



NSROC 2007 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Speech Notes

**Clr Pat Reilly, President NSROC
Mayor, Willoughby Council**



Welcome special guests, Mayors, councillors, staff and members of the press to this, the third NSROC annual conference.

Its great to see so many of you here, representing your councils and taking this opportunity out of your busy schedules to discuss matters of regional importance and to continue the process of building regional policy.

As usual we have had a busy year, both as a ROC and as individual councils. We have had the release of the first set of sub-regional plans as part of the State Government's Metropolitan Strategy, which includes the Plan for the Inner North, and I know many councils are still grappling with the housing and employment targets contained within it.

We will be putting together a NSROC submission on the Plan identifying some of our concerns about it, particularly the lack of detail on infrastructure, and I urge your respective councils to do the same.

We have also had a series of quite dramatic planning reforms, including the recent change to the legislation which enables the Planning Minister to summarily sack councils if he doesn't think they are behaving or are not processing development applications quickly enough.

Other recent changes have given Minister Sartor even greater powers to call in developments, deem them state significant or critical infrastructure, and enforce adherence to the LEP template. Slowly but surely, the community, and us, the elected representatives of the community, are being cut out of the development process – and I think this is what the Minister ultimately wants.

His recent assertions regarding Development Processing times by councils give us an indication of what lies ahead. He is certainly keen on the idea of panels and private certifiers and he is also listening very closely to the needs of the development industry.

I think, and I am sure many of you would agree, it is time they we confronted this issue in a serious way before we lose our planning powers completely.

We have also had a recent change of Local Government Minister. Our new Minister for Local Government Paul Lynch, will be attending our next NSROC Board meeting in a few weeks and I look forward to learning in more detail what he plans for his portfolio. Certainly he has given



every indication that he intends to continue the proposed reforms initiated by his predecessor, including his pursuit of regional alliances.

While we are, of course, supportive of on-going reform where it is necessary, I will take care to remind the minister that the biggest impediment to our on-going operations, apart from the Planning Minister, is resourcing.

We keep banging the drum about rate-pegging but I think not much is likely to change there. And it is with some relief that he has assured us that he will approve additional levies where an appropriate business case has been put forward.

However when we have on-going cost increases and cost-shifting such as that proposed by the Electoral Commission for holding our local elections next year, it will never be enough.

Until rate-pegging is lifted, councils will always be on the back foot financially, even in a relatively affluent area such as this, we contributes no less than 4 per cent of the entire national economy.

But putting politics and money aside for a moment, this year, like previous years, has a theme – and that theme is 'meeting the climate change challenge'. We have heard much about climate change in the media and certainly it is something that is of great concern to many of our residents.

Climate change remains something of a political football at the federal level and it is already clear that it will be a significant election issue. Yet while our colleagues in Canberra debate the merits of signing Kyoto and implementing carbon trading schemes, local government, as usual, has

quietly gone about the business of doing something about it.

Already many of the councils are taking part in the Cities for Climate Change Protection Programme run by the International Council for Local Environment Initiatives. Our own mayor for Hornsby Shire Council, Nick Berman is a member of the ICLEI Executive Committee. This excellent programme sets targets for reducing council's carbon emissions but many of you recognise more can be done.

At the NSROC level we have explored the issue through the NSROC Board and adopted a range of Climate Change actions – which you will find documented in your Conference packs. In our final session, our Executive Director, Dominic Johnson, will be identifying how these, and other projects relating to sustainability are faring, in his review of NSROC's performance over the last 12 months.

The Board also resolved to make Climate Change the theme of this conference and we have selected a range of speakers for you to listen to and interact with accordingly, including Frank Muller, a visiting fellow from the University of New South Wales, Peter Dorman, an in-line manager from the Newcastle City Council, and later, we will hear from Lisa Corbyn, the Director General of the newly named Department of Environment and Climate Change regarding the state government's response to the issue.

I do accept some of you might be climate change sceptics, while might already be implementing programmes to combat climate change. Whichever camp you are in, I hope that by the end of today you will have a thorough grounding in what both the state government and our



state representative body are doing about the issue, as well as a better grasp of the science which has prompted scientists world wide to start ringing the alarm bells.

I also hope you have a few ideas for what we can do, as individuals, as councils and as a region to meet the challenges that climate change will bring.

Most of all, I hope you take this opportunity to talk with your fellow councillors, and the council staff from your neighbouring councils, in a bi-partisan spirit, to ensure that this conference demonstrates the best attributes of local government: that is a sphere of government that is open, honest, effective and above all, united for the common good.

