial Hall (to assist with rates)	225.00
Uarbry Hall Committee (to assist with rates)	151.34
Leadville Fire Shed (to assist with rates)	205.36
Coolah Youth Centre (to assist with garbage charges)	205.36
<b>Total Contributions – Rates &amp; Charges</b>	<b>\$10,336.90</b>

## Donations

	\$'s
School Prize Nights (Northern)	420.00
Anzac Day (Southern)	250.00
Coonabarabran Arts Acquisitive Prize	809.00
Coonabarabran Shire Orbital Swing Band	1,000.00
Cooinda – sewerage extension	8,000.00
Crooked Mountain Concert	3,000.00
Coonabarabran 2WRCFM	473.00
Coonabarabran Equestrian Expo	1,000.00
Coonabarabran DPS Local & Family History Group Inc	500.00
Coonabarabran Bunny Bazaar	1,000.00
Coonabarabran Jockey Club	1,000.00
Coonabarabran – Warrumbungle Art Expo	1,000.00
Binnaway Jockey Club	1,000.00
Baradine Progress – Retirement Village	10,000.00
Baradine School Band	250.00
Coolah Development Group	400.00
Coolah Swimming pool shed	900.00
Coolah Youth Club	1,000.00
Coolah Sports Club	-156.00
Coolah Radio Station	11,288.00
Coolah Jazz in the Tops	500.00
Dunedoo Bush Poetry	500.00
Dunedoo Girls to Grannies	200.00
Dunedoo Lions – Acquisitive Art Prize	800.00
Dunedoo Polo Crosse	300.00
Dunedoo Three Rivers Radio	520.00
Dunedoo TAFE	50.00
Ulamambri Hall Committee	2,000.00
Mendooran Jockey Club	1,000.00
Breast Screening Van	572.00
Neilrex Hall	500.00
Neilrex Tennis Club	700.00
Other Donations	4,036.00
Northern Inland Academy of Sport	327.00
Keep Australia Beautiful	427.00
Coolah RSL Club	500.00
Warrumbungle Staff Christmas Party	3,000.00
Victorian Bush Fire Volunteers	1,044.00
<b>Total of donations</b>	<b>\$60,110.00</b>
<b>TOTAL OF CONTRIBUTIONS AND DONATIONS</b>	<b>\$70,446.90</b>

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# Statement of Human Resources Activities

LGA s.428(2)(m)

## Human Resource Management

HR had an extremely busy year with new targets being set to ensure all HR processes were undertaken efficiently and effectively. Newsletters were used to ensure staff were kept informed of any news which effected them with a health newsletter a popular addition. With the opening of the Yulluwirri Child Care Centre involving 15 new positions new position descriptions and associated documentation were created at very short notice. Payroll section of HR ensured all employees were paid on time and staff requests and queries were answered.

## OH&S/Risk Management

This year the Workplace Safety Officer took on the role of Return to Work Coordinator and worked closely with medical professionals to ensure a quick return to work for injured staff. Safe Work Method Statements was given a high priority and the workplace safety officer worked closely with engineering staff to ensure this huge project was progressing. All staff were made aware of the importance of risk assessments in the workplace. State Cover safety audit was returned on time with improvements in all areas.

## Staff Recruitment Services

Again this year proved to be very busy in this area. Large turnovers in staff occurred with the same problem of attracting technical staff still occurring. New strategies were explored to overcome this problem and efforts will be made in the new year to fill these positions.

## Performance Management

All competencies were completed by 31<sup>st</sup> August 2008. All staff, except managers, have been issued with new competency documents in the latter part of this financial year. New revised standards and principles were applied to these competencies ensuring the competencies targeted each individual position and were more relevant.

### Staff Training Activities

Confined Spaces Updates, 34  
Dealing with Difficult People, 14  
Test and Tag, 2  
Wastewater Operator Training, 1  
Drum Muster Training, 3  
Culvert Inspection Training, 3  
Debt Collection Training, 4  
OH&S Induction (White Card), 2  
Apply Traffic Control Plans, 9  
Stop/Slow Traffic Control, 13  
Record Keeping, 1  
Undertaking Workplace Assessment, 5  
Workshop for Managers, 10  
Manual Handling - All staff  
Rural Fire Service Operator Training, 43  
Chainsaw Level 2, 1  
Return to Work Co-coordinator Training, 1  
FBT Training, 1  
Various Workcover Tickets

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# Statement of Activities to implement EEO Management Plan

LGA s.428(2)(n)

An extensive review of the EEO Management Plan took place in 2008/2009, this was undertaken to ensure all processes and policies within the organisation met legislative and Council requirements with improvements made where needed.

