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RISK MATTERS



Lvl 3, 170 Railway Parade,
West Leederville WA 6007

(08) 9483 8888

admin@lgiswa.com.au

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CEO's Message



JAMES SHERIDAN

CEO LGIS

james.sheridan@lgiswa.com.au

The first quarter of 2023/24 has been a busy one for your Scheme; our member services team has been out on the road visiting members, and I've enjoyed the opportunity to continue to meet members and discuss the issues that matter to you.

As this update is being written our auditors are finalising the financial results for 2022/23 and they look promising, with a small surplus predicted. This is a positive result for the mutual Scheme which doesn't operate to make a profit, but rather to serve and protect the local government sector. The Annual Financial Report is due to be released in late October and will be available online and in hard copy to members.

Pleasingly all members chose to renew for 2023/24 confirming that a mutual approach remains the best option for long-term sustainable protection for the sector.

At the end of 2022/23 we bid farewell to two board members – Aaron Cook, CEO of the Shire of Gingin and independent Tony Evans, their contributions will be missed. We were also pleased to welcome two new board members – Ben Rose, CEO of the Shire of Donnybrook Balingup and independent director Kelly Hick.

The South West WorkCare Forum in Bunbury saw participation from over 60 local government leaders and professionals and explored relevant conversations over fitness for work and worker's compensation. We were also present at the WALGA Convention this year to show our commitment.

In this edition, our feature explores the lessons from some of our largest and most complex claims in the last five years. Claims expenditure is the key factor influencing member contribution costs - in 2022/23 LGIS received over

2,300 claims and paid out over \$43.8 million. There are lessons for all members from these major claims – not to say that they necessarily could've been avoided, but there are actions that could have been taken to reduce the severity of these losses (e.g. quantum, lost time and reputation).

We also look at the cyber pilot program results and dive into the benefits of our new Early Notification program.

Rolled-out in 2022, the cyber pilot program highlighted a number of deficiencies across the cyber control environment with most local governments rating less than one (1) on the Australian Signals Directorate (ASD) Essential 8 maturity scale.

The spotlight is also on injury management as we look at how proactive treatment can improve outcomes for claimants, employers and the Scheme. Launched on 1 July 2023, the Early Notification program is Scheme funded and empowers our members to support their employees and improve their health and wellbeing outcomes.

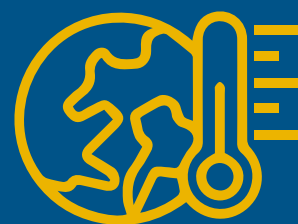
The results for the Great West Aussie Adventure are out and we have some amazing feedback from our members. Take a read of what our participating members have to say about the activity challenge.

Finally, our Ask an Expert column delves into important conversations around managing workers on prescribed medical cannabis, and how can aquatic facilities maintain regular testing of equipotential bonding (earthing).

I do hope you enjoy this edition, and if you have a question for our Ask an Expert column please send it through to me or our editorial team at pia.duxbury@lgiswa.com.au or patrika@lgiswa.com.au

As always, if you have any questions about the magazine, or if you'd like to discuss any matter regarding your membership, cover, claims, or risk management services with LGIS, please contact me directly on 9483 8886.

Natural disaster, safety failure and negligence – Lessons from big claims for all members



In 2022/23 LGIS received over 2,300 claims and paid out over \$43.8 million. It's a similar story most years with LGIS handling more than 2,000 claims across property, liability, workers' compensation, motor and volunteer bushfire fighter protection.

The vast majority of claims are small to mid-sized in cost, but most years see a small number of extraordinary claims. The incidents that lead to these major claims can occur for a variety of reasons – natural disasters, safety failure or negligence.

There are lessons for all members from these major claims – not to say that they necessarily could've been avoided, but there are actions that could have been taken to reduce the severity of these losses (e.g. quantum, lost time and reputation).

Local governments working together

At its heart LGIS is local governments working together to protect their organisations, people and communities. The majority of claims are paid directly out of members' contribution payments, which every year go into the 'pot' or 'pooled fund'.

Large cost claims which exceed the pooled fund limit are paid by our indemnity partners (reinsurers). This year we invested \$34.64 million (35% of contributions) to secure indemnity cover for the Scheme, ensuring that when disaster hits LGIS can respond quickly to support our members.