**Cr Genia McCaffery,
Mayor of North Sydney and
President of the Local Government
Association of NSW**



Thank you for inviting me to speak to your 2007 Annual Conference.

Since 1995 I have had the privilege of representing the community. And since 2004 I have been the President of the Local Government Association of New South Wales. So I also have a wider constituency, the 73 councils across the state – metropolitan,

coastal and country – which are members of the Local Government Association.

The greatest challenge I have, as Mayor of North Sydney or President of the LGA is ensuring that whatever we do in Local Government actually reflects our communities' informed wishes.

In recent months, you will have noticed climate change is now on everyone's political agenda, at a Federal, State or Local Government level. You can't open a newspaper without seeing an article on climate change.

Climate Change is arguably the most significant issue facing us, and it's a problem, if not dealt with immediately and effectively, that could have dire consequences for future generations.

Climate change is a global problem that reaches to the local level, and we must all readjust, restrain our extravagant waste of resources, perhaps more so in Australia than any other country in the world. And Local Government, far from being limited in its sphere of influence, is pivotal to the global debate, and the global solutions. Global warming and greenhouse gas emissions are no longer uncertainties to be debated. The evidence that climate change is occurring is inescapable. It is no longer open to argument.

Scientists are already seeing changes in our climate with rising temperatures and changes in rainfall patterns.

The ten hottest years on record have occurred since 1994 with 2005 being Australia's hottest year on record.

As Sir Nicholas Stern states in his recent review on the economics of climate change: "The scientific evidence is now overwhelming: climate change presents



very serious global risks, and it demands an urgent global response." Faced with this reality, we must shift our attention to Mitigation, and Adaptation.

We are hearing about Solar Cities, nuclear power, dirty coal, clean coal, the need for planning reforms to achieve energy savings.

While these "big issues" are argued in the political arena it is local authorities who have made genuine, "on the ground" progress in working towards climate change.

- We are leading the race to minimise the impacts of climate change through programs such as the Cities for Climate Protection Program;
- Many councils are producing an energy savings action plan,
- Many councils are applying for grant funding from various State and Federal funds to undertake programs and activities that will address the various impacts of climate change. These funding programs are a clear acknowledgement that local government is well placed to make a difference

Local Councils can have a major impact on reducing greenhouse gas emissions through making changes to their own activities as well as using their planning powers, spending policies and community and business links to influence households and businesses.

Forgive me if I refer to North Sydney to illustrate my point.

NSC is committed to reducing its' CO2 emissions by 50% on 1996 levels by 2010.

Rather than adopting a quick fix policy of offsetting NSC is concentrating on demand management through a blend of energy efficiency measures primarily focussing on emission reduction and complemented by the strategic purchase of GreenPower.

Rather than one particular project the strategy at NSC has been to involve all levels and areas of Council to create a long term holistic approach which can be sustained and built upon in the future.

Community

- 3CBDs Greenhouse Initiative - encouraging businesses to rate their building using ABGR and improve on greenhouse performance
- Energy Smart Homes Programme; assisting residents with the greenhouse rating of their home, and providing energy efficiency advice
- Hosting a range of energy forums and workshops. Free energy audits for householders and providing residents with energy efficient light globes and AAA showerheads.
- Sustainable Small Business Program; auditing and retrofit of small business
- Green Waste collection
- Fridge Buyback Scheme
- Sustainability Expo

Travel

- Introduction of the Go-Get car scheme - providing residents with the opportunity to car share
- 'Green' Parking Permit Scheme - schedule of payments based on greenhouse performance of residents vehicles
- Expansion of the CBD cycle ways



Northern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils

- North Sydney Walking Guide.
- North Sydney Bike Map.
- Walking bus for Schools
- Part of the CCP Plus Sustainable Transport Project
- Street Lighting energy reduction trials

Corporate

- Purchase of 25 per cent Green Power for Council buildings
- Solar powered Olympic swimming pool
- A range of energy improvements for Council buildings and facilities from 1998 and currently incorporating the Energy Savings Action Plan
- Initiation of a green purchasing program
- Introduction of Toyota Prius and hybrid truck for Council fleet.
- Improved tracking of energy use through monitoring (Planet Footprint)
- Subsidised public transport tickets
- Community Energy Forum
- Continued commitment to reduce reliance on private motor vehicles and improve access for residents and visitors of North Sydney
- Improved energy performance of Council's community centres and other Council facilities
- Continued delivery of education programs for residents to assist with the improvement of energy performance of North Sydney homes
- Continuation of the 3CBDs Greenhouse Program - encouraging businesses to improve greenhouse performance.
- Coal Loader Sustainability Centre
- Continued participation in the ICLEI CCP Plus campaign and the Sustainable Transport project

NSC is currently undertaking a complete carbon audit so that we can more

accurately assess our footprint and its' reduction.

