

NSW DEPARTMENT OF PREMIER AND CABINET

DIVISION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

**Report on Findings from 2006-07 Social Justice Initiatives
Survey**

**Regarding Local Council Initiatives for
Young People, Women, People with a Disability, Older People,
Indigenous Peoples, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse People and
Affordable Housing**

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INTRODUCTION

This report presents findings from the survey of local councils regarding selected youth, women, disability, older people, Aboriginal, cultural and linguistic diversity and affordable housing initiatives. The report covers the period from 1 January 2006 until 31 December 2007. The survey was in seven sections.

122 out of 152 councils responded to the survey, representing a response rate of 80%. This represents a small decrease (2%) in the percentage of councils who responded to the previous survey.

Of the councils that responded, 63 (52%) were urban councils (i.e. those with a population greater than 20,000, or with a population density greater than 30 persons per square kilometre, or 90% or more of the population is urban) and 59 (48%) were rural councils (i.e. those with a population less than 20,000, and with a population density less than 30 persons per square kilometre, and less than 90% of the population is urban).

Of the 122 councils that responded to the survey, 113 (93%) gave permission for their names to be included in lists of councils that responded to the survey and more specifically for their names to be included in lists to identify which councils have implemented any of the initiatives covered in the survey. Copies of these lists can be obtained by contacting the Department of Premier and Cabinet, Division of Local Government.

The following tables present findings from the 2006-2007 survey. Where data was collected the tables compare findings with the 2004-2005, 2003, 2002 and/or 2001 surveys. The number (N) of urban and rural councils who responded to the survey has been identified in each table.

PART ONE: YOUNG PEOPLE

Advisory Committees

Table one: Number of councils that have ever had a Youth Advisory or Consultative Committee

2003			2004-2005			2006-2007		
	No.	%		No.	%		No.	%
Urban (N=70)	56	80	Urban (N=65)	60	92	Urban (N=63)	57	90
Rural (N=73)	46	63	Rural (N=60)	31	52	Rural (N=59)	37	63
Total (N=143)	102	71	Total (N=125)	91	73	Total (N=122)	94	77

In 2006-2007, 94 councils (77%) reported ever having a Youth Advisory or Consultative Committee. This is 4% higher than in 2004-2005. Urban councils continued to be more likely than rural councils to report having ever had a Committee (90% and 63% respectively).

Table two: Number of councils where Youth Advisory or Consultative Committees were still operating as at 31 December 2007

2003			2004-2005			2006-2007		
	No.	%		No.	%		No.	%
Urban (N=56)	47	84	Urban (N=60)	42	70	Urban (N=57)	42	74
Rural (N=46)	37	80	Rural (N=31)	20	65	Rural (N=37)	22	59
Total (N=102)	84	82	Total (N=91)	62	68	Total (N=94)	64	68

Most (64 or 68%) of the Youth Advisory or Consultative Committees reported as having been established were still operating as at 31 December 2007. Urban councils continued to be more likely than rural councils to report Committees still operating (74% and 59% respectively). The percentage of Committees still operating in 2006-2007 was the same as in 2004-2005 (68%) but less than in 2003 (82%).

PART TWO: WOMEN

National Framework for Women in Local Government Action Plans

Table three: Number of councils that have adopted a National Framework for Women in Local Government Action Plan

2004-2005			2006-2007		
	No.	%		No.	%
Urban (N=65)	3	5	Urban (N=63)	11	17
Rural (N=60)	3	5	Rural (N=59)	4	7
Total (N=125)	6	5	Total (N=122)	15	12

In 2006-2007, 15 councils reported adopting a National Framework for Women in Local Government Action Plan. This represents an increase in both the number and percentage of councils with Action Plans since 2004-2005. Urban councils were more likely than rural councils to have an Action Plan (17% and 7% respectively).