Take the most recent year, 2022/23 for example, LGIS collected \$99.5 million in contributions and incurred claims costs totalling \$56.43 million. Of that \$56.43 million, we recovered \$10.36 million from our indemnity partners. In other words, claims costs accounted for 56.7% of member contributions for 2022/23. Given the long-tail nature of worker's compensation and liability, claims costs may develop even more as the 2022/23 year matures.

The flow of contributions in and claim payments out is not a simple equation, and LGIS makes sure that the retained fund meets minimum capital requirements as well as the claims and reinsurance expenses. We also earn income from investments which supports part of the day-to-day operational costs to manage and deliver the Scheme.

It's an approach that has worked for over 25 years, making LGIS one of the longest running local government mutuals in Australia.

This mix of a pooled fund, under pinned by indemnity providers, works and allows LGIS to be nimble and responsive to our member needs.

Mutual benefits when mitigating risks

It's clear when looking at the relationship between contributions and claims paid, how all members benefit from consistent risk management across the entire sector. Consistent and effective risk management across the sector, reduces the number of incidents that cause claims and eases pressure on contributions.

LGIS is committed to working with our members to build capacity and capability to manage risks and drive down claims – protecting the Scheme, containing contribution costs, and ensuring the sustainable protection of the WA local government sector.

What's happening with sector claims?

The Scheme continues to experience expenditure pressure; particularly from the WorkCare and Property portfolios with poor results over the last three years.

WorkCare claims numbers are decreasing, but the average cost of claims has gone up to \$27,570, which is a 46% increase in the last five years. Over that time, lost time injury (LTI) days have also increased by 40%. Moreover, over 60% of claimants were aged over 50 in the last five years; many of these claims have arisen due to aggravation of pre-existing injuries or a reduction in physical capacity.

Psychological injuries, which are on average 45% more expensive per claim than musculoskeletal injuries, are also on the rise.

The Property program is also experiencing increases with the 10-year average cost per claim increasing by 15% in the 2022/23 period - faster than inflation.

The majority of LGIS Liability claims continue to be driven by damage and/or injury caused by trees and managed road networks. Since 2008, there has been a steady upwards trend.

Financial Year	Property	Liability	WorkCare
2018/19	592 claims costing \$6.5 million	1,233 claims costing \$4 million	920 claims costing \$19.7 million
2019/20	717 claims costing \$10.8 million	1,436 claims costing \$3.8 million	919 claims costing \$20.2 million
2020/21	544 claims costing \$21.2 million	1,296 claims costing \$3.8 million	888 claims costing \$20.1 million
2021/22	526 claims costing \$11.6 million	1,553 claims costing \$2.6 million	732 claims costing \$12.2 million
2022/23	526 claims costing \$10.6 million	1,479 claims costing \$1.3 million	723 claims costing \$3.9 million

We look at four claims that have impacted our members and what we can learn from them

Case study 1: Tropical cyclone Seroja; major asset loss with 17 members impacted

Tropical cyclone Seroja hit the WA coast in April 2021 as a Category 3 cyclone affecting many members. The cyclone brought damaging wind gusts of up to 170km/hr along with heavy rainfall. Our members across the Mid-West and Wheatbelt regions of the state reported widespread damage, destroyed homes, and power outages.

The Insurance Council of Australia declared TC Seroja an 'insurance catastrophe' with a total of 875 buildings damaged and a damage bill of over \$200 million.

Areas impacted by TC Seroja

Northampton, Perenjori, Mingenew, Morawa, Greater Geraldton, Three Springs, Mt Marshall, Bruce Rock, Carnarvon, Westonia, Carnamah, Merredin, Koorda, Mukinbudin, Nungarin, Dalwallinu and Chapman Valley

The pathway of TC Seroja across Western Australia



The damage

This was a rare event for people on the central west coast of WA and many properties in the affected area were not constructed to withstand Category 3 cyclone impact. Many of the damaged properties contained asbestos building material resulting in extensive contamination across much of the impacted area.

Significant damage was reported to buildings, roofing, fencing, vegetation, trees, landscape and infrastructures.

The buildings were not cyclone rated (in line with existing building codes) and were damaged beyond repair; the majority of buildings and assets were declared total losses in the most heavily impacted local government area, Northampton.

Common types of property damages caused due to cyclone:

- ▶ Roofs blown away due to failure of rusted fasteners, roof battens and other roof components.
- ▶ Structural damage to buildings caused by cyclone winds, failure of inadequately secured gutters, flashings, fascia and eaves, damage to building contents.
- ▶ Damage to fence, pools, patios, doors and windows blown open due to inadequate fixing to walls or inadequate locks and door sets.
- ▶ Collapse of unreinforced masonry walls.
- ▶ Property inundation and damage caused by storm tide.