As a result of GreenPower purchases across NSC CO2 emissions have been reduced by 178 tonnes, through paper and green waste diversion by 14446 tonnes, and through vehicle changes 20.40 tonnes.

We want to be a leader in our area and our residents seek advice on ways they too can be more energy efficient. We are also involved on several climate change advisory groups where we can disseminate the lessons we have gained.

Through our involvement in NSROC we are already working with other councils to share our knowledge.

Our air quality initiatives include:

- Conversion of our fleet to hybrid and LPG powered vehicles,
- Season ticket loans and subsidies for staff to use public transport,
- Our energy savings action plan to reduce CO2 emissions, and
- We are currently undertaking a carbon audit which will enable better target and reduction of emissions.

We also promote a free energy audit program for residents, which entitle them to free energy efficient light globe replacement.

The Associations, as representative body for the 152 councils in NSW, are also addressing this important issue.

At present they are undertaking a two year funded project, Capacity Building for



Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation, to assist councils in adapting to and mitigating against climate change.

Specifically the project aims to:

- Increase the knowledge of local councils regarding potential scenarios which will arise as a result of climate change in the mid to long term future (10, 20 and 50 years);
- Raise awareness in local councils regarding the likely impacts of climate change on their natural and built assets and infrastructure;
- Raise awareness in councils regarding ways in which their operations impact on greenhouse gas emissions and ways in which they can contribute to a reduction in climate change;
- Build the capacity of local councils to adapt to climate change through adjustments to their land-use, operations and infrastructure management (including retrofitting and infrastructure upgrading); and
- Help councils to reduce or ameliorate the negative impacts of climate change on the social, economic and environmental well being of their council area.

As part of this project A Climate Change Action Pack is being developed that will be available via the Associations' website at the end of August.

It will provide scientific background on the issue and options for policies.

The pack will also have case studies on climate change mitigation and adaptation project being undertaken by local councils in NSW and across Australia.

All Councils are invited to submit case studies for the pack and I would encourage you to do so.

My Council has already provided a case study on our "Fees for Car Impact" project which encourages residents to think about the environmental impacts of their actions and to minimise the impact of cars. Another climate change initiative being coordinated by the Associations is the NSW Mayors Agreement on Climate Change.

The Associations established the Agreement following a motion by Waverley Council, passed unanimously at last year's Local Government Association Conference.

Mayors around the State have been invited to participate in this program which encourages Local councils across NSW to commit to "meeting or beating" Kyoto targets as part of a climate change agreement.

By signing the agreement councils will agree to "meet or beat" greenhouse reduction targets assigned to Australia by the Kyoto Protocol, by pursuing ambitious targets of up to 30% in their operations and activities.

I congratulate those councils which have separately already taken the initiative and nominated reduction targets for their own LGA.

There are brochures about the Associations' Climate Change Project



here this evening (*Bridget Dwyer, Project Officer, is present*), and there is further information on the LGSA's website.

Looking to the future, local government will play an increasingly important role in developing and implementing adaptation strategies that reduce council and community vulnerability to projected impacts of climate change.

I wish you well today. You are helping reaffirm yet another opportunity for Local Government, to make a real difference to global climate change.

Thank you.

Lisa Corbyn
Director General of the Department of Environment and Climate Change



Thank you for inviting me here this evening to talk to you about what the NSW Government is doing to address climate change.

I would like to start by acknowledging the country we are meeting on this evening and paying my respects to the traditional owners and elders of the Cameraygal clan and the Eora nation.

As a Department DECC has a significant role to play in interacting with Aboriginal people in the broadest sense. So I want to start by reinforcing the importance of acknowledging country and paying our respects, particularly as a key role for us as an organisation is caring for country under our broader environment and sustainability banner. And I do apologise

for having to be put later on your agenda – we also have our Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Advisory Committee on these two days and I was also scheduled to meet with them - hard to be in the same place at the same time!

I would also like to acknowledge the presence of all of the Mayors and Councillors here the, General Managers and of course the speakers before me.

I should especially acknowledge one of your keynote speakers, Genia McCaffery, who also happens to play a key role as a member of our EPA Board and who is a keen advocate for dealing proactively with Climate Change, sustainability and of course good SOE reporting.

The good attendance reflects the importance that many people now place on the issue of climate change, and the totality of issues that it now represents.

