

South Australian Region Organisation of Councils

**Strategic Plan
2019-2023**

Foreword

I have pleasure in presenting the South Australian Region Organisation of Councils 2019-2023 Strategic Plan.

This Strategic Plan is the first plan developed by SAROC under the new constitutional arrangements established by the Local Government Association of South Australia in 2018.

SAROC is an important committee of the LGA representing the collective voice of regional councils.

Over the next four years SAROC has identified key objectives it will be seeking to progress on behalf of regional councils to help with economic development, community wellbeing and the management of our natural and built environment to help make regional South Australia a vibrant and valued part of our State.

SAROC recognizes that to achieve these objectives it will need to work in close collaboration and partnership with our regional LGAs and regional councils along with key stakeholders including RDAs and our Federal and State Governments.

On an annual basis SAROC will prepare a business plan which will identify the key actions it will undertake each year to address the objectives in this Strategic Plan.

I commend this Strategic Plan to you and look forward to working with you on implementing this plan over the next four years.

Mayor Erika Vickery

Chair of the South Australian Region Organisation of Councils

About the LGA

The Local Government Association is a voluntary membership organisation via which councils across the State unite together with a single voice for the common good.

All of the 68 councils in South Australia are members.

The Local Government Act 1999 specifies that:

The LGA is constituted as a public authority for the purpose of promoting and advancing the interests of local government and has the objects prescribed by its constitution.

The object of the LGA is to achieve public value through the promotion and advancement of the interests of local government by:

- **advocating** to achieve greater influence for local government in matters affecting councils and communities;
- **assisting** Members to build capacity and increase sustainability through integrated and coordinated local government; and
- **advancing** local government through best practice and continuous improvement.

The LGA undertakes the following activities for the purpose of achieving the Association's objectives:

- advocate and provide leadership for local government in South Australia, leading to strong engaged communities served by efficient and collaborative Councils and Community Councils;
- advocate for an autonomous, effective and democratic system of local government in South Australia to meet contemporary community needs;
- encourage and promote an efficient, effective and sustainable system of local government in South Australia;
- promote and protect the interests of local government and its Members and the communities they represent;
- encourage and help local government to engage with, and respond to, the needs of the community;
- develop and maintain consultation and co-operation between local government and the State and Commonwealth governments and their agencies;
- assist Members to develop and maintain their financial sustainability and for the advancement of local government;
- undertake any business activity which contributes to the Object;
- represent Members of the LGA and local government to the public and the State and Commonwealth governments;
- act as an advocate for Members and the local government community to address contemporary needs;
- facilitate engagement and collaboration by and between Members as to their common interests;
- encourage, assist, promote and foster the achievement and maintenance of the highest levels of integrity, justice, competence, effectiveness and efficiency of local government;
- undertake or promote any activity which the Board of Directors determines to be for the benefit or interest of Members and local government in South Australia; and
- undertake any function as may be vested in the LGA by statute.

About SAROC

The South Australian Region Organisation of Councils (SAROC) is a regional organisation of member councils of the Local Government Association of South Australia (LGA) established under the LGA Constitution. A list of the member councils of SAROC is included in Appendix 1.

SAROC is a committee of the LGA and is responsible to the Board of Directors for the discharge of its functions.

As a committee of the LGA, SAROC has a key role in assisting the LGA with the achievement of its objects by:

1. Supporting the activities of the LGA at a regional level;
2. Promoting communication between Members and between Members and the LGA;
3. Advocating in respect of matters which affect the SAROC Regional Group;
4. Encouraging engagement of Members within the SAROC Regional Group with SAROC and the LGA; and
5. Participating in policy development and implementation

As an organisation working to promote and deliver on behalf of regional South Australia, SAROC has developed the following guiding principles it will operate under:

1. A strong partner and voice representing the regions;
2. Working closely with key stakeholders on matters of joint interest;
3. To prioritize and address issues which are common to all regions;
4. To collaborate closely with the LGA and the Greater Adelaide Regional Organisation of Councils (GAROC); and
5. To be nimble, agile and responsive to the needs of regional councils.

The SAROC Strategic Plan 2019-2023

Vision

For Every South Australian to have the best Local Government Experience

Mission

The Mission of the South Australian Region Organisation of Councils is:

To provide leadership support, representation and advocacy on behalf of regional South Australian Councils for the benefit of the Community.

Themes

This Strategic Plan has four themes for SAROC to focus on over the next four years. These themes form the basis of the SAROC Annual Business Plan which will be developed each financial year, and will guide the activities and actions of SAROC.

The following four themes have been guided by the themes used by Regional LGAs and constituent councils:

Theme 1: Economic Development

SAROC recognises the important role councils play as local place makers. With the right policy settings and partnerships, regional councils can help to create the best conditions for local businesses to grow and thrive.

