Local
Government
Managers
Australia
SA Division

2014 Leadership Excellence Awards

Compendium of Finalists

Special thanks to our Corporate Partners:

Diamond Partner:

Emerald Partners:

Platinum Partners:

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Introduction and Thanks

A Word from the President

As you read this Awards Compendium please reflect on the incredible level of commitment and capacity of our people, our sector. We have sought to put the spotlight on some of our people who exemplify what is great about local government. Behind these people are more great people, organisations and communities.

Our aim is to highlight and encourage collaboration, sharing leading practice and our deep commitment, as a sector, to make a significant and positive difference with and for our communities. We know that our heartfelt appreciation of the contribution, success and achievements of others is one of the best ways to support and nurture our pursuit of excellence. We know that the pursuit of excellence delivers increasing levels of public value.

In your very busy life, I ask that you take a moment to reflect, acknowledge and celebrate. We make a difference!

Victoria MacKirdy
President, LGMA (SA)

About This Guide

As the aim of the LGMA (SA) Leadership Excellence Awards is to both celebrate and promote excellence in local government, this compendium has been designed to include detailed information about all finalists including contact details should you wish to get in touch and learn more about their projects and initiatives.

About LGMA (SA) and the Leadership Excellence Awards

Local Government Managers Australia SA Division (LGMA (SA)) is the leading professional association representing managers and aspiring managers in local government in South Australia. Our purpose is to promote excellence through the advancement of local government management. The Leadership Excellence Awards program is an annual program which recognises outstanding achievement and innovation in local government.

Overview of the Judging Process

The independent judging panel consisted of: John Coombe, former Local Government CEO, Jane Gascoigne, Grants Commissioner, Ray Pincombe, former Local Government CEO. In addition, the following people joined the panel for the Award which they sponsor: Allison Ashby from AME Recruitment, David Hitchcock from the LGA, Justin Lang and Matthew Scales from Zero Waste SA; Adrian Rose from Solo Resource Recovery, Debbie Sterrey from Statewide Super, Rod Ellis from Tonkin Consulting, Peter Illee from Primary Industries and Regions; Jeanette Walters from Office for the Ageing; Julia Grant from the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources, and Robyn Daly and Victor Di Maria from Local Government Risk Services.

All submissions were written.

All nominations were considered by the judging panel and a shortlist of the entries across the eleven categories was arrived at. All shortlisted candidates then had a phone interview with the judges, addressing a series of questions provided to them in advance. The panel then met again to make the final decision in each category.

The judges remarked that this year saw an extremely high calbre of nominations across all 76 nominations received.

The winner of the Management Challenge was determined through a national scoring system and the process in South Australia was managed by Chief Facilitator, Terry Bruun.

Further Information

For further information about this publication, finalists and winners, the Leadership Excellence Awards Program or sponsorship opportunities, contact Taryn Sexton on executive@lgmasa.org.au or 0400 429 003

Leadership & Management Excellence
<u>Metropolitan</u> Councils

Sponsored by:

Jodie Rugless, City of Charles Sturt

Winner

Jodie Rugless is the Information Services Manager at the City of Charles Sturt where she has full strategic and operational oversight of all IT services. Her portfolio incorporates 31 employees with a total annual budget of $7.9m. In 2013, Jodie introduced an organisation wide electronic forms based system to streamline and automate Council forms for internal and external use, facilitated the Ministerial Launch of the City of Charles Sturt Digital Hub, a community facility which she designed and implemented, replaced the organisation's compliance management system resulting in a 50% improvement in expiation notice processing times, oversaw the implementation of the Asset Management System and improved IT service quality by reducing service desk waiting times by 87%. Jodie has been a major driver of change across the organisation resulting in benefits to both local government and the community.

Mark Dowd, City of Onkaparinga

Finalist

Mark Dowd, CEO of the City of Onkaparinga, is being nominated for instigating an organisational cultural change program. The first step of Mark's vision highlighted the need to invest in staff, engaging and motivating them in order to build a positive environment. A priority was the persuading of elected members to support his idea and ensuring provision in the budget to do so. Mark then took the Executive team into a phase of developing trust, thus laying a foundation for open and honest discussion, debate and ultimately, cohesive and effective decision making. The outcomes of the program were developed within this environment of team development (starting from the top) and have provided a galvanising vision for the cultural direction of the organisation.   Results from the latest organisational survey reveal that the highest positive scores relate to staff being proud to work for the City of Onkaparinga and that they have a good understanding of what behaviours and achievements are expected of them.