I want to cover a couple of issues. Firstly, I wanted to give you a quick picture of the recent changes to DECC following the NSW State Election and the re-alignment of agencies to better reflect the NSW Government's priorities, including the significant climate change agenda. We work so closely with Councils and have built a strong partnership in so many areas but I know how confusing some of the changes can be so you can hear about the changes directly from me.

I will then focus more specifically on tonight's climate change theme, what the NSW Government is doing, and how it links back to your local councils.

DECC

The NSW Government sent a strong signal to the people of NSW about its commitment to tackling climate change



and the broad environment and natural resources agenda.

It created the Climate Change, Environment and Water portfolio, and appointed two very enthusiastic Ministers to lead the way – Ministers Phil Koperberg and Verity Firth, as the Minister Assisting. It's a dynamic portfolio with very big ticket issues like Climate Change and of course water, not to mention the very important NPWS, EPA, Environmental Trust, BGT & SCA.

Another significant change was the announcement of the creation of two major new departments – the Department of Environment and Climate Change (DECC) – which I have the privilege of leading; and the Department of Water and Energy headed up by Mark Duffy. Both agencies have close synergies and work closely together.

For DECC, this announcement has now brought together many major programs from a variety of places and former agencies, with a renewed focus on delivery of the Government's climate change, natural resources and environment priorities. It also provides a new platform for NSW to deliver some enormous dividends for the environment and the community.

So these new departmental arrangements demonstrate Government's strong commitment to tackling the causes and impacts of climate change on our environment. The integration also allows us to address sustainability and the conservation and management of our natural and cultural heritage in a more holistic way.

The creation of DECC has seen the merging of people from the former

Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) including NPWS and the EPA, and parts of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the NSW Greenhouse Office (from TCO), Department of Energy, Utilities and Sustainability (DEUS) and a few from the Department of Primary Industries (DPI).

DECC now has reorganised its structure to better manage all of the existing and emerging challenges. We now have three Deputy Director Generals who some of you may know in charge of the following groups:

- Simon Smith for Climate Change and Environment Protection
- Richard Sheldrake for Conservation, Landscapes and Policy
- Tony Fleming for Parks and Wildlife

The Climate Change and Environment Protection Group leads the state's response to climate change, delivers water, energy and waste sustainability programs and implements regulation of a diverse range of activities that can impact on the health of the NSW environment and its people. 'Regulation' is delivered using a mix of tools including education, partnerships, licensing and approvals, audit, enforcement and economic mechanisms. So it interacts a lot with local government in the shared EPA's pollution waste regulatory & education role, urban sustainability of Environmental Trust the Sustainability Programs: waste, climate change, energy and water saving bids.

The Conservation, Landscapes and Policy Group develops and coordinates strategic policies, programs and technical frameworks which set corporate-wide direction and priorities in biodiversity issues, natural resource management, landscape conservation, coastal



protection (floods and environment protection, like air quality, water quality, noise & chemicals. These are all areas where we interact with councils a lot.

The Parks and Wildlife Group is responsible for National Parks & Reserves & has recently taken on Marine Parks.

We also have set up a Scientific Services Division merging the science of DEC & DNR of about 250 people, it undertakes scientific research, investigation, monitoring, analysis, evaluation and reporting on a wide range of natural resource and environmental issues. It is building new scientific capabilities in climate change. Of course there are other Divisions = like Culture and Heritage and Botanic Gardens Trust but I won't dwell on them tonight.

Well that pretty much covers where we are at in DECC, in a nutshell.

Climate Change – General

Climate change is how the community and many companies are now framing the debate and discussions about how we move towards a sustainable future. It's not just about "the environment", it's about the economy, it's about social and community issues; it's about consumption, about science – it's about the future.

The community is looking for leadership when it comes to how we shape the future and how they can participate in doing that. That is what we want to do as a Department.

We have made gains but we need to reduce our resource and energy consumption and conserve our drinking water supply more. And foremost in many

people's minds is the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

We just published the NSW SOE in December last year. It showed us, that even with the effort put in, in NSW, total greenhouse emissions have increased by 4 per cent in the past decade through our increased demand for energy and our reliance on fossil fuels.

The conclusion by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change is authoritative and unequivocal: global warming is mostly due to human activity, climate systems are changing faster than previously realised and greenhouse gas emissions will need to be cut by at least 60% by 2050 to be certain of averting dangerous levels of climate change. And NSW has made that commitment in its State Plan in November 2006.

Of course, 2006 the newly coined phrase, the "tipping point", with the release of an Inconvenient Truth, the Stern Review, and fundamental shift in public opinion and the politics of climate change in Australia.