LGIS immediately contacted the affected members and appointed an adjuster to guide and work together with the members. Consulting structural engineers were also engaged to examine the severely damaged properties to expedite assessment and repairs.

LGIS received a total number of 17 claims made under the Property Protection Policy and has paid \$6.8M to date to affected members.

LGIS immediate response to crisis

- ▶ Advance communication was sent to all members advising point of contact and reasonable precaution to be taken to minimise loss and safety.
- ▶ Adjuster was appointed immediately to guide members in response to damage, and mitigation of loss and assessment.
- ▶ Site visited by our senior management team to ensure clear communication and support from the various LGIS scheme offerings (e.g. EAP, OSH and Risk services).
- ▶ Financial assistance was provided to assist member in their initial restoring of the properties by way of interim payments.

What have we learnt?

- ▶ LGIS, adjusters and affected members need to have regular meetings to detail the extent of damage.
- ▶ Engage builders and other trades as soon as possible, and prioritise cost assessment for damage and make safe.
- ▶ Members need to make decisions on rebuilding or repair as early as possible – there needs to be clear communication of reinstatement strategy.
- ▶ Members should adequately resource the rebuild/ repair process and ensure that senior officers have appropriate decision making authority.
- ▶ Record keeping is vital - take photos, make an initial view on extent of loss, create a single source of truth for managing estimates (e.g. one loss spreadsheet and ensuring recovery costs are logged against a single cost centre).

Cyclone Seroja alone is the third largest claim event in the LGIS property fund's history.



Case study 2: Worker's impairment highlights the need for pre-employment assessments

An outside worker in his early 40s sustained a significant workplace injury to his lower back at a local government owned/operated facility while trying to assist a ratepayer who had attended the facility.

As a result, the worker underwent major back surgeries resulting in a permanent impairment and an inability to return to work and undertake his pre-injury or any alternative role.

LGIS findings

Once the claim was lodged LGIS investigated the situation; it was found that the worker had a pre-existing medical history.

The worker also had psychological issues resulting from relationship challenges and substance abuse. Although these issues were present prior to the work accident, they were heightened during the claim journey.

It should be noted that workers' compensation is a no fault system, and employer perception of liability plays no part in the interpretation of the *'Workers' Compensation Act (WA)*.

A pre-employment medical was not done prior to the worker's employment. A pre-employment medical can be a useful tool in assessing a worker's fitness for work before starting a new role.

LGIS discovered there was only limited information gathering by the employer at the time of injury, including not taking photographs of the equipment involved, which belonged to a third party. This was a critical piece of evidence and without it, lessened the employer's ability to defend the matter.

At the date of settlement, this evidence was not available nor was the third party willing to cooperate in the investigation or participate in any legal proceedings.

Although some records were kept by the employer, there was a gap in the record keeping process and communication to workers. In this instance, there was lack of written instructions and policies visible to both workers and ratepayers where the incident occurred.

Outcome

The worker exhausted his full entitlement to weekly compensation and underwent two invasive surgical procedures. Those procedures were not completely successful and caused the worker physical complications which also impacted his pre-existing psychological issues and consequently, his mental wellbeing.

The worker suffered a whole person impairment sufficient to make a common law claim for damages against his employer.

The claim was successfully resolved at a pre-trial conference in the District Court of WA.

What have we learnt?

- ▶ Workers' compensation is a 'no fault' system and an employer takes a worker as they find them – no blame approach.
- ▶ Pre-employment medicals are a useful tool to manage identified risks so it is best to utilise them during the hiring process (especially for a physically intensive job role).
- ▶ Policies and procedures should be documented and records maintained confirming they are understood by all workers (and ratepayers, if applicable).
- ▶ Signage should be clearly visible on sites where patronage and operation of a facility accessible to the public may place ratepayers and/or workers at risk.