Deb Richardson, City of Prospect

Finalist

Deb Richardson, Director Community and Planning at the City of Prospect is highly valued as an effective leader by Elected Members, management, staff, volunteers, and community members. She is trusted by them to be fair and honest and so they are then prepared to 'go the extra mile' which delivers very successful results for Council and the community. Her staff have been quoted as saying "Deb is dynamic, across all issues, treats everyone with equal respect, is extremely creative, energetic, and an inspiring leader allowing staff space to be creative and step out of their comfort zone. She gives "permission to fail", leads by example in a non-controlling manner. She has passion for her job and true empathy for people" Debbie is absolutely committed to a genuine community engagement which means everyone has a 'voice'. She possesses a high level of integrity and honesty ensuring a commitment to good governance is part of all her dealings. This has led to more cooperation in these engagements by all sides and greater satisfaction and confidence for all.

Leadership & Management Excellence Rural Councils Award

Sponsored by:

Rural City of Murray Bridge Volunteer Management Team

Winner

The Rural City of Murray Bridge Volunteer Management Team has developed and implemented a Volunteer Management Plan to assist the city to attract, develop and retain volunteers while providing a stimulating, supportive and safe work environment that enables them to maximise their contribution. The Plan includes individual signed Volunteer Agreements, is in line with national standards and is aimed at ensuring the contributions of all 230 volunteers are aligned with the city's plans and goals.

Cate Atkinson, Wakefield Regional Council

Finalist

Not long into her role as CEO of Wakefield Regional Council, Cate Atkinson identified the need for the community to come together and encourage positive thinking about the future development opportunities in the region. Due to limited resources, she undertook the development of the council's Economic Statement and Action Plan by using her skills to facilitate workshops, interpret results and update an outdated plan. She then used her limited budget to have her work peer reviewed. By conducting the work herself, Cate was able to directly build her relationship with the community while giving them ownership of the plan.

Tracey Faehrmann, Renmark Paringa Council

Finalist

Through her dedication, work ethic and commitment to outcomes, Tracey Faehrmann in her role as HR Manager, has delivered on three key projects at Renmark Paringa Council. The first is the introduction of a Workforce Planning Program, the second an integrated Quality, Health, Safety and Environment System and the third a Training Program that resulted in over $70K in training initiatives and all staff achieving a minimum Certificate III in their field. Tracey has been nominated in particular for her leadership skills and the positive effect she has had on staff morale.

Excellence in Risk Management Award

Sponsored by:

Renmark Paringa Council Quality, Health, Safety Environment Team

Winner

Over the past year, the Renmark Paringa Council Quality, Health, Safety Environment Team has been concentrating on providing an integrated Safety, Risk and HR system that is user friendly, has real time data and would meet legislative compliance internally and against Australian and International standards. $86,000 of valuable resources was being spent annually on ineffective risk management processes. The project had an implementation budget of $30,000 and 100% of staff and volunteers were trained in the system prior to it going live.

City of Charles Sturt Paveline Project Team

Highly Commended

The City of Charles Sturt's Paveline Project Team recognised an opportunity to reduce manual handling injuries associated with asphalt patching. They designed a truck with a moveable chute to eliminate the need to manually shovel and carry the asphalt. Not only has the development of this prototype resulted in zero asphalt patching related manual handling injuries, but also it has led to an enormous sense of pride on the part of the operational staff and the community who have taken a keen interest in the truck.

Excellence in Environmental Leadership and Sustainability Award

Sponsored by:

Government of South Australia
Zero Waste SA

Port Pirie Waste Management Strategy

Winner

Port Pirie Regional Council has radically changed almost every single aspect of its waste management processes during 2013 and delivered them simultaneously. A cross department project team was set up to deliver on the Port Pirie Waste Management Strategy. This included closing and rehabilitating its existing landfill, constructing a state of the art $3.5 million new fully enclosed transfer station, implementing a three bin kerbside collection service, the preparation of a Waste Pathways Strategy, and the implementation of two campaigns. The anti-litter campaign aimed at youth at the skate park, boat ramp and beach areas included both TV advertising and social media while the illegal dumping campaign involved ads, signage, surveillance and prosecutions. All of these activities required leadership and innovation in order to ensure that the changes required were effective, delivered on time within budget, and accepted by the community and Elected Members.