Recruitment and Selection processes were again scrutinized, with several changes made in documentation to ensure the probity of the whole system was upheld. All members of selection panels were reminded of their responsibilities in the area of EEO and HR was satisfied with outcomes from panel members.

## **OTHER LEGISLATION – Section 428(2)(r)**

### **Child Protection and Community Services Act 1999**

In 2008/09 Council required advertisements in Children's Services to state that all prospective staff working in close contact with children within Connect Five, Child Day Care, the Yuluwirri Child Care Centre and all Swimming Pools would be required to undertake a Working With Children Check as a condition of their employment. Should checks return unsatisfactory an offer of employment within Children's Services and Environmental Services would not be made.

## External Bodies

LGA s.428(2)(o)

Council is required to provide a statement of external bodies that have exercised functions delegated by Council.

During the period in review the following bodies exercises delegated functions on behalf of Council -

Body	Function
Castlereagh Macquarie County Council	Control of Noxious Weeds on public land and waterways in its area
Macquarie Regional Library	Library Services

During the report period Council also had a number of committees that advised Council on specific issues. The advice from these committees is used to assist in the decision making process of Council.

The following committees involved representatives from the community, Councillors and Council officers.

Body	Function
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Warrumbungle Shire Tourism and Economic Development Advisory Committee	Tourism promotion and advise Council on economic development
Medical Services Advisory Committee	To maintain the level and relevance of medical services available in the Shire
Warrumbungle Aerodromes Advisory Committee	Advise Council on the needs and practical management of the Shire's Aerodromes
Town Committees – Coolah, Dunedoo, Mendooran/Merrygoen, Binnaway and Baradine	Provide information to Council on community needs

There are three committees which are formed as a requirement of statutory obligations and those committees report to Council but have no formal link to Council. The Councillor representatives on these committees are appointed for the term of the Council.

Body	Function
Traffic Committees	Traffic Management
Bush Fire Management Committee	Fire mitigation
Local Emergency Management Committee	Emergency co-ordination

Council is also represented on the following Regional committees:

The North West Weight of Loads Group	Police Accountability and Consultation
Central Orana Regional Arts Steering Committee	Central West and Namoi Catchment Management Authorities
Central Ranges Natural Gas Association	Orana Regional Organisation of Councils
Golden Highway Consultative Committee	



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## Companies

LGA s.428(2)(p)

Warrumbungle Shire Council did not hold a controlling interest in any company during the period 2008/2009.

## Partnerships, Cooperatives, Joint Ventures

LGA s.428(2)(q)

During this period Council was a joint venture member of the Macquarie Regional Library Service with Dubbo City Council, Wellington Shire Council and Narromine Shire Council.

During this period Council was also a joint venture member of the Castlereagh Macquarie County Council.

Council also coordinates the Castlereagh Family Day Care Scheme which services Warrumbungle and Gilgandra Shires, and Connect Five Children's Services which services Warrumbungle, Gilgandra, Coonamble and Narromine Councils.

Council is also part of Statewide and StateCover which are mutuals for the provision of public liability, property insurance, fidelity guarantee and workers compensation.

## Competitive Neutrality Pricing

### (National Competition Policy) requirements

LGA s.428(2)(r) and Reg cl 217(1)(d)

All levels of Government are required to apply the principle of competitive neutrality for their business operations. The principle of competitive neutrality is based on the concept of a "level playing field" between persons competing in a market place, particularly between private and public sector competitors. Essentially, the principle is that government businesses, whether Commonwealth, State or Local, should operate without net competitive advantages over other businesses as a result of their public ownership. Council has determined its business activities as follows:

- ◆ It is confirmed that Council does not have any Category (1) business activities.
- ◆ Council has not implemented Competitive Neutrality Pricing requirements as Council has no identified Category (1) business.
- ◆ The following Council activities have been confirmed as category (2) businesses under the principles of Competitive Neutrality.