- ▶ Training attendance registers should be maintained. But where possible, the content of training courses should be kept as they offer an insight into what exactly took place at the training course. In this case, LGIS had provided some in-house training to the employer's outside workforce and there were records of the presentation slides that were used and photographs of the trainer demonstrating certain techniques to the audience. This was a valuable evidence.
- ▶ All evidence should be gathered as soon as practicable following a workplace incident, particularly where a significant injury has occurred and medical assistance is required. This includes the evidence of witnesses and the production of relevant documents. Given that the length of time between a work accident occurring and a claim being finalised can be years rather than months, individual memories will fade and people can leave the organisation and move up. But evidence that has been documented in writing does not fade with time and memories can be refreshed from documentary evidence if that evidence has been kept in a place or format where it can easily be retrieved.
- ▶ The interaction between a worker suffering serious physical injury and the impact of that injury on a worker's mental wellbeing should not be underestimated. Maintaining contact and supporting a worker during the claim process can have benefits.



Case study 3: Lack of record keeping impeded the City's defence

A member engaged a contractor to conduct maintenance work on their premises. The lighting at the local government property where the contractor was working was defective or poorly designed such that after a set time, the lights would automatically turn off. Whilst the contractor was carrying out their work, the lights turned off and they fell leading to a significant injury.

As the entity in control of the premises, the City owed a 'duty of care' to the contractor to ensure they were not exposed to unreasonable risks. In this situation, the defective lighting design/system was deemed to be an unreasonable risk.

LGIS findings

During the investigation, we found that the lighting was originally designed by another contractor and not by the member themselves. Unfortunately, the local government did not retain any records of the contractor involved and therefore, we had no ability to join them as a party or bring them into the court proceedings and assign all or if not part of the liability to them.

Outcome

As a result of the defective lighting design/system on the member's premises, the contractor suffered an injury and the member was liable to pay damages to the injured contractor. LGIS negotiated a settlement with the contractor involved.

Lessons from the case

This matter highlights the importance of ensuring proper records are created and retained regarding all work performed by members and any agreements with third party contractors for work to be done on its behalf. As the member failed to do this in this matter, it could not attribute or share liability for the incident and, therefore, was exposed to 100% of the liability for the contractor's injuries and loss.



Case study 4: Member suffers economic loss – inflationary pressure

A third-party truck failed to give way and pulled out in front of a member's waste truck causing damage to the vehicle. The truck was assessed and declared as a total economic loss with a pre-accident value of approximately \$200,000. The member had declared an asset value of \$132,000 for the truck which, given the pre-accident value, meant the truck was significantly undervalued. Motor policies will only pay the lesser of either the pre-accident value or the declared value.

Ensuring motor vehicles are appropriately valued and declared is essential to ensure there is no 'gap' between what the motor policy will pay at the cost of replacing the damaged vehicle on a like for like basis (market value).

Local governments should take note of inflationary pressures when valuing their property and motor assets. This is an important step to reduce the loss to our member if and when disaster strikes, and ensures that your protection will be adequate to appropriately respond.

LGIS findings

Ensuring all fleet vehicles, especially large specialists vehicles like waste trucks, are appropriately valued and declared is critical to ensure the motor policy will enable the member to replace the vehicle on a like for like basis with no 'gap'. The member hired a replacement waste truck at substantial cost, but it is likely this will be recovered from the at-fault party.

Waste trucks provide a critical service to the community and the loss of a single asset can have large impacts to members and their service ability.

Through recovery efforts and in-depth assessing reviews, LGIS assisted the member with their UIL (uninsured loss – the 'gap' between the motor vehicle coverage and the costs of replacing the vehicle on a like for like basis) and the hire costs (up the motor vehicle policy limit of \$5,000).

Outcome

The member was happy with the settlement but this incident has alerted the member to review all of their asset declarations and valuations on a regular basis.

Lessons from the case

Inflation and economic conditions continue to deteriorate and local governments should carefully consider if leaving a contingency is valuable vs the potential impact of a loss.

For Q2 this year, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) was recorded at 5.6%, which is still above the Reserve Bank of Australia's (RBA) target range of 2 to 3 %. Construction and equipment costs are still very high; making it essential for local governments to consider asset re-evaluation.

This is a good reminder to members to review their declared asset values across the board.

Our team across the varied portfolios – WorkCare, Liability, Property, Bushfire Volunteer, and Motor protection provide members with more than just claims management. Claims consultants will attend mediations, court, provide coronial inquest support, share lessons learned across WA local government and provide advice to local government staff.

For more information LGIS services, please get in touch with your account manager. ▾



Local government cyber vulnerabilities exposed in pilot program

Phase one results of the LGIS cyber pilot program are out and look concerning; phase two, starting in mid-2023, will develop resources to support the entire sector in building capacity and capability to address cyber vulnerabilities.