Our expanded role of the Department of Environment and Climate Change brings together policy, scientific and program implementation expertise from across a range of state agencies – such as the former Greenhouse Office and staff from the former Departments of Energy, Utilities and Sustainability and Natural Resources to try to help deal with this tipping point.

Building on NSW's record of national leadership on this issue, our newly expanded Department is prioritising actions to reduce the growth in greenhouse emissions and manage and protect our natural resources, in the face of this unprecedented threat.



What the State Government is doing

I know that everyone is jockeying for position on Climate Change but, in Australia, NSW was quicker than most in recognising and beginning to respond to climate change in the Greenhouse Plan and more recently the State Plan. We resolved our debate over the need for long term targets in June 2005 by committing to a 60 per cent by 2050 and return emissions to 2000 levels by 2025.

As well as long term reduction targets NSW has adopted very near term renewable energy targets help accelerate the growth of this sector. Government has already brought forward legislation for these targets.

We also realised early on that putting a price carbon would be the central pillar of any greenhouse gas reduction strategy.

So while emissions trading might seem new to many Australians, NSW had by 2003 introduced the world's first mandatory schemes. The Greenhouse Gas Abatement Scheme GGAS remains the second largest MANDATORY carbon emissions trading scheme in the world (after the EU). And it built the good experience that we had in NSW on other trading schemes like the Hunter Salinity Credit Scheme.

And over the past three years, the NSW Government, along with other Australian State and Territory Governments, has worked on the establishment of a (Kyoto compliant) national emissions trading scheme. NSW has really been leading the State charge in designing a national emissions trading scheme.

Although it hasn't been acknowledged, the Federal Government's own emissions trading proposal has drawn heavily on the pioneering work done by the states.

However, we understand that, in the challenging and fast moving field of climate change policy, simply being first is not enough to claim leadership.

Setting targets is the easy part, what everyone wants to know is how we plan to meet them. In November last year, following extensive community consultation, making progress toward our emissions reduction targets became one of the State Plan's 34 priorities.

Including the targets in the State Plan is a significant and I believe bold step by the Government, because it brings climate change policy into the era of modern performance based governance aimed at delivering real, measurable, and beneficial results to the community.

The Government's efforts to reduce our greenhouse gases will be subject to the accountability and reporting requirements as priorities for more traditional state responsibilities like education, health and transport.

The community will be able to check our progress and decide for themselves if it's satisfactory.

And the State Plan also makes responsibility clear. DECC is the lead agency & Minister Koperberg is lead Minister. Making progress toward meeting our greenhouse targets everyone's job but the environmental portfolio is being tasked with making that delivery happen. A new Cabinet Committee will assess the performance of both the ministerial and departmental lead for this priority.



For the first time, emissions reductions programs will be subject to a rigorous quantitative approach scrutinized by Cabinet so NSW can be sure that we are getting the best value for our investments in emissions reduction.

The Government's targets are really challenging but we must start acting now. Existing programs will take us part of the way to the 2025, but we will need to seize on low cost emission reduction opportunities, in areas like energy efficiency, if we are to ensure success.

So DECC is now developing options for new cost-effective emissions reduction measures that we can implement in the areas of commercial and residential energy efficiency, transport, industrial, mining and waste emissions.

We are establishing a number of cross-government projects to identify policy options for cost effective emission reduction measures, which will complement a national emissions trading framework.

And we want to actively engage with the Local Government Association and ROCs such as yours to identify and learn from examples of best practice initiatives, and understand what is required to help such initiatives be rolled out more broadly.

Speaker Biographies:

Frank Muller



Frank Muller is a Professorial Visiting Fellow at the University of New South Wales Institute of Environmental Studies. He lectures, writes and advises governments and business on sustainable development, especially the challenges and opportunities presented by global climate change.

Frank has a 32 year career in environmental, energy and land use policy in Australia and the United States working in government, universities, private consulting and the community sector. Before joining UNSW, he headed greenhouse and sustainable development policy in the NSW Government for 4½ years at The Cabinet Office and Premier's Department and also worked on climate change policy at the University of Maryland and several think tanks in Washington, DC, advising the United Nations, the Clinton Administration, US State Governments and several developing countries. Frank also has served as an environmental planner in state government and a senior adviser to a Federal Minister. He has a Master in Public Administration from Harvard University, a science degree from ANU and is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

**Peter Dormand
City Energy & Resource
Manger Newcastle City Council**



With a back ground in the electricity supply industry, followed by 15 years in local government, Peter Dormand has a lifelong passion for responsible energy use.

