

Notes for Integrated Planners Network meeting Dec 2009

Where are reforms are up to?

- hopefully you're aware that the Local Government Act has been amended to include the new planning and reporting requirements for councils (see Circular to Councils 09-37 on 14 Oct)
- in regard to the Regulation, we're just waiting for PCO to provide us with a final Regulation so that we can get it approved by the Minister and signed by the Governor
- so not sure when Regulation will commence but there are no significant changes to draft that was issued for public consultation earlier in the year
- Guidelines will cover what's in the Regulation

- in regard to the Guidelines and Manual, they have been submitted for approval
- DDG is keen for them to be released before Christmas
- they will be released even if the Regulation hasn't been gazetted
- they will be released via a circular to councils which has also been submitted for approval
- there are no significant changes to either from the draft issued for public consultation
- there are likely to be some updates early next year e.g. tourism planning

- we're also finalizing a webpage that will include advice on workforce planning as this isn't covered in any detail in the Manual
- webpage will also provide links to other resources on strategic planning, community engagement and civic leadership

Transitional legislative provisions

- it's important that you are aware of the transitional provisions that are now included in the Act (Schedule 8, Part 31 *Provisions consequent on enactment of Local Government Amendment (Planning and Reporting) Act 2009*)
- this is covered in the circular that will be issued with the Guidelines and Manual
- these provisions are that the management planning and annual reporting requirements that were in the Local Government Act prior to the amendments that commenced on 1 October 2009 continue to apply until a council has commenced under the new planning and reporting requirements
- this matter is covered in the circular that will be issued with the Guidelines and Manual

- for example, Group 1 councils will commence under the new provisions from 1 July 2010
- this means that Group 1 councils must comply with the new planning provisions for the 2010/11 year
- however, Group 1 council annual reports for the 2009/2010 year (due 30 November 2010) must comply with the previous reporting requirements

- it's important to be aware of this when you're referring to the Local Government Act on the NSW Legislation website because the current version only has the new requirements

- the circular will let you know how you can refer to an historical version of the Local Government Act on the NSW Legislation website

(<http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/maintop/view/inforce/act+30+1993+ed+2009-07-06+N/>)

Group nomination

- as at Wednesday we had 143 councils who have nominated a group, including some county councils

- 5 councils have been granted a short extension

- only leaves 18 or about 10% of general purpose and county councils that haven't responded so we're currently following them up

- of those that have nominated a group 30 will be in Group 1, 47 in Group 2 and 66 in Group 3

Baseline survey

- thank you to those of you who may have completed or assisted with completing this survey

- 84% of councils have responded and we're currently following up those who haven't

- we've started analyzing the responses so will be contacting councils about mentoring early next year

Working with State agencies

- I wanted to cover briefly working with State Government agencies

- this will also be covered in the circular that will be issued with the Guidelines and Manual

- the Division has received a number of invitations from councils to attend consultation sessions for the development of their Community Strategic Plan

- the Division's role is to provide advice to councils to assist their transition to the new planning and reporting framework

- we're not a service delivery agency so we can't provide input into the future priorities and aspirations of each local government area

- this is a matter for the community and stakeholders of an area which includes State agencies that provide services to the community

- councils need to identify mutually beneficial opportunities in working with State agencies that operate in their area

- it's important that councils build on established relationships and utilise existing forums to identify areas in common and potential partnerships

- to obtain input from State agencies, in many cases it will be more efficient and effective to develop a draft Community Strategic Plan and then convene a State agency forum that invites those agencies that provide services in an area or have been identified as potential partners in the delivery of the community's priorities and aspirations

Implementation

- DLG's focus next year will be on assisting councils to implement the new requirements

- DLG is keen to work with LGMA and IPN on best way to do this which might include training sessions/workshops for practitioners

- DLG is currently planning mid-term councillor information seminars similar to those held following elections

- details are still being worked out but these are likely to be held in Sep-Oct, GMs and senior staff will be encouraged to attend as well as councillors, and will focus on IP&R