Rolled-out in 2022, phase one of the pilot supported participating members to better understand their exposure to cybercrime and develop targeted plans to address them. It also provided LGIS with a representative sample to better understand the sector's cyber risk position.

The pilot program highlighted a number of deficiencies across the cyber control environment with most local governments rating less than one (1) on the Australian Signals Directorate (ASD) Essential 8 maturity scale.

Approach for phase one

Conduct cyber security assessment against the Essential 8 requirements for the participating pilot group of LGIS members and submit a detailed report including the findings and maturity ratings of each local government. The ASD Essential 8 guide was introduced as part of the federal government's cyber security policy, released in October 2021.

Approach	Objectives	Activities	Outcomes
Information gathering	Understand current situation	Request for information and scheduling meeting with relevant parties	General situation understanding
Documentation review	Assess current situation	Document analysis and configuration review	Further situation understanding
Analysis and assessment	Assess current situation and identify gaps	Interviews, classify and rate results	In-depth situation understanding and gaps
Reporting and closure	Remediate risks	Draft recommendations	Recommendations action plan

The findings of this assessment were consistent with successive Office of the Auditor General (OAG) reports. All four local government reports starting 2019 found that the sector's cyber security readiness is inadequate. The most recent OAG report 'Information Systems Audit – Local Government 2021-22' released this year, audited 53 local government entities and found 324 control weaknesses (of which 69% (225) of these weaknesses were unresolved issues from the prior year).

The 2022 JLT Public Sector Risk Report also highlighted cyber security among the top five risks for the sector both nationally and in WA.

The pilot program aimed to work out a baseline for the sector's cyber control environment. The members selected were based on a range of factors such as size and internal cyber resources, service provider dependency, and regional challenges.

Implementation of controls by pilot participants

Domain/controls	Strong	Moderate	Poor
Multi-factor authentication	63%	6%	31%
Restrict administrator privileges	6%	6%	88%
Regular backups	44%	19%	37%
User application hardening	-	12%	88%
Patch operating systems	19%	6%	75%
Patch applications	6%	-	94%
Configure Microsoft Office macro settings	-	19%	81%
Application control	31%	12%	57%

Focus areas to improve cyber security; pilot findings

Phase one found five key areas across participants which had poor control implementation. Members are encouraged to review these areas in their own practices to decrease cyber vulnerabilities.

Patch operating systems and patch applications

Implementing patch management security controls is of paramount importance to safeguard all organisations' data and confidential information from threats like ransomware and malware. This control is considered one of the top priorities within the ASD Essential 8 cyber security strategies. It plays a pivotal role in reducing the member's vulnerability to potential security breaches.

By ensuring the timely application of security patches to both operating systems and applications, each member may create a robust defence mechanism against known vulnerabilities. This proactive approach is especially critical for incident response as it can significantly mitigate the impact of cyber incidents.

In the unfortunate event of a security breach, having up-to-date patches can mean the difference between a minor disruption and a major data breach. Therefore, local governments should place a high priority on consistently patching their operating systems and applications to enhance their incident response capabilities and overall cyber resilience.





Restrict administrator privileges

Implementing strict controls to restrict administrator privileges is an integral security measure for ASD Essential 8. Unlike standard users who have limited control over their device's system, administrator accounts have full access and the ability to make system-wide changes.

When these controls fail or are inadequately enforced, they create vulnerabilities that can be exploited by both internal and external threats. The consequences of such control failures can range from the loss of sensitive personal information to significant reputational damage. Therefore, it is imperative for each local government to establish and rigorously maintain effective controls that limit the extent of administrator privileges. This not only enhances overall security but also mitigates the risk of insider and outsider attacks.

The assessment highlights the critical importance of establishing robust security controls within the IT infrastructure. A key aspect of this process involves determining privileged access management rules and diligently applying these rules while considering the principles of segregation of duties, even for accounts with privileged access.

It is imperative to evaluate privileged accounts within the context of both privileged and unprivileged environments. Notably, many of these essential controls have not been implemented in unprivileged operating environments. This underscores the need for comprehensive security measures to be extended to all aspects of an IT structure, ensuring a more holistic and effective security posture.

User application hardening

Application hardening (controls that block web browser access) reduces security risk by eliminating potential attack vectors and condensing the system's attack surface.

User application hardening, a crucial component of cybersecurity, involves implementing controls that effectively block web browser access. This practice plays a pivotal role in reducing security risks by eliminating potential attack vectors and minimising the system's attack surface. By meticulously configuring and fortifying user applications, each local government can significantly enhance their resilience against cyber threats.