The efforts of Peter and his colleagues at Newcastle City Council have earned them more than a dozen state, national and international awards for innovative solutions to reduce energy and resource consumption. Their efforts also led to Newcastle City Council establishing AMEIF the Australian Municipal Energy Improvement Facility in 1998 to transfer this knowledge and experience to other cities and towns throughout Australia and overseas. Since that time, AMEIF has worked with over 200 local governments and businesses throughout Australia & New Zealand.



Notice of Motions

Motion 1: Carried

That this Assembly call on the Australian Government to establish a Local Government Community Infrastructure Fund. The Fund, to be established in a manner similar to the Future Fund, is to be used to assist local government in the planned renewal of ageing community infrastructure (excluding roads) as proposed in a local authority's adopted Asset Management Plan, subject to there being a 50% co-contribution from the local authority, and that there is no decrease in expenditure for that class of asset in Council budgets over an average of the previous three years.

Motion 2 Carried

That the Local Government Association provide its support to Hornsby Shire Council in requesting ICAC to formulate and implement a broad public education process through local government on the issues relating to corruption risks in NSW development processes.

Motion 3 Carried

That the Local Government Association call for the State Government to provide more certainty to local councils by announcing a four year rate-pegging formula in the financial year immediately following local government elections and to do away with annually pegged rates.

Motion 4 Carried

That NSROC support lobbying by the LGSA to the New South Wales Premier requesting that Coastal grant programs initiated by NSW Maritime and Department of Environment and Climate Change be fully funded and maintained by the New South Wales State Government for projects considered to be of state significance.

Motion 5 Carried

That NSROC request the New South Wales Government to increase grant funding for the development of sports facilities through the New South Wales Department of Sport, Recreation and Racing's Capital Assistance Program and Regional Facilities Program.

Motion 6 Carried

When considering applications to host future Local Government Association (LGA) Conferences, selection criteria be widened to include consideration of the water and energy saving devices installed at the proposed conference venue and at accommodation venues. Further, that



Northern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils

an environmental checklist be developed for this purpose and reported to councils with the Business Paper for the conference at which the decision is to be made.

Motion 7 Carried

That NSROC congratulate the New South Wales Department of Primary Industries, Fisheries and the Hawkesbury River oyster growers for work undertaken to remove derelict oyster leases and associated infrastructure from the Hawkesbury Estuary and seek a commitment from the New South Wales Government to spending the balance of the original \$2.8 million commitment on further removal of derelict oyster leases affected from the prevalence of the QX disease.

Motion 8 Carried

THAT NSROC support negotiations by the LGA with the New South Wales State Government for an amendment to rate pegging restrictions to permit councils to vary rates above the approved limit for a specific purpose/s approved by the Minister for Local Government. Increases for specific purpose/s would be subject to:

- Audited returns of expenditure for the purpose being submitted to the Department of Local Government;
- No decrease in expenditure on that purpose from an average of the previous 3 years; and
- Maximum increases being restricted to 1% for any one purpose.

Motion 9 Carried

That NSROC support calls for the State Government to provide a fee structure within the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979 to enable a Council to levy a scheduled fee when a development application is lodged to cover costs where a Council is required to instigate action to ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of a development consent.

That NSROC member councils provide their fee structures to the LGA for consideration at the LGA Conference.

Motion 10 Carried

That NSROC support representations to the State Government and opposition that councils be consulted as part of the Minister's process in determining whether a development constitutes a major project in accordance with Part 3A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 and State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Projects) 2005.



Motion 10a Carried

That support representations to the State Government and opposition that Part 3A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act be repealed.

Motion 11 Carried

That any proposal of the RTA to declassify or transfer responsibility for maintenance of a State Road to a Council only proceed with the willing concurrence of that Council, and be contingent on the RTA indemnifying the Council in respect of any claim arising in future which is attributable to the design, construction the RTA's maintenance of that road.

Motion 12 Carried

Due to a lack of positive action taken by the Heritage Office over a two year period in response to a motion on this matter submitted to the 2005 LGA Conference, that the LGA:

- 1. Once again express its concern at the inability of Local Government to ensure that a minimum level of maintenance is achieved for locally listed heritage items to prevent their destruction by neglect.**
- 2. Request the State Government extend the provisions of the Heritage Act 1977, relating to minimum maintenance levels for items on the State Heritage Register, to include locally listed heritage items.**

Motion 13 Carried

- a. That NSROC support formal representations to the Chief Judge of the Land and Environment Court of NSW raising its concerns in relation to the liberty granted by the Court enabling appellants to undertake a multitude of modifications to plans which are subject of an appeal and to highlight the significant legal costs incurred by Local Government in the process.**
- b. The Chief Judge be requested to ensure that the Court strictly apply the procedures set under the recently introduced Court practice note where amended plans are being substituted in an appeal**
- c. Should amended plans be submitted and approved by the Land and Environment Court, Council's costs to be borne by the applicant.**