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City of West Torrens Waste Management Team

Finalist

The City of West Torrens Waste Management Team adopted a new strategy on illegal dumping. The strategy has a two-pronged approach comprising an education campaign involving the development of new resources, and revised investigation and enforcement procedures. Of note are the "Save Heaps" stickers, free mattress and sofa collection, free e-waste disposal and vouchers for trailer loads of rubbish. The collection of illegally dumped waste by council staff has reduced by 40% while hard rubbish collections have increased by an average of 27% per year. The overall savings to the councils have been estimated at between $100-$150k.

Northern Adelaide Waste Management Authority

Finalist

The Northern Adelaide Waste Management Authority, a Regional Subsidiary formed to facilitate waste management for its three member Councils, Gawler, Playford and Salisbury, recognised that an opportunity existed to establish a Regional Resource Recovery Centre incorporating a public Waste Transfer Station and Salvage and Save Operation. The project seeks to deliver positive social, safety, environmental and financial outcomes. In its first twelve months, the Centre and its on-site, partners Salvage and Save and Scout Recycling, has attracted 10,400 vehicles to the facility for the purpose of dropping off waste items. In addition, thousands of residents have used the free E-Waste drop-off available at the Centre. A number of Councils have already visited the centre with a view to duplicating various aspects of the operation where possible.

Upper Torrens Land Management Project

Finalist

The Upper Torrens Land Management Project is a Local Government Landcare Partnership between The Barossa Council, the Adelaide Hills Council and the Upper Torrens Catchment community.   The Grassy Groundcover Restoration is a six-year project with in excess of $550,000 spent during 2013. Over the 4 years commencing in 2013 a total of 200 hectares of grassy woodland will be restored using the techniques pioneered in this project, a further 200 hectares of degraded grassy woodland will be revegetated and a further 500 hectares will have threat abatement such as weed control and feral animal control undertaken. The project is supported by an innovative model which brings together the scientific, governance and community engagement expertise required for such a ground-breaking project.

Excellence in Water Security Award

Sponsored by:

Government of South Australia
Department of Environment,
Water and Natural Resources

City of Charles Sturt Waterproofing the West Stage One Project

Steering Group

Joint Winner

In order to treat and inject 2,400 mega litres of recycled water into the aquifer each year, the Water Proofing the West Stage One Project Steering Group was established. The project involves five interconnected project sites, numerous sub-projects and multiple partners and a budget of $70 million. The role of the Project Steering Group was particularly important in managing the risks that had the potential to cause project blockages and that required a higher level of intervention and decision making.   By having a sound governance structure in place that was based on partnership principles and involved key funding partners working in partnership with the, staff, the Project Manager and consultants and contractors to the project, there was a significant amount of accountability on all parties to contribute to the delivery of the project.

2014
LEADERSHIP
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Light, Barossa, Gawler & Mallala Water Region

Joint Winner

The Gawler Water Reuse Scheme is a stormwater harvesting and reuse project that captures urban stormwater runoff, treats it within constructed wetlands and stores it within an underground aquifer ready for reuse. A supply network will deliver non-potable water for use on public and private open space areas in the Town of Gawler, Light Regional Council, The Barossa Council and the District Council of Mallala.   Stage 1 of the project is joint funded by the four subject Councils and the Commonwealth Government. To ensure the project was fully funded, the Councils undertook an extensive process to partner with the private sector to fund and operate the long term scheme. The key terms and conditions of the agreement between the public and private sector enabled the Councils to transfer the commercial risks (and rewards) of operating a water supply entity over to the Private Partner and to ensure that the project assets and associated asset depreciation would not negatively affect the councils' financial indicators.

Waterproofing Whyalla Implementation Team

Finalist

The Waterproofing Whyalla Implementation Team aims to save 420 ML of potable water per annum by extending the existing reclaimed water use scheme with the treated waste water being supplied from SA Water's plant. This will be used to irrigate two Council owned Ovals, other sporting fields and school sites. In addition, a scheme of installing sub-surface drip irrigation will irrigate approximately 167 hectares of new median strips and reserves, parks and gardens. More than 400 trees and 10,000 sqm of lawn have been planted with further lawn seeding and plantation planned.   Most importantly the security of supply and delivery of irrigation water will support local economic development and save council money.

Leadership in Financial Management Award

Sponsored by:

City of Tea Tree Gully Continuous Improvement Program

Winner

The City of Tea Tree Gully has delivered a 5% reduction in operating expenditure within a 12 month period through the 'Innovate to Excel' Program. This program was formed to embed a culture of continuous improvement within the organisation, increase the relevance of service provided to the community, empower staff to drive change, provide staff with a consistent approach to reviewing services and service standards, improve community satisfaction with Council and its service delivery and indentify and implement sustainable costs savings. To date Council has registered over 50 formal continuous improvement initiatives that have been completed with benefits to the value of $3.8M over 18 months and with over 40% of staff involved.