This approach not only strengthens security but also safeguards critical systems and sensitive data from unauthorised access and potential breaches. The critical aspect is to review and test the implemented rules to ensure their effectiveness and functionality.

Configure Microsoft Office macros

Configuring Microsoft Office macros is another crucial step in bolstering cybersecurity, aligning with the ASD Essential 8 requirement. It acts as a robust defence against the proliferation of unauthorised programs that attempt to construct 'self-replicating' code capable of compromising end-user systems. By meticulously configuring Office macros, local governments fortify their defence mechanisms against a prevalent cyber threat.

It is imperative to ensure that only authorised and secure macros can execute within the environment, reducing the risk of malicious code execution. To achieve this, members can implement stringent policies and controls. These may include whitelisting trusted macros, restricting the execution of macros to digitally signed sources, and enforcing strict validation processes. By doing so, they establish a comprehensive barrier against malicious code injection, bolstering the security of their systems and data. This approach aligns with the ASD Essential 8 requirement and strengthens the overall cybersecurity posture.

Based on the assessments, it is clear that among the ASD Essential 8 topics, configuration macro settings demonstrate the lowest level of maturity. This means that when compared to other areas, this aspect is often overlooked and falls behind in terms of implementation across most local governments.

The fact that this control is often overlooked might be because of the rules concerning macro settings are quite detailed, and these detailed rules are not applied in default configuration settings. This emphasises the need to give greater consideration to macro settings, especially when dealing with complex legacy systems that could hinder control implementations. It stresses the importance of collectively assessing security rules for each system and collaborating with all relevant stakeholders throughout the organisation to establish an effective cybersecurity strategy.

Therefore, it is crucial for each member to acknowledge the significance of prioritisation and diligence in implementing these rules. In simpler terms, giving due attention and effort to this control is vital for overall cybersecurity.



Application control

Application control encompasses the formulation and enforcement of policies to curtail unauthorised applications, effectively shrinking the attack surface and mitigating malware risks. Moreover, application control reduces the likelihood of human errors, bolsters incident response capabilities by swiftly containing threats, and offers finely tuned controls tailored to specific security needs. Notably, it ensures compliance with regulatory mandates while serving as a foundational pillar of a robust cybersecurity strategy. In essence, robust application control measures are indispensable for fortifying defences against cyberattacks and upholding the integrity of IT environments. Therefore, it is imperative that members institute controls that distinctly identify, centrally manage, log, and shield application controls on workstations and servers, safeguarding them against unauthorised alterations.



Phase 2 – developing a ‘How to’ guide to improve your cyber controls

Phase two of the pilot which will develop a cyber guide to assist members in implementing the ASD Essential 8 control environment. During the second phase, extensive guidelines will be developed to explain ASD Essential 8 requirements and the implementation steps to achieve compliance with these requirements to the greatest extent possible.

Furthermore, the first part of the project shows that exception management may have been implemented for various ASD Essential 8 domains. These guidelines will also encompass instructions on how to effectively manage these pre-existing exceptions within the IT infrastructure.

To have a chat about your cyber risk practices and how to manage them, please get in touch with your LGIS account manager. [▼](#)





The Great West Aussie Adventure

We recently concluded our sector-wide health initiative - the Great West Aussie Adventure as part of the LGIS' health and wellbeing program.

The eight-week challenge, which concluded on 10 September 2023, saw participation from 59 members and over 800 participants. From walking, running, cycling, weight training and team sports, participants took part in various forms of physical activity to improve their day-to-day fitness and covered a total combined distance of 302, 976kms.

Fitness for work is an ongoing challenge for many local governments as they manage an ageing workforce with increasing chronic issues such as obesity, heart disease, and mental illness. This activity challenge was designed to encourage behavioural change to improve overall wellbeing.

We partnered with one of our preferred wellbeing providers, Health by Design, to provide all our members and their staff access to this fun and interactive physical activity challenge.

List of top 5 rankers

Team	Progress (total avg)
Shire of Mount Marshall	905.60 km
Shire of Augusta-Margaret River (AMR)	844.80 km
City of Nedlands	816.30 km
Mindarie Regional Council (MRC)	677.40 km
Shire of Narrogin	628.70 km

Congratulations to the team at Shire of Mount Marshall for winning the challenge, kudos to your teamwork and dedication!