Baradine Water Supply  
Baradine Sewerage Services  
Binnaway Water Supply  
Coolah Water Supply  
Coolah Sewerage Services  
Coonabarabran Water Supply  
Coonabarabran Sewerage Services

Dunedoo Water Supply  
 Dunedoo Sewerage Services  
 Village Water Supplies (Bugaldie/Kenebri/Merrygoen)

- ◆ Council has maintained a complaints handling system for Competitive Neutrality Complaints with a register to record and manage all such complaints. Council's Records management system is used to record, register and track complaints.

### **Competitive Neutrality Complaints 2008/2009**

There were no Competitive Neutrality Complaints received in 2008/2009 and accordingly there is no outcome to report. There are no outstanding complaints.

## ***Comparison of stormwater management***

Reg cl 217(1)(e)

No annual charge has been levied by Council for stormwater management services.

## ***Companion Animals Act and Regulation Activities***

Reg c1217 (1) (f)

1. Lodgement of pound data collection returns with the department	Yes – annual data supplied to electronic data base
2. Lodgement of data relating to dog attacks with the department	No dog attacks during period
3. Amount of funding spent relating to companion animal management and activities	\$77,060.00
4. Companion animal community education programs carried out	Yes – schools program conducted and website used
5. Strategies Council has in place to promote and assist the desexing of dogs and cats	Information provided to owners and discounted registration
6. Strategies in place to comply with the requirements under section 64 (Companion Animals Act) to seek alternatives to euthanasia for unclaimed animals	Suitable dogs given to RSPCA to rehouse
7. Off leash areas provided in the Council area.	Yes
8. Detailed financial information on the use of Companion Animals Fund money for management and control of companion animals in the area.	Received \$5,440 – which was spent in salaries of Rangers controlling Companion Animals

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## Report on special variation expenditure

S508(2)

As no special variation was received by Council, there are no outcomes or expenditures to report.

## Freedom of Information Act 1989

s.68 and cl 10

During the period under review, one Application under Freedom of Information Act received in the previous year was referred to the Ombudsman for review. The Ombudsman's decision was made supporting Council's decision not to release information relating to that previous application. Although the Ombudsman did disagree with one of the grounds Council had withheld the information he added another ground for withholding the information requested.

The applicant then referred the matter to the Administrative Decisions Tribunal with the matter being heard in February 2009. At the end of June 2009 a decision had not been made. A decision was handed down in early July 2009. That decision upheld Council's decision not to release the information requested but did require that personal information relating to the applicant be made available – this was agreed by Council at the hearing.

Applications made under the Freedom of Information Act should be in writing to the Public Officer, Council Chambers, P O Box 191, Coonabarabran 2357. The current application fee of \$34.00 is payable at the time of lodgement of the application.

## Privacy Statement

s.33

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

The Act prescribes that Council may hold personal information concerning individuals for a lawful purpose that is directly related to an activity or function of Council and is necessary for that purpose.

Any information held by Council has been acquired to carry out Council's lawful and proper functions and to keep individuals informed on issues before Council, should the need arise. All such uses will be in accordance with this Act and its associated Management Plan and Code.

Council endorsed a Privacy Management Plan which outlines policies and practices to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Act. Council also incorporates appropriate information in Council's Staff Induction Manuals dealing with the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act.

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To date, no applications have been made for information under the Act and accordingly, no review regarding contravention or disclosure was required to be conducted by or on behalf of Warrumbungle Shire Council under Part 5 and the PPIP Act.

Access to personal information held by Council may be obtained by contacting Council's Privacy Officer, Mr Robert Geraghty.

## **Particulars of compliance with Planning Agreements**

### **s.93G (5)**

Council does not have any planning Agreements in force as per Section 93G(5) of the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979.

## **Statement of Affairs**

A copy of Council's current Statement of Affairs can be obtained from the Administration Desk at the Administration Centre at 20 John Street, Coonabarabran 2357 or accessed via council's website – [www.warrumbungle.nsw.gov.au](http://www.warrumbungle.nsw.gov.au)