Simon Zbierski, Campbelltown City Council

Finalist

Simon Zbierski, Manager Finance at Campbelltown City Council introduced an electronic budgeting tool that has reduced the time it takes for both budget managers and finance staff to complete the requirements for what can otherwise be a very time consuming annual process. The refinement of this budgeting module over time has reduced the need for staff to double handle financial information, freeing up time to focus on ensuring that Council's financial parameters and targets are further scrutinised and met. Staff have become better educated about budget processes and Elected Members have appreciated the change in detail and scrutiny on the new project forms which has added credibility to the budget process.

Local Hero Award for Leadership in Community Services

Sponsored by:

City of Playford Library Service

Winner

The City of Playford's Library Service has developed the "Give the Gift of Reading" initiative to address low community literacy levels among children. The program encourages the public to purchase new books for children and drop them off in the library or some local partner post offices around SA.   Playford Library also partnered with AnglicareSA who acted as a distributer for the donations to reach the homes of children so they could have exposure to books, regardless of circumstance.   It has proven to be a success with over 780 books donated. Furthermore, the initiative has been adopted by 24 SA Library Services in 2013, resulting in over 2000 donations state wide.   The Playford Library Service has aspirations the program will reach a national level in upcoming years and support literacy where it is most needed.

Leadership Onkaparinga Program Team

Highly Commended

Leadership Onkaparinga is a structured community leadership program aimed at supporting and encouraging residents to assume leadership roles within their communities. The program's 88 graduates are skilled, confident and articulate citizens who have become an informed reference group for complex community engagements and positive advocates for the Council in the community. The program has an annual council budget of $59,000, which has been supplemented with funding of $10,000 through SA Works. Since the program began, 85% of participants have chosen to gain accreditation which has led them to further education, training and, in some cases, employment.

Natalie Buesnel, City of Prospect

Finalist

The energetic Natalie Buesnel is the Social Programs Coordinator for the City of Prospect and oversees the running of twelve programs including the Community Lunch, Zoo Group, Market Run, Exercise Programs, Men's Shed and Fishing Group. Natalie's particular passion is for developing and implementing programs specific for residents in Supported Residential Facilities. For example the Strength for Life program is aimed at increasing strength and mobility. The effectiveness of the programs is clearly demonstrated by the continued achievement of targets and outputs set by the funding bodies. Natalie's enthusiasm and commitment to setting and achieving her goals will ensure that the Social Programs at the City of Prospect can only grow bigger and better.

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Emerging Leader of the Year Award

Sponsored by:

Marc Voortman, District Council of Mount Barker

Winner

Marc Voortman is the Manager Planning Policy and Strategy at the District Council of Mount Barker. During his time at the council, he has led the Regional Town Centre Planning Review and was designated as the key council contact following significant community opposition to the State Government decision to rezone land for residential use. Marc has demonstrated considerable communication skills providing all stakeholders with the information they require and input into the decision making processes where appropriate. Marc provided council with strategic leadership advice throughout the MDPA process managing the diversity of community and stakeholder opinions.   In addition, Marc gives of his time to mentor and train students and young people.

Joanne Seabrook, Barossa Council

Finalist

Joanne Seabrook is the Manager of the nationally accredited Barossa Visitor Centre, one of the busiest centres in the state, employing 7 staff and 10 volunteers and fielding approximately 60,000 enquiries annually. The Centre has undergone a $500k expansion and was the first in the State to introduce an online booking system. The last 12 months has seen visitor enquiries through the Centre rise by 19%, booking revenues increase by 52%, a rebranding exercise and joint initiatives for the launch of an enhanced regional Barossa website.   Jo has recognised the power of data to demonstrate outcomes and inform business planning. She sits on the Board of Tourism Barossa and is an integral member of Council's Organisational Management Group.

