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**Thursday August 7th, 2012**

## Welcome to Excellence in Brief



This edition of the newsletter again finds ACELG at peak capacity. We have just hosted two highly successful research and dialogue events in Western Australia, and released a raft of new research papers aimed at assisting local government on issues such as workforce, infrastructure and strategic planning, shared services and other themes. There is more to come.

ACELG's work is not only intended for local government practitioners – the Centre and its research is also a useful resource for the many sector reform discussions currently underway, such as the Independent Local Government Review Panel in NSW (of which I am Chair), deliberations about local government in Western Australia and Tasmania, the Victorian Government's review of its planning system, the Northern Territory financial sustainability review (of which ACELG Chair Margaret Reynolds is a Taskforce member), and federally funded Local Government Reform Fund projects, to name a few.

Certainly change and sector reform is a constant; the difference in the current operating environment is that ACELG does and can exist for local government as a national resource for such reform discussions – a 'think tank' if you will.

Over the next few months ACELG's operation and sector contribution will be independently reviewed. I invite you to make contact with me or Assistant Director Melissa Gibbs to discuss where and to what extent our work has so far assisted local government achieve its aims.

You will notice in the following new item that the position of Director has been advertised. After more than a decade at UTS, I will be semi-retiring at the end of this year. My retirement is timed to ensure a new director has the opportunity to see the Centre through the second half of its life. We'll keep you posted on developments as they occur.

I encourage you read about our most recent work and achievements, and to forward this newsletter to your colleagues. Please don't hesitate to email or call if there's anything you wish to discuss about the Centre's work.

Graham Sansom  
Director

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## Director Position Advertised

The Centre's Director, Professor Graham Sansom, has advised the ACELG Board that he will be retiring at the end of 2012. ACELG is therefore seeking a new Director to provide strategic leadership and direction to the Centre. Applications close 27 August 2012. View the advertisement [here](#).



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## Chairperson appointed to Northern Territory Taskforce



ACELG Chairperson Margaret Reynolds has been appointed to the Northern Territory Government's Shires Financial Sustainability Review Taskforce. The Taskforce will oversee the implementation of the 32 recommendations identified in the recent Shire Sustainability Review, and will also provide advice to the Minister for Local Government on related issues. View the

Taskforce site [here](#).

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## Key ACELG Events and Engagement

*Western Australia Research Showcase-Forum*



Co-hosted by Edith Cowan University (ECU), ACELG's program partner in the west, this research event presented ACELG research findings relevant to the Western Australia sector

and provided a forum for researchers to explore themes that may impact Western Australia local government in the future. A diverse array of papers was presented in two streams, and the event was attended by over 60 local government professionals and stakeholders. View the program and presentations [here](#).

### *Roundtable on Western Australian Local Government*

ACELG was very pleased that the Minister for Local Government, the Hon John Castrilli could attend and contribute to its Roundtable on Western Australian Local Government, also in Perth in July. The President of the Western Australian Local Government Association (WALGA), Mayor Troy Pickard, also provided opening remarks.

The Roundtable was chaired by Hon Margaret Reynolds and facilitated by ACELG Director, Graham Sansom. Attendees included representatives from WALGA, the state government and local government department, LGMA (WA), IPWEA (WA), plus senior representatives of a number of urban and regional councils and other key organisations.



Minister for Local Government Hon. John Castrilli and ACELG Chairperson, Margaret Reynolds



WALGA President Mayor Troy Pickard (left) and Professor Atique Islam (right) from Edith Cowan University

### *ALGA Stand and LGMA Congress*

ACELG staff and Chairperson, Margaret Reynolds, attended and discussed latest research at the ALGA 2012 National General Assembly in Canberra (mid-June). Staff also attended and presented at the LGMA National Congress and Business Expo in Perth (late May). Post-event information and documents can be viewed at the following links; [ALGA](#) and [LGMA](#).

We thank ALGA and LGMA National for the opportunity to speak with their delegates about our work.

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## **Program Research Seminars and Launches**

### ***Low carbon seminar***

The ACELG discussion paper *Local Action for a Low Carbon Future* was launched at the University of Technology, Sydney on 14 June with a seminar co-hosted by UTS:CLG. Speakers included Cheryl Thomas, Executive Director, the Council of Capital City Lord Mayors and Professor Tony Jackson, University of Dundee. View the research paper and story [here](#). For more information contact [Stefanie Pillora](#).



Presenters (L-R): Stefanie Pillora, ACELG; Cheryl Thomas, Council of Capital City Lord Mayors; Professor Tony Jackson, University of Dundee; Chris Dunstan, UTS-ISF.