Motion 14

- a) That NSROC councils, through the Local Government (LGA), continue to press the NSW Government to pursue strengthening the National Packaging Covenant with the Federal Government to reduce packaging in the waste stream and decrease litter in the environment.
- b) Further, that councils, through the LGA, call on the NSW State Government to work towards enforcing its Extender Producer Responsibility (EPR) Scheme for the “wastes of concern” to ensure the established voluntary targets are met in a timely fashion.
- c) That councils, through the LGA, also support further investigation into the development of a State Container Deposit (CD) Scheme as a means to increase recycling and reduce littering in the environment. Support for a CD system should be progressed as a means to implement EPR and speed up the current voluntary waste reduction rates.
- d) That the Government release the Report on Container Deposit legislation.

Motion 15

That NSROC support representations to the State Government:

1. Expressing local government’s concern about the “full cost recovery model” proposed by the Electoral Commission NSW in respect of the administration of local government elections
2. Seeking to limit the amount charged to individual councils by the Electoral Commission NSW for the administration of local government elections to a maximum of \$4.00 per elector, with annual increases only to be in accordance with CPI.
3. That NSW Government be asked to review its decision to seek full cost recovery for the conduct of local government elections to provide a more cost-effective and affordable election system for NSW councils or alternatively allow councils to conduct their own elections.

Motion 16 Carried

That NSROC submit to the Local Government Conference a motion to make representation to the appropriate bodies to request amendments to the current Fringe Benefits Tax legislation that encourages the overuse of



vehicles to achieve tax benefit at the detriment of human health and the environment. This legislation should encourage a commitment to sustainable principles that would provide incentives to lessen vehicle kilometres travelled, encourage fuel efficient and alternative fuel vehicles and promote other alternative transport incentives for companies.

Motion 17 Carried

That NSROC submit to the Local Government Conference a motion to call on State government to develop a comprehensive strategy that will address mitigation and adaptation to climate change. This should investigate State and Local government's current and future liability across policy, planning, infrastructure and asset management, operations and investment strategy area as well as promoting leadership and demonstrating a sound commitment to sustainability.

Motion 18 Carried

That representations be made to the Minister for Local Government to review the basis on which special rate variations may be levied, so as to allow councils greater flexibility in structuring special levies having regard to the reasons the levy is sought and the impact on the community.

Motion 19: Carried

That the major Federal political parties commit to the following matters in relation to aircraft noise and Sydney Airport:

- a. No further increase in aircraft movements over the NSROC region;
- b. the aircraft noise sharing plan being rigorously enforced including the application of appropriate fines and penalties to strengthen compliance;
- c. the dissemination of information in a timely manner by the operator of Kingsford Smith Airport in relation to noise and traffic data and ongoing operational issues;
- d. the implementation of the continued Long Term Operating Plan;
- e. the implementation of strategies to encourage all aircraft operators to utilise newer quieter aircraft;
- f. the expansion of Kingsford Smith Airport in a manner which will not result in an increase in aircraft noise; and
- g. the continuation of the Sydney Airport Community Forum.

Motion 20 Carried

That NSROC support the motion of Winger-carribee adopted at the 2006 LGSA Conference by:-



Northern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils

- 1. Requesting the Department of Local Government to recognise that “vegetative screen plantings” can be defined as a type of development to be included in the land use tables of a LEP and that in some circumstances it is appropriate to require the lodgement and assessment of a Development Application.**
- 2. Offering to work with the NSW Department of Planning to formulate a planning control which allows councils to control the height of all hedge planting (irrespective of species) in their respective Local Government urban and rural areas.**

Motion 21 Carried

1. That NSROC call upon the Federal Minister for Communications, Information Technology and the Arts to review the Federal Telecommunications Act 1997 regarding the installation of low-impact facilities on adjoining properties, to remove the existing inequities that can occur in residential or mixed use zones, when a neighbour of an adjoining property consents to the erection of a tower on their property, without consent of the adjoining neighbours. An appropriate procedure should be put in place which provides for an equitable outcome for all parties involved, including a right of appeal against an unfair decision."

2. That NSROC write to all Federal Members covering the NSROC area and seek their support in addressing this inequity.

Motion 22: Carried

That NSROC call upon the Minister for Planning to review the role and obligations and accountability measures of private certifiers to ensure that they respond to and act on complaints raised by councils and people adversely affected as a result of or during building construction.