Scott Reardon, City of Holdfast Bay

Finalist
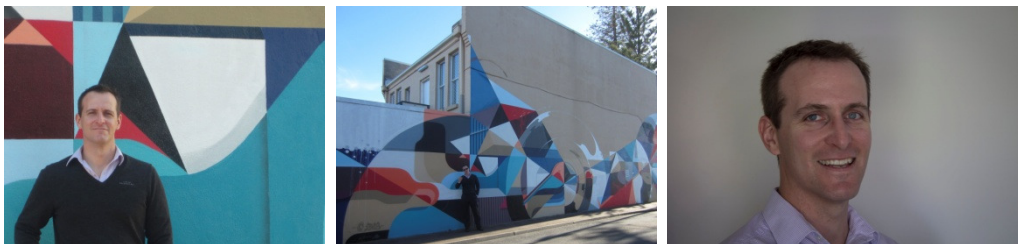
Scott Reardon is the Liquor Licensing & Community Safety Officer at the City of Holdfast Bay. Recognising that graffiti related vandalism was rising by 37% per year, Scott sought funding from the Attorney-General's department to run a pilot program called the 'Foundation Graffiti Prevention Initiative.' In its first year, the program reduced reported instances of graffiti related vandalism by 47%, as well as leading to the apprehension and charging of some offenders. Many of these offenders were referred to an intervention program that gave them the opportunity to work through issues and gain support. Scott's ability to manage staff and sub-contractors while maintaining open communication with other stakeholders identify the core characteristics necessary to be an effective leader.

Excellence in Asset Management Award

Sponsored by:

City of Charles Sturt Works and Assets System Implementation Project Team

Winner

In 2010, the City of Charles Sturt Works and Asset System Implementation Project Team set off on a journey to procure and implement a new centralised asset management system incorporating an asset register, works order system, strategic asset management planning, flexible reporting module and mobility in the field. The total project budget was $1.18m. In November 2013 the system was deployed to 220 staff including 150 field staff with around 90 mobility devices deployed into the business.   Since 'Go live' around 21,000 Works Orders have been processed in the system - that's an average of around 1,750 per week. A deliberate focus on collaboration, change management and leadership support resulted in a high level of involvement from the business.

Shiree Daum, Corporation of the City of Whyalla

Finalist

Shiree Daum is the Project Officer Assets / GIS at the City of Whyalla. With an ageing civil infrastructure asset base and extensive backlog of maintenance and renewal work, Shiree led an Infrastructure Asset Audit. The outcomes of the resultant modelling will introduce efficiencies for Councils that are struggling with the ability to interpret road asset condition data and provide greater confidence in the asset plan preparation and in annual works programs budgeting. The spreadsheet of existing data has been developed into a model which gives an indication of the required budget to reduce or eliminate the backlog of work. Data can also be extracted and used to set up a forward plan based on the suggested treatment and ordered by road priority or hierarchy. This project has equipped a newly formed management team with information to drive decisions on funding requirements and approved works programs.

Age Smart Award for Leadership Excellence in Age-friendly Communities

Sponsored by:

SENIORS CARD

City of Salisbury Healthy Ageing and Access Team

Winner

The City of Salisbury's Healthy Ageing and Access Team has used the SA Age Friendly Environment and Communities Toolkit to develop its Ageing Plan and continue its long term commitment to ensuring older residents can remain active, healthy and able to participate as community citizens. 28% of Salisbury's residents are over 55 and 40% of those are from cultural backgrounds. The team's work has included the use of a pedestrian access consultation group called "Access Ambassadors," a Seniors Cultural Program supported by a cultural staff team of 5 who speak a total of 10 languages, and health focused programs including activities such as walking, cycling and yoga. The approach has led to an increase of 19% in participation of cultural residents and attracted national and international attention.

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Monica DuPlessis, City of Holdfast Bay

Finalist

Monica DuPlessis, Community Services Manager at the City of Holdfast Bay, developed a strategy titled "Growing Older in the City of Holdfast Bay: Baby Boomers and Beyond." The project's aim was to gather information that would assist the council to plan for and respond to the emerging needs of Baby Boomers and inform the development of an Ageing Strategy for the City.   Monica has demonstrated exception leadership through the development and implementation of new services, such as a 'Dare to Dream' program with a health and wellbeing focus to encourage people to Dream, Achieve, Reconnect, Engage with a long held dream or aspiration.   By implementing an Ageing Strategy that accurately reflects the future needs of the Baby Boomers the city will be effective in creating places and spaces that are relevant and meet the expressed needs of the community utilising them.

2014 Management Challenge

Sponsored by:

CIVICA

Adelaide City Council

Winner

City of Onkaparinga

2nd Place

City of Mitcham

3rd Place

Teams (in no particular order)

City of Norwood Payneham and St Peters

City of Charles Sturt

City of West Torrens

City of Holdfast Bay

City of Tea Tree Gully

Alexandrina Council

City of Marion

City of Salisbury

Adelaide Hills Council

City of Playford

Light Regional Council

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