Table four: Number of Action Plans developed using the National Framework for Women in Local Government Information Kit for Councils

2004-2005			2006-2007		
	No.	%		No.	%
Urban (N=3)	2	67	Urban (N=11)	7	64
Rural (N=3)	2	67	Rural (N=4)	4	100
Total (N=6)	4	67	Total (N=15)	11	73

In 2006-2007, most (11 or 23%) of the councils that had adopted an Action Plan used the National Framework for Women in Local Government Information Kit for Councils to develop them. The number of councils that have used the Information Kit to develop their Action Plans has increased since 2004-2005. Rural councils were more likely than urban councils to have used the Information Kit in 2006-2007 (100% and 64% respectively).

PART THREE: PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Section 1 – Disability Action Plans

Table five: Number of Disability Action Plans adopted by councils as at 31 December 2007

2001			2002			2003			2004-2005			2006-2007		
	No.	%		No.	%		No.	%		No.	%		No.	%
Urban (N=77)	40	52	Urban (N=72)	34	47	Urban (N=70)	45	64	Urban (N=65)	44	68	Urban (N=63)	49	78
Rural (N=86)	11	13	Rural (N=79)	8	10	Rural (N=73)	13	18	Rural (N=60)	16	27	Rural (N=59)	18	31
Total (N=163)	51	31	Total (N=151)	42	28	Total (N=143)	58	41	Total (N=125)	60	48	Total (N=122)	67	55

In 2006-2007, a total of 67 councils (55%) reported ever having adopted a Disability Action Plan. The percentage of councils reporting that they had adopted a Disability Action Plan has been increasing gradually since 2002. Urban councils remained more likely than rural councils to report adopting a plan (78% and 31% respectively).

Table six: Number of Disability Action Plans that were current as at 31 December 2007

2004-2005			2006-2007		
	No.	%		No.	%
Urban (N=44)	35	80	Urban (N=49)	39	80
Rural (N=16)	16	100	Rural (N=18)	18	100
Total (N=60)	51	85	Total (N=67)	57	85

Most (57 or 85%) of the councils that had ever adopted a Disability Action Plan reported that the Plan was current as at 31 December 2007. Rural councils were more likely than urban councils to have a current plan (100% and 80% respectively). These findings are consistent with 2004-2005.

Table seven: Number of Disability Action Plans that were developed using the NSW Government Disability Policy Framework

2001			2002			2003			2004-2005			2006-2007		
	No.	%		No.	%		No.	%		No.	%		No.	%
Urban (N=40)	28	70	Urban (N=34)	24	71	Urban (N=45)	27	60	Urban (N=44)	30	68	Urban (N=49)	37	76
Rural (N=11)	9	82	Rural (N=8)	6	75	Rural (N=13)	13	100	Rural (N=16)	11	69	Rural (N=18)	10	56
Total (N=51)	37	73	Total (N=42)	30	71	Total (N=58)	40	69	Total (N=60)	41	68	Total (N=67)	47	70

In 2006-2007, most (47 or 70%) of the Disability Action Plans ever adopted by councils were reported as being developed using the NSW Government Disability Policy Framework. The percentage of councils that reported that they had used the Framework was similar to previous years. Urban councils continued to be more likely than rural councils to report using the Framework.

Table eight: Number of Disability Action Plans sent to the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC)

2001			2002			2003			2004-2005			2006-2007		
	No.	%		No.	%		No.	%		No.	%		No.	%
Urban (N=40)	24	60	Urban (N=34)	22	65	Urban (N=45)	28	62	Urban (N=44)	30	68	Urban (N=49)	27	55
Rural (N=11)	6	55	Rural (N=8)	6	75	Rural (N=13)	3	23	Rural (N=16)	6	38	Rural (N=18)	5	28
Total (N=51)	30	59	Total (N=42)	28	67	Total (N=58)	31	53	Total (N=60)	36	60	Total (N=67)	32	48

In 2006-2007, about half (32 or 48%) of the councils that had adopted a Disability Action Plan reported sending the plan to HREOC. The percentage of plans sent to HREOC has varied since 2001. Urban councils continued to be more likely than rural councils to report sending their Plan to HREOC.