Motion 23:

Added to Motion 15

Motion 24: Carried

That the LGSA write to the Premier of NSW requesting that the State Government reinstate funds lost to public libraries as a result of the NSW State Budget for 2007/08.

Motion 25: Carried

That NSROC makes representation to the State Government to review the rating structure in the light of urban consolidation in metropolitan and regional centres which results in many more multiple dwellings and the



consequent penalisation of rate payers in single dwellings in order to ensure an equitable distribution of rates across the rate base.

Motion 26: Carried

That NSROC endorse a motion to lobby the Department of Local Government to amend all relevant legislation to enable Councils to impose a rate on Utility Networks.

Motion 27: Carried

That NSROC continues to lobby Roads and Traffic Authority to fund the completion of the proposed "Missing Harbour Link" cycle and pedestrian way in the Sydney Regional Bicycle Network.

Motion 28: Carried

"That the Local Government Association of NSW request that the Minister for Local Government amend the Investment Order to allow Councils to invest surplus funds in the same manner as the NSW Treasury."

Motion 29: Carried

"That the Commonwealth Government be requested to increase the total amount allocated for Financial Assistance Grants to equal 1% of the total Commonwealth taxation revenue".

Motion 30: Carried

"That the Local Government Association adopts the "Asset Management Guidelines - NSROC Region (June 2007)" to assist in setting minimum and desirable requirements for the management of assets across NSW."

Motion 31: Carried

"That the guidelines for completing Plans of Management, either under the Crown Lands Act (Section 112) or the Local Government Act (Section 36), have identical requirements."

Motion 32: Carried

"That the State Government be requested to amend the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act to enable councils to recoup the costs associated with the removal of illegal signage erected on public land (eg: election posters, concert posters on power poles) from the persons/groups that are benefiting from this illegal signage".

Motion 33: Carried

"That for the benefit of Local Government in NSW, as that tier of Government closest to the community, and to support Government initiatives to create



additional investment in renewable energy to minimise the negative climate change impacts of greenhouse gas emissions and our reliance on the Earth's limited fossil fuel resources, a memorandum of agreement be established between the Australian Greenhouse Office, the NSW Department of Energy and Water, the Department of Local Government and accredited Energy providers to share equally the additional costs associated with the purchase of accredited Green power for those Councils with established greenhouse gas reduction action plans in place and electing to purchase 100% of their total energy requirements as Green power."

Motion 34: Carried

"That the Department of Local Government (DLG) be requested to establish panels of independently qualified people to form Conduct Committees to investigate complaints against Councillors for breaches of Code of Conduct , and the costs of these Committees be met by the Department.

The DLG is further requested to provide clarification and definition in respect of vexatious complaints and circumstances that would constitute 'abuse of process' and guidelines on what remedies would be available to Councils in such circumstances."

Motion 35: Carried

"That the Minister for Planning be requested to amend the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act to create a framework for monitoring the activities of Private Certifiers including the requirement for Private Certifiers to pay performance security bonds which Councils may call upon to recover costs associated with Councils undertaking investigations when certifiers fail meet their statutory responsibilities."

Motion 36: Carried

"That the Minister for Planning be requested to amend the structure of the panels considering Council draft Local Environmental Plans (LEPs) and Local Strategies to allow the Council submitting the draft planning instrument to be present as an observer and to respond to enquiries at the panel and to be consulted on the composition of the panel."

Motion 37 Carried

"That the Minister for Planning be requested to consider an amendment to the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act to facilitate a consistent approach to electronic signatures so the e-lodgement of



development applications and related applications and certificates can occur in a standard way across the State.”

Motion 38: Carried

That the Northern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils be asked to represent the interests of Councils caught up in major infrastructure projects undertaken in their area by higher levels of government. SPECIFICALLY, this Motion calls for a system of compensation for the considerable time and effort expended by Councils' officers in dealing with interface issues arising solely as a consequence of such project AND suggests that the compensation be 'in kind' through the paid secondment of suitable officers to the project to provide real-time interaction between the project team and the 'receiving' Council(s).”

Motion 39: Carried

That all Councils be encouraged to write to their Local Members seeking support in requesting the Roads and Traffic Authority to revisit the Traffic Committee restructure process with a view to preserving the input of councillors who represent the local community. And that it is up to the individual Council as to how they manage the input from their councillors.

Motion 40: Carried

That NSROC ask the LGSA to convene a Seminar to:

- a) Review/showcase local government partnerships which are delivering an increased level of affordable housing, and also to
- b) Workshop an advocacy approach to take this issue up to state and federal levels.