Here is what some of our participating members had to say about our activity challenge.

Shire of Augusta-Margaret River

“The great thing about this challenge is it takes any kind of physical activity we do throughout the day and lets us apply it to our travels/kms. Everyone on the team is very active in different ways, from doing swimming or running or gym workouts so we can be a great team while still being individuals and doing the kind of exercise we love and are good at.”

“But it has encouraged us to keep focused on what we are doing and given extra motivation to keep moving even on those days when you don’t always feel like it but feel better for it after you’re done.”

City of Nedlands

“My contribution has been consistently focused on cycling. I commute to work daily and cycle in my free time. The commute to work is accessible and safe for riders of all abilities. I use the bike path along the train line and detour through Karrakatta to reach Smyth Road. The City’s end of trip facilities are great, however there is an opportunity for enclosed/locked bike storage should more employees choose this method of travel.”

“For me, I attend group fitness classes, the gym and swimming. The challenge has improved my wellbeing awareness.” - Workplace Health and Safety Officer at City of Nedlands

Overall, most staff members are using this opportunity to commute to work via active transport. The city has great facilities to support that, change rooms, showers and iron. We have acquired 12 bike racks and will place them over the 5 main departments (admin, depot, libraries, arts centre, and aged and childcare facilities. This will support staff that wish to cycle to work.” – City of Nedlands



“The team at the Shire of Mt Marshall are delighted to take home the win for the Great West Aussie Adventure. With all staff members invited to participate, we saw a range of employees sign up for the challenge. From members of our administration team right through to our caravan park caretaker and Shire librarian. It was a lot of fun to be involved in a WA Local Government collaboration, while moving our bodies and having fun along the way. We remained motivated by keeping each other accountable for our daily activities. Our caravan park caretaker, Meldy took on the captain role and continued to encourage the team to keep moving and to remember to log our activities.”
- Shire of Mount Marshall



City of Gosnells

This what the individual staff at the City said about the challenge –

“I am doing this because I am recovering from cancer treatment and, after spending almost 17 months stuck in the house, I get outside as much as I can. I enjoy hiking, walking and swimming (mainly in the ocean).”


“I am participating in the challenge since it is an easy and flexible way to get involved in wellness initiatives offered by the City of Gosnells. There’s no set time or location which makes this easier than a lot of other sessions – my work hours fall outside office hours so I often can’t attend.”

“I am adding my regular daily exercise to the challenge portal. The main activity I’ve got listed is walking. I add a small amount of time to cover my physical activity during work hours, but most is my evening gym sessions.”

“This is an additional motivator to stay active during the winter months when it is a bit harder to drag myself out of the house.”

“I love participating in challenges as they motivate me to move more”

“These challenges bring people together and are great for team building, in addition to the health benefits they offer.”

For more information on LGIS health and wellbeing strategies, please get in touch with our WorkCare services manager, James Larkin at health@lgiswa.com.au 



The City of Gosnells enjoys providing staff health and wellbeing-related challenges and recently completed one which involved more than 70 staff members. The City provides staff a range of other wellness activities including lunch time wellness walks, free fitness sessions (Tuesday afternoon from 5:15pm), free yoga sessions (lunch time yoga and meditation) and recent health information workshops (breast cancer, prostate, heart health, and stroke). The City is committed to supporting staff health and wellbeing”
– Ian Cowie, CEO for City of Gosnells



Challenge participants from the City of Gosnells

Early notification program: LGIS' new service to manage injuries

If workers have an injury, whether caused at home or at work, LGIS can provide early support to get better outcomes and avoid complications.

Our new 'Early Notification' program launched on 1 July 2023 supports our members and their workforce with access to early treatment and return to work support for employees who may have injuries inside or outside of work.

The Scheme funded program empowers our members to support their employees and improve their health and wellbeing outcomes.

When managing employees there are some situations that require additional support. Incidents that occur within or outside of the workplace may become workers' compensation claims if not handled at the right time. Research suggests that the earlier we can intervene with proactive management, the better the outcome for both the organisation and employee.

What does the Early Notification Program provide?

Our expert team will help identify the most appropriate services to manage the situation, so that we achieve the best outcomes for your employees (and bushfire volunteers).

The following Scheme funded services are available to all members:

▶ **Physical injuries – aches or pains**

Qualified physiotherapists provide immediate advice and treatment on any minor musculoskeletal conditions. Workers can have up to three sessions with a physiotherapist as required. The program aims to provide early advice to a worker with ongoing aches, pain or discomfort before a more significant injury occurs.