Section 2 – Accessibility

Table nine: Number of councils that have ever had a Disability Access Committee

2001			2002			2003			2004-2005			2006-2007		
	No.	%		No.	%		No.	%		No.	%		No.	%
Urban (N=77)	75	97	Urban (N=72)	69	96	Urban (N=70)	67	96	Urban (N=65)	61	94	Urban (N=63)	58	92
Rural (N=86)	32	37	Rural (N=79)	29	37	Rural (N=73)	26	36	Rural (N=60)	25	42	Rural (N=59)	28	47
Total (N=163)	107	66	Total (N=151)	98	65	Total (N=143)	93	65	Total (N=125)	86	69	Total (N=122)	86	70

In 2006-2007, a total of 86 councils (70%) reported ever having a Disability Access Committee. Urban councils were more likely than rural councils to report ever having an Access Committee (92% and 47% respectively). These findings are consistent with previous years.

Table ten: Number of Disability Access Committees still operating as at 31 December 2007

2001			2002			2003			2004-2005			2006-2007		
	No.	%		No.	%		No.	%		No.	%		No.	%
Urban (N=75)	71	95	Urban (N=69)	61	88	Urban (N=67)	63	94	Urban (N=61)	53	87	Urban (N=58)	52	90
Rural (N=32)	26	81	Rural (N=29)	21	72	Rural (N=26)	21	81	Rural (N=25)	17	68	Rural (N=28)	20	71
Total (N=107)	97	91	Total (N=98)	82	84	Total (N=93)	84	90	Total (N=86)	70	81	Total (N=86)	72	84

Most (84%) Access Committees were still operating as at 31 December 2007. Committees continued to be more likely to still be operating in urban areas compared to rural areas. The percentage of Committees still operating has declined slightly over time.

PART FOUR: OLDER PEOPLE

Planning for an ageing population

Table eleven: Number of councils with an Ageing Population Strategy/Plan separate to the social/community plan

2004-2005			2006-2007		
	No. councils	%		No. councils	%
Urban (N=65)	11	17	Urban (N=63)	13	21
Rural (N=60)	5	8	Rural (N=59)	2	3
Total (N=125)	16	13	Total (N=122)	15	12

In 2006-2007, a total of 15 councils (12%) reported having an Ageing Population Strategy/Plan separate to the social/community plan. This figure is similar to 2004-2005. As in 2004-2005, urban councils were far more likely than rural councils to report having a separate Ageing Population Strategy Plan (21% and 3% respectively).

Table twelve: Number of councils with “whole of council” Strategies/Plans

2004-2005			2006-2007		
	No. councils	%		No. councils	%
Urban (N=11)	10	91	Urban (N=13)	10	77
Rural (N=5)	3	60	Rural (N=2)	2	100
Total (N=16)	13	81	Total (N=15)	12	80

In 2006-2007, of the 15 councils with separate Ageing Population Strategies/Plans, 12 have a “whole of council” Strategy/Plan. Rural councils were more likely than urban councils to have a “whole of council” Strategy/Plan (100% and 77% respectively). This is different to 2004-05 where urban councils were more likely than rural councils to have such a Strategy/Plan. However, it should be noted that the number of rural councils with a separate Strategy/Plan is very small.

PART FIVE: INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Section 1 – Aboriginal Mentoring Program

Table thirteen: Number of councils that have ever implemented the Aboriginal Mentoring Program as at 31 December 2007

2001			2002			2003			2004-2005			2006-2007		
	No.	%		No.	%		No.	%		No.	%		No.	%
Urban (N=79)	10	13	Urban (N=69)	8	12	Urban (N=70)	14	20	Urban (N=65)	8	12	Urban (N=63)	8	13
Rural (N=86)	7	8	Rural (N=81)	9	11	Rural (N=73)	6	8	Rural (N=60)	8	13	Rural (N=59)	4	7
Total (N=165)	17	10	Total (N=150)	17	11	Total (N=143)	20	14	Total (N=125)	16	13	Total (N=122)	12	10

In 2006-2007, a total of 12 councils (10%) reported ever implementing the Aboriginal Mentoring Program. Urban councils were twice as likely as rural councils to report having implemented the program. However, the number of councils is relatively low. The percentage of councils implementing the program over time has remained relatively stable at about 10% since 2001.