Theme 2: Community Development

SAROC acknowledges the significant contribution regional councils make to community development through public health and community wellbeing activities, and the need for adequate levels of State Government services and funding to support healthy and resilient communities..

Theme 3: Natural and Built Environment

SAROC recognises the importance of local government's role in the future planning and maintenance of South Australia's natural and built environment.

Theme 4: Financial Sustainability and Governance

SAROC recognises the challenges regional councils face in attaining and maintaining financial sustainability. SAROC acknowledges that councils proactively improve practices to achieve best practice in financial management, governance and reporting.

Four Year Objectives

The following Objectives will guide the activities and actions of SAROC over the next four years. These Objectives will underpin the actions and/or initiatives that SAROC will undertake on an annual basis as identified in its Annual Business Plan.

Economic Development

Enable advocacy and partnership opportunities that recognise the specific needs of the regions and support councils to drive sustainable economic development.

Community Development

Support strong, vibrant and cohesive regional communities through advocacy and partnerships that unlock local government's potential to deliver quality community services and meaningful outcomes in public health and wellbeing.

Natural and Built Environment

Influence, inform and advocate for the State Government to address policy and legislative barriers that hinder councils from undertaking their roles in maintaining and enhancing the natural and built environment in regional South Australia.

Financial Sustainability and Governance

Advocate to maximise contributions and investment from other tiers of government to contribute toward local government financial sustainability, and to assist councils to identify opportunities to support and strengthen governance arrangements.

The Role of SAROC

The SAROC Terms of Reference identify a range of roles to support the LGA in the delivery of its Objects. SAROC will play the following important roles in achieving its vision and mission and in addressing its four themes and key objectives.

Role	SAROC will:
Regional Advocacy	Represent the regions on issues that matter to all regions to the LGA, State and Federal Government and with key stakeholders.
Policy Initiation and Review	Develop policy that is of strategic importance to all regions. Review and advise on policy matters as requested by the LGA.
Leadership	Initiate actions and lead activities that provide benefit to all regions. Develop and maintain relationships with the State and Federal governments.
Engagement and Capacity Building in the Regions	Engage with members within the SAROC Regional Group and keep them informed of the activities of SAROC Actively promote communication between members and between members and the LGA

Stakeholders and Partners

SAROC recognises that for it to be a successful Regional Organisation of Councils it needs to work in close collaboration and in partnership with its key partners and stakeholders. SAROC also recognises that close engagement and the ability to support the development and capacity building of its partners will also lead to successful outcomes for South Australian regions.

As a committee of the Local Government Association, SAROC has identified the following organisations as key partners and stakeholders:

- LGA Board of Directors and LGA Secretariat
- Regional councils
- Regional Local Government Associations
- Greater Adelaide Regional Organisation of Councils
- State Government and its agencies
- Federal Government and its agencies
- Regional Development Australia
- Murray Darling Association

Determining Actions and Priorities

To assist in identifying the actions and priorities that SAROC will undertake on an annual basis and included within the annual business plan of SAROC, under each of the themes and to support the Objective identified above, SAROC will focus its efforts by taking on the role as defined below:

Theme	SAROC Roles			
	Regional Advocacy	Policy Initiation and Review	Leadership	Engagement and Capacity Building in the regions
Economic Development				
Community Development				
Natural and Built Environment				
Financial Sustainability and Governance				

Strategic Plan Implementation and Review

Under the SAROC Terms of Reference, SAROC is required to develop an Annual Business Plan which supports the delivery of the Strategic Plan.

The Annual Business Plan for the next financial year is to be developed by June of each year and presented to the Board of Directors for approval.

The Annual Business Plan provides the specific actions against which the activities of SAROC can be monitored.

Appendix 1- List of Regional Group of Members of the South Australian Organisation of Councils

SAROC Regional Grouping	Members
Southern and Hills Councils* <small>*Adelaide Hills Council is a member of the Greater Adelaide Regional Organisation of Councils (GAROC)</small>	Alexandrina Mount Barker Victor Harbor Yankalilla Kangaroo Island
Legatus Councils	Adelaide Plains Barossa Barunga West Clare and Gilbert Valley Copper Coast Goyder Light Mount Remarkable Northern Areas Orroroo Carrieton Peterborough Wakefield Yorke Peninsula Flinders Ranges
Eyre Peninsula	Ceduna Cleve Elliston Franklin Harbor Kimba Streaky Bay Tumby Bay Wudinna Lower Eyre Peninsula Port Lincoln
Limestone Coast	Grant Kingston Mount Gambier Naracoorte Lucindale Robe Tatiara Wattle Range
Murraylands and Riverland	Loxton Waikerie Mid Murray Karoonda East Murray Coorong District Southern Mallee Berri Barmera Renmark Paringa Murray Bridge
Spencer Gulf Cities	Port Augusta Port Pirie Whyalla

