

**REVIEW OF
LOCAL GOVERNMENT EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

**OVERVIEW OF SUGGESTED STRUCTURES FOR THE CONDUCT AND
MANAGEMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

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1. Background to Date

This paper has been prepared as part of a comprehensive review and evaluation of Local Government education and training issues and the LGA's Education & Training Service.

It provides an overview of various organisational structures and options to consider for the future management and conduct of education and training in the SA Local Government sector. The suggested structures included in this document are based on data and information compiled from a range of sources, namely;

- A draft background paper which provides an overview of the delivery of education and training programs to Local Government over the last decade or so. This paper overviewed the structured approaches to the delivery of education and training in Local Government from an historical perspective, firstly through the Local Government Industry Training Council (LGITC), then the Local Government Training Authority's (LGTA) Centre for Local Government Training and currently through the LGA's Education and Training Service.
- The outcomes of a Local Government Education and Training Summit held on 11 June 2003 which was attended by a number of key stakeholders.
- Information collected from a number of interviews with representatives of professional groups, universities and the vocational education & training sector.

The review of the Local Government Education and Training requirements conducted in 2000 (the Stewart Report) outlined the areas of support the sector requires from the LGA as follows:

- provide education and training specific to the Local Government sector eg Council Member training and development, interpretation and implementation of relevant legislation
- provide fast response to education and training issues affecting the whole sector
- act as an information source on education and training providers and resources for the sector
- facilitate better coordination of education and training effort arising from liaison with regional associations, professional groups, the Australian Local Government Training etc
- in consultation with the sector, formulate education and training policy, represent the sector at State and Federal Government levels on education and training issues
- facilitate and encourage research and development of education and training products/services which will assist Council Members and staff better serve their communities

The research and consultation undertaken to date would suggest that any future structure designed to respond to the current and future education and training needs of the sector would need to:

- continually gather "intelligence" on the training needs of the sector in order to avert the occurrence of skill shortages and to ensure opportunities exist to support Councils in training and development activities for current employees
- respond to the issues raised in the LGA's Workforce Planning Project (undertaken in 2001) and be supported by future projects of this nature
- facilitate opportunities for cross pollination of skills and perhaps staff exchanges between State and Local Government as an education and training strategy

- provide coaching and mentoring services across the sector
- address and respond to the various legislative requirements for prescribed qualifications eg building surveyors and these need consideration and support
- support skills development among women currently/potential employed in the Local Government workforce so as to increase and support the number of women in senior roles
- address the education and training requirements of young people so as to increase their skills and career path options and to provide Councils with the skilled staff they require in the future
- enable better coordination between the Local Government sector and educational institutions such as universities and vocational educational training providers to ensure that training gaps are identified and provided for
- enable better coordination between the education and training course offerings of the LGA and those of professional groups to avoid duplication of effort
- identify and respond to Council Members' perspectives on the competencies and skills they require to fulfil their roles and provide mechanisms to enable self assessment of needs.
- ensure adequate funding sources are identified to support the provision of education and training services and associated research

2. Features of Future Structures for Service Delivery

Given the issues identified above, any future structure for the delivery of education and training services and associated research must ensure:

- consultation, involvement and where relevant and appropriate, ownership among:
 - Councils
 - President's Forum
 - Local Government Managers Association
 - Local Government Professional Bodies
 - Universities
 - Vocational Education & Training providers
 - State Government
 - Local Government Unions
- provision of an annual course program that offers short courses in metropolitan and country areas that are cost effective and attendance is paid for by Councils overall, having regard to the increased costs for delivery in country areas in comparison to the metropolitan area
- promotion of access by Council staff to certificate courses relevant to the Vocational Education & Training LG Training Packages
- the establishment of effective relationships with training providers, including training consultants, TAFE and the University sector
- the maintenance of attendance records for courses and information regarding course program content/methodology etc, including evaluation of courses
- the conduct of research into the future training needs of staff and Council Members, including the conduct of projects to support the education and training effort of the sector
- the provision of a cost effective service

The governance arrangements finally adopted by the sector will need to ensure adequate consultation and involvement of the client base – Councils. In addition the arrangements need to be fully accountable to the sector from both financial and service delivery perspectives.