Table fourteen: Number of Aboriginal people that have been or are being mentored

	2001	2002	2003	2004-2005	2006-2007
Urban	17	13	35	18	8
Rural	13	11	11	15	4
Total	30	24	46	33	12

In 2006-2007, a total of 12 Aboriginal people have been or are being mentored. Urban councils reported mentoring twice as many Aboriginal people as rural councils (8 and 4 mentees respectively). Over time, the number of Aboriginal people that have been mentored has fluctuated. The number of mentees reported in 2006-2007 is the lowest number of mentees since 2001. This result needs to be interpreted with caution, as the councils that respond to the survey varies between surveys. Some councils may also interpret the question as only those people who were mentored during the period of the survey and therefore do not include any people who have been mentored previously.

Table fifteen: Number of Aboriginal women who have been or are being mentored

	2001			2002			2003			2004-2005			2006-2007		
	Total	Females	%	Total	Females	%	Total	Females	%	Total	Females	%	Total	Females	%
Urban	17	8	47	13	5	38	35	20	57	18	3	16	8	5	63
Rural	13	7	54	11	4	36	11	5	45	15	8	53	4	3	75
Total	30	15	50	24	9	38	46	25	54	33	11	33	12	8	67

In 2006-2007, a total of 8 Aboriginal women (representing 67% of all mentees), were reported as having been or were being mentored. As with the total number of Aboriginal people mentored, the number of Aboriginal women mentored has fluctuated over time with the lowest number of women mentees in 2006-2007. In 2006-2007, rural councils were more likely than urban councils to mentor Aboriginal women (75% and 63% of mentees were women respectively). The likelihood of urban and rural councils mentoring Aboriginal women has also varied over time.

Section 2 – Aboriginal Advisory or Consultative Committees

Table sixteen: Number of councils that have ever had an Aboriginal Advisory or Consultative Committee

2001			2002			2003			2004-2005			2006-2007		
	No.	%		No.	%		No.	%		No.	%		No.	%
Urban (N=77)	41	53	Urban (N=69)	41	59	Urban (N=79)	43	54	Urban (N=65)	36	55	Urban (N=63)	35	56
Rural (N=86)	22	26	Rural (N=81)	25	31	Rural (N=73)	25	34	Rural (N=60)	19	32	Rural (N=59)	18	31
Total (N=163)	63	39	Total (N=150)	66	44	Total (N=143)	68	48	Total (N=125)	55	44	Total (N=122)	53	43

In 2006-2007, a total of 53 councils (43%) reported ever having an Aboriginal Advisory or Consultative Committee in 2006-2007. Urban councils were more likely than rural councils to have Committees (56% and 31% respectively). This is consistent with findings in previous years.

Table seventeen: Number of Aboriginal Advisory or Consultative Committees still operating as at 31 December 2007

2001			2002			2003			2004-2005 ¹	2006-2007		
	No.	%		No.	%		No.	%			No.	%
Urban (N=41)	34	83	Urban (N=41)	34	83	Urban (N=40)	34	85	N/A	Urban (N=35)	28	80
Rural (N=22)	13	59	Rural (N=25)	14	56	Rural (N=25)	14	56	N/A	Rural (N=18)	5	28
Total (N=63)	47	75	Total (N=66)	48	73	Total (N=68)	48	71	N/A	Total (N=53)	33	62

¹ This data was not collected in the 2004-2005 survey.