### ***Rural-Remote and Indigenous Local Government Research***

ACELG convened a search conference for CEOs from rural-remote and Indigenous (RRI) local government in Cairns in June and a roundtable of key stakeholder to review progress on the [ACELG RRI program](#) generally. The search conference will lead to the development of a series of recommendations and actions to enhance capacity. Workshop findings will be disseminated to CEOs and will shortly be available to download from the ACELG website.

For more information contact [Melissa Gibbs](#).

### ***Metropolitan Governance Roundtable***

Representatives from government, business and academia convened for a roundtable about metropolitan governance at the University of Technology, Sydney on 7 June. The session was facilitated by Graham Sansom, and provided the opportunity to showcase and discuss a new ACELG discussion paper, *An Australian Model of Metropolitan Governance: Insights from Perth and South East Queensland*. View the paper and news item [here](#).

For more information contact [Su Fei Tan](#).



Graham Sansom facilitates

### *Strategic Innovation and Local Government roundtable*

The Innovation and Best Practice Program held a roundtable at the University of Canberra in May to facilitate a leaders 'think tank' to examine innovation and 'next practice' in the local government sector. More than 30 attendees participated, including senior council managers and elected officials, representatives from state-territory associations, Commonwealth and other agencies plus applied researchers-scholars. The Roundtable outcomes report is available [here](#). For more information contact [Paul Bateson](#).

### *Community governance research launch*

The Evolution in Community Governance report was launched in Melbourne and Sydney recently, facilitated by Stefanie Pillora, ACELG's Research Program Manager. In Melbourne, it was launched at the City of Port Phillip on 4 May, and in Sydney on 10 May at the Bendigo Bank head office, attended by NSW Local Government Minister the Hon Don Page. This project was supported by the MAV, LGMA National and the Bendigo Bank. View the publication [here](#), and view Minister Page's media release [here](#).

For more information contact [Stefanie Pillora](#).



At the Sydney launch (l-r) Phil Jones, Bendigo Bank NSW State Manager; The Hon Don Page, NSW Minister for Local Government; Penny Holloway, General Manager, North Sydney Council & ACELG Board Member, Peter McKinlay, AUT University and research author.

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## **2012 Executive Leadership Program Gaining Momentum**

ACELG and ANZSOG have opened expressions of interest to attend the 2012 Excellence in Local Government Leadership Program (ELGLP). The program will run in two modules – September 24-28 (Sydney), and November 26-30 (Canberra). The ELGLP is a cutting-edge leadership program which aims to enhance professionalism and skills in local government, showcase innovation and best practice, and facilitate a better-informed policy debate.

*"[The Program] demonstrates and encourages local innovation! Strong conversations about co-design, citizen centred policy development, collaboration and managing public value." - A 2011 Graduate.*

Applications will be accepted until **13 August**. View the brochure [here](#). For more information contact Jane Durlacher, (03) 9035 3278 or [j.durlacher@anzsog.edu.au](mailto:j.durlacher@anzsog.edu.au).

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## Research Partnerships

ACELG is pleased to announce several new research partnerships:

- Wyndham Council, Surf Coast Shire Council, Nillumbik Shire Council and the new Democracy foundation to support the ANU in researching the role and future of citizens committees in Australian local government
- Hume City Council, Gwydir Shire Council and the Australian Learning Communities Network to support RMIT in researching the impact of learning partnerships as catalysts for change in local communities, and to examine the elements that can be applied to other local government areas
- University of Tasmania in undertaking a scoping study of Australian and international literature on the role of social enterprises and their relationships with Councils.

For more information contact [Stefanie Pillora](#).

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## Asset Management and Financial Planning – Progress on a National Assessment Framework



The National Assessment Framework (NAF) on-line Portal is nearing completion and will be available for Councils shortly. The NAF will enable Councils to carry out an assessment of their current asset and financial management processes in line with the nationally consistent measures.

Councils will shortly be sent a log-on and password to undertake an assessment of their ability to provide sustainable service delivery into the medium to long term. This initiative is part of ACELG's '[Organisation Capacity Building](#)' program.

Contact Leon Patterson, IPWEA National Director Infrastructure Management, 0437 427

542 or [lpatterson@ipwea.org.au](mailto:lpatterson@ipwea.org.au).