Financial Issues

What ever structure is finally adopted by Local Government careful consideration will need to be given to the costs of the structure and services and how it will be financially supported.

During the consultations various funding sources were identified as follows:

- contributions by the LGR&DS
- introduction of an education and training levy as a part of LGA subscriptions
- course fees to include a proportion for the delivery of the overall service (administration/research etc) as opposed to course costs recovery

If a levy was considered worth pursuing, consideration would need to be given to whether it would be a levy on all Councils or only on participants attending course programs. It will be important to ensure that equitable access to training at a reasonable cost to all Councils, and in particular rural Councils, is provided.

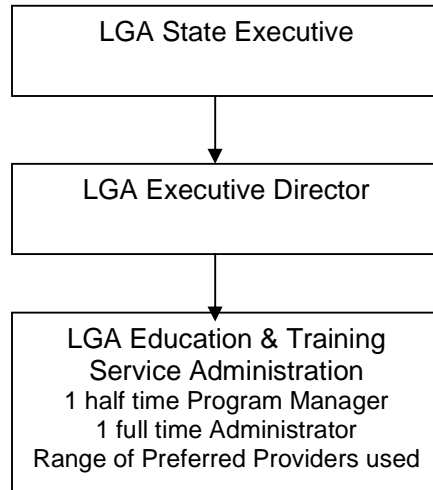
3. Education & Training Service Structure - Evaluation Criteria

Several potential structures for the delivery of an education and training service are provided in the next section of this paper. In order to evaluate each option the following criteria is proposed:

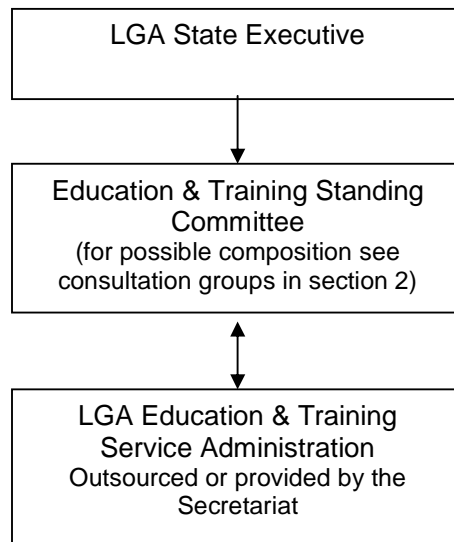
- Governance arrangements are accountable to the sector
- Costs for the delivery of the service are appropriate and reflect an appropriate balance between user pays and sector wide contributions
- Courses conducted are assured of being high quality and effective evaluation is undertaken
- A broad range of courses are able to be offered to the sector
- Administration arrangements are appropriate to the size and scope of the service
- High quality trainer providers are attracted to participate with the Local Government sector
- Services are clearly responsive to needs of the Local Government sector
- Stakeholder representation/consultation and consequent “ownership” is provided for
- Access is available to information regarding the sector’s training needs
- Ability to identify and undertake research & development on potential new products/services is provided for

8. Model Options for Administering the Education & Training Service

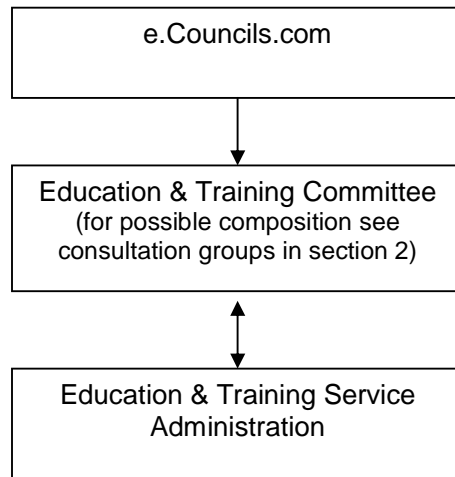
Model 1 – Education & Training Service currently being delivered



Model 2 – Education & Training Service as a Standing Committee of LGA



Model 3 – Education and Training Service delivered independent of LGA



Model 4 – Education & Training Service contracted out