Of the 53 councils that reported ever having an Aboriginal Advisory or Consultative Committee, 33 councils (62%) reported that these Committees were still operating as at 31 December 2007. This represents a decrease in the percentage of Committees still operating compared with previous years, particularly amongst rural councils. Urban councils continued to be more likely than rural councils to have an Aboriginal Advisory or Consultative Committee still operating in 2006-2007 (80% and 28% respectively).

Section 3 – Aboriginal Community Infrastructure

Table eighteen: Number of discrete Aboriginal communities served by sealed roads

2003				2004-2005				2006-2007			
Councils	Communities	No. served by sealed roads	%	Councils	Communities	No. served by sealed roads	%	Councils	Communities	No. served by sealed roads	%
Urban ¹	-	-	-	Urban (N=12)	24	13	54	Urban (N=11)	25	14	56
Rural	-	-	-	Rural (N=22)	40	34	63	Rural (N=21)	39	26	67
Total (N=41)	64	58	91	Total (N=34)	64	47	73	Total (N=32)	64	40	63

¹ In 2003, responses were not broken down into urban and rural.

In 2006-2007, 40 of the 152 councils in NSW (26%) included one or more of the 64 discrete Aboriginal communities identified in NSW. Of these 40 councils, 32 (80%) responded to the survey. Of the 64 discrete Aboriginal communities identified, 40 (63%) were reported as being served by sealed roads. There has been a decrease in the number and percentage of discrete Aboriginal communities served by sealed roads compared to previous years. The decrease has mainly occurred in rural council areas. The reasons for this are unknown. Discrete Aboriginal communities in rural council areas continue to be more likely than those in urban council areas to be served by sealed roads.

Table nineteen: Number of discrete Aboriginal communities served by flood-free roads

2003				2004-2005				2006-2007			
Councils	Communities	No. served by flood free roads	%	Councils	Communities	No. served by flood free roads	%	Councils	Communities	No. served by flood free roads	%
Urban ¹	-	-	-	Urban (N=12)	24	14	58	Urban (N=11)	25	11	44
Rural	-	-	-	Rural (N=22)	40	25	66	Rural (N=21)	39	25	64
Total (N=41)	64	52	81	Total (N=34)	64	39	61	Total (N=32)	64	36	56

¹ In 2003, responses were not broken down into urban and rural.

In 2006-2007, of the 64 discrete Aboriginal communities identified, 36 (56%) were reported as being served by roads that are flood-free to a standard of one flood interruption in five years. There has been a decrease in the number and percentage of discrete Aboriginal communities served by flood-free roads compared to previous years. The decrease has mainly occurred in urban council areas. The reasons for this are unknown. Discrete Aboriginal communities in rural council areas continue to be more likely than those in urban council areas to be served by flood-free roads.

The following table twenty relates only to those councils which have on-site sewage management systems in their areas. It is estimated that there are 124 such councils. Of these, 100 (81%) responded to this survey.

Table twenty: Number of councils that consulted local Aboriginal communities when developing an On-site Sewage Management Strategy

2006-2007		
	No. councils	%
Urban (N=14)	5	36
Rural (N=23)	7	30
Total (N=41)	12	29

A total of 12 councils (29%) reported consulting with local Aboriginal communities when developing their On-site Sewage Management Strategy. Urban councils were slightly more likely than rural councils to report consulting with Aboriginal communities.

The following tables twenty-one and twenty-two relate only to those councils which have on-site sewage management systems and discrete Aboriginal communities within their areas. There are 24 such councils in NSW. Of these, 16 (67%) responded to the survey.

Table twenty-one: Number of On-site Sewage Management Strategies that include actions such as education, monitoring and compliance in relation to discrete Aboriginal communities

2006-2007		
	No. councils	%
Urban (N=5)	3	60
Rural (N=6)	1	17
Total (N=11)	4	36

A total of 4 councils (36%) reported having an On-site Sewage Management Strategy that included actions such as education, monitoring and compliance in relation to discrete Aboriginal communities in their area. Urban councils were more likely than rural councils to have such actions although the numbers are very low.