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## New Publications

### *Study of Service Delivery Reviews*

ACELG has just released a new study that looks at service delivery reviews undertaken in 11 councils across Australia. The paper assesses the level of maturity of formal service review processes used in a variety of councils and the outcomes achieved, and makes recommendations on how such processes can be supported and enhanced in the future. For more information, contact [Sarah Artist](#).

### *Other Publications*

A number of other publications were finalised since the May edition of 'Excellence In Brief', including:

- Using Social Media in Local Government: 2011 Survey Report (June 2012) – view [here](#)
- Local Action for a Low Carbon Future (June 2012) – view [here](#)
- Workforce Planning and Development: Capacity Building Opportunities (June 2012) – view [here](#)
- The Australian Model of Metropolitan Governance: Insights from Perth and South East Queensland (June 2012) – view [here](#)
- Rural-Remote and Indigenous Local Government Program: Capacity Building Survey (May 2012) – view [here](#)
- Legal and Governance Models for Shared Services in Local Government [Interim Report] (May 2012) – view [here](#)
- Local Government Service Delivery to Remote Indigenous Communities (May 2012) – view [here](#)
- Innovation in Local Government: Defining the Challenge, Making the Change (May 2012) – view [here](#)
- Scoping Study: Impact of Fly-In Fly-Out/ Drive-In Drive-Out Work Practices on Local Government (May 2012) – view [here](#).

All titles are available from our [Recent Publications page](#) or the [ACELG Library](#).

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## Research to be Released

- Research on state legislative frameworks for strategic planning – Contact [Sarah Artist](#)
- Resource sharing in rural-remote and Indigenous local government (case studies) – Contact [Melissa Gibbs](#)
- Community engagement rural-remote and Indigenous local government – Contact [Melissa Gibbs](#).

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## Upcoming ACELG Events

- **Tuesday 7 August:** ACELG-ABS Local Government Data Sets Roundtable, University of Technology, Sydney, with Alex Gooding facilitating – Contact [Stefanie Pillora](#)
- **Friday 10 August:** Strengthening Local Government Revenues – Search Conference, Melbourne. Graham Sansom facilitating – Contact [John Lavarack](#)
- **Friday, August 17:** ACELG-CLAIR-OSIPP Forum on Local Government, Improving local government efficiency and performance: recent experiences in Australia and Japan, UTS - Graham Sansom facilitating. Flyer available [here](#) – Contact [Sarah Artist](#)
- **Monday-Wednesday 17-19 September:** Reviewing and Enhancing Local Government Service Delivery (UTS-CLG short course, Sydney). Incorporating findings from the ACELG paper *Service Delivery Reviews* – Contact [Sarah Artist](#)
- **Thursday 11 October:** ACELG Research forum and sector dialogue, Queensland – Contact [Stefanie Pillora](#).

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## Conference and Seminar Presentations by Secretariat Staff

### *Graham Sansom, Director*

- Presentation, INGENIUM conference, NZ, 22 June
- Facilitation, Metropolitan Governance Roundtable, University of Technology, Sydney, 7 June, and, the ‘ACELG Western Australia Local Government Roundtable’, Perth, July 12
- Seminar presentation at Victoria University, Wellington, 10 May.

### *Melissa Gibbs, Assistant Director*

- Local Government Benchmarking conference, 18 July



- ACELG Western Australia Research Showcase-Forum, 12 July
- ACELG's activities to the Council Members' Strategic Issues Seminar convened by at the LGA of SA, 8 June
- LGMA National Congress, 20 - 23 May
- Leadership and strategic planning, Good Governance convened by LGANT, Darwin, 9 and 10 May.

*Stefanie Pillora, Research Program Manager*

- Presentation on Local Action for a Low Carbon Future research at UTS forum, 'Local Carbon Futures: Opportunities for local government, 14 June
- Facilitation, ACELG Western Australia Research Showcase-Forum, 12 July.

*Karen Purser, Program Coordinator, Women in Local Government*

- Presentation, Local Government Knowledge Management at the MAV Future of Local Government Conference, 26 June.

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## Other Staff News

- Graham Sansom has advised the ACELG Board that he will be retiring at the end of 2012; is currently Chair of the Independent Local Government Review Panel (NSW). More information is available [here](#)
- Mervyn Carter is continuing with ACELG as the program manager for the national data project
- Karen Purser is continuing with ACELG to develop a suite of projects aimed at increasing the participation of women in executive leadership positions in local government
- Alex Kats has joined our consortium partner LGMA (National) as Project Support Officer for Workforce Initiatives.

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## Finding Out About ACELG's Work

- See ACELG in the News [here](#)
- Subscribe to the quarterly ACELG newsletter [here](#)
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