Table twenty-two: Number of councils that have implemented the actions in On-site Sewage Management Strategies relating to discrete Aboriginal communities

2006-2007		
	No. councils	%
Urban (N=5)	2	60
Rural (N=6)	2 ¹	33
Total (N=11)	4	36

¹ This number needs to be interpreted with caution as only 1 rural council reported including actions relating to discrete Aboriginal communities (see table twenty-one)

A total of 4 councils (36%) reported implementing actions in their On-site Sewage Management Plan relating to discrete Aboriginal communities. Urban councils were more likely than rural councils to have such actions although the numbers are very low.

Section 4 – Agreements with Aboriginal groups

Table twenty-three: Number of councils that have adopted a formal agreement/memorandum of understanding with an Aboriginal group

2004-2005			2006-2007		
	No. councils	%		No. councils	%
Urban (N=65)	27	42	Urban (N=63)	25	40
Rural (N=60)	10	17	Rural (N=59)	12	20
Total (N=125)	37	30	Total (N=122)	37	30

A total of 37 councils (30%) reported that they have adopted a formal agreement or memorandum of understanding with an Aboriginal group as at 31 December 2007. Urban councils were more likely than rural councils to have a formal agreement in 2006-2007 (40% and 20% respectively). These findings are similar to 2004-2005.

PART SIX: PEOPLE FROM CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS

Multicultural Strategies/Plans

Table twenty-four: Number of councils that have adopted a Multicultural Strategy/Plan separate to the social/community plan

2004-2005			2006-2007		
	No. councils	%		No. councils	%
Urban (N=65)	22	34	Urban (N=63)	23	37
Rural (N=60)	4	7	Rural (N=59)	3	5
Total (N=125)	26	21	Total (N=122)	26	21

In 2006-2007, a total of 26 councils (21%) reported that they have adopted a Multicultural Strategy/Plan separate to the social/community plan. Urban councils were more likely than rural councils to report having a separate Multicultural Strategy/Plan in 2006-2007 (37% and 5% respectively). These findings are similar to 2004-2005.

Table twenty-five: Number of “whole of council” Strategies/Plans

2004-2005			2006-2007		
	No. councils	%		No. councils	%
Urban (N=22)	19	86	Urban (N=23)	21	91
Rural (N=4)	3	75	Rural (N=3)	2	67
Total (N=26)	22	85	Total (N=26)	23	88

In 2006-2007, of the 26 councils with separate Multicultural Strategies/Plans, 23 councils (88%) have a “whole of council” Strategy/Plan. Urban councils were more likely than rural councils to have a “whole of council” Strategy/Plan (91% and 67% respectively). These findings are similar to 2004-2005.

PART SEVEN: AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Table twenty-six: Number of councils that cover affordable housing in any of their strategies/plans

2004-2005			2006-2007		
	No. councils	%		No. councils	%
Urban (N=65)	44	68	Urban (N=63)	46	73
Rural (N=60)	24	40	Rural (N=59)	21	36
Total (N=125)	68	54	Total (N=122)	67	55

In 2006-2007, a total of 67 councils (55%) reported covering affordable housing in their strategies/plans. Urban councils were twice as likely as rural councils to cover affordable housing in their strategies/plans (73% and 36% respectively). These findings are similar to 2004-2005. This is not surprising given that affordable housing is more likely to be an issue in urban rather than rural areas.

Table twenty-seven: Number of councils that have an affordable housing project

2004-2005			2006-2007		
	No. councils	%		No. councils	%
Urban (N=65)	16	25	Urban (N=63)	17	27
Rural (N=60)	13	22	Rural (N=59)	9	15
Total (N=125)	29	23	Total (N=122)	26	21

In 2006-2007, a total of 26 councils (21%) reported having an affordable housing project. Again urban councils were almost twice as likely as rural councils to have affordable housing projects (27% and 15% respectively). These findings are similar to 2004-2005. Again, this is not surprising given that affordable housing is more likely to be an issue in urban rather than rural areas.