▶ **Return to work support**

Need help to develop a return-to-work program? This provides quick, discrete access to a senior workplace rehabilitation provider, who will develop a full staged return to work program for you and your employee. It is designed to assist our members feel confident in managing an employee's return to work and know how to progress them step by step.

▶ **Conflict resolution**

We understand that the workplace can be difficult to navigate when there are communication breakdowns, conflict in the workplace or evolving organisational changes. This service provides access to experienced mediators and counsellors to help problem solve relationship breakdown with practical solutions and adjustment counselling.

▶ **Bushfire volunteers**

Volunteer bushfire fighters (VBF) may face extreme situations or witness challenging situations that can be traumatising. This service provides VBFs with access to counsellors and clinical psychologists that are discrete and personalised.

Not sure about your situation or services needed? Contact us at health@lgiswa.com.au, and we will work with you to navigate the situation and develop practical solutions. ▼



Injury management team's new pathway results in speedy recovery post injury

A fresh, new approach to handling claims is already delivering benefits to claimants, members and saving money.

The new injury management pathway went live on 1 July 2023 and has changed the way that LGIS handles new and emerging workers' compensation claims with early notification support services.

Our injury management team are all allied health professionals and draw on clinical knowledge and skills to work in collaboration with trusted providers. The team identifies high risk claimants and intervenes to support better recovery and return to work outcomes.

Services include early intervention access to specialised physiotherapists, and latest technology to reach our rural remote clients who have limited access to therapy, support with development of return-to-work plans, access to psychologists, and support for general practitioners by psychiatrist on how to best manage mental health claims.

Case Study: Worker resumes full time work hours with early notification

A female worker in her 50s slipped on a wet ramp and fell on her outstretched left hand in June 2022. She suffered a shoulder injury and had surgery.

She complained of persistent pain and limited functional improvement in terms of her work even after surgery.

LGIS refers worker to specialists

The workplace rehabilitation provider at the City flagged the worker's lack of improvement to LGIS' injury management advisor (IMA) this year following the surgery.

Our IMA assessed the situation, liaised with the treating physiotherapist, and identified that the worker was presenting with key pain makers post-surgery that could result in the development of chronic pain syndrome. Our IMA arranged a referral for a specialist physiotherapist review after gaining consent from the worker.

The specialist physiotherapist undertook a comprehensive assessment, including reviewing the workers medical information, addressing her concerns, and formulating a treatment plan to resolve the identified issues.

The outcome

After a six-week treatment, the worker went for a follow-up review and found improvement in her condition.



After seeing him (the specialist physiotherapist) and talking through my pain with him, I suddenly started shooting goals. I was referred to see him as I had a shoulder injury that even after surgery was agonising. He understood my hypersensitivity and the shielding that I was doing unconsciously. He helped me to an extent that after my six week review I got a gold star. Today my claim was finalised.” – Injured worker



The result of the specialist physiotherapist referral was the finalisation of a complex claim.

Specialist physiotherapists are highly trained and experienced physiotherapists who are recognised as being at the top of their field. They are able to break down not just the physical, but also the psychosocial contributors of pain and injury often leading to far superior results than just treating the physical injury alone. They work collaboratively with treating providers and provide expert opinions on treatment and rehabilitation.

Lessons learned

- ▶ Having a collaborative relationship with our members and providers enables LGIS to work faster and smarter to ensure workers are provided with the best support possible to optimise their recovery.
- ▶ Due to the rehabilitation provider flagging this worker's high pain level, the IMA was able to utilise their clinical skills to liaise with treating providers and identify the need for a specialist physiotherapist review.
- ▶ Without the specialist physiotherapist's intervention, the claim could have remained open for another 6 - 12 months, if not longer, which would have negatively impacted both the worker and member.
- ▶ It is important to note here that post surgery, the worker used to work four hours a day for four days a week. Once the physiotherapy intervention was successful, she returned to normal full-time hours.

Case Study: Surgery avoided with specialised support plan

A worker from a metropolitan member sustained a left knee injury causing meniscal tearing, a condition in which forceful twisting causes certain tissue in the knee to tear. The general practitioner (GP) referred the worker for an immediate imaging and surgical review. The claim was lodged with LGIS.

LGIS injury management intervention: Initial triage

All new claims are triaged by the IMA team within the first 1- 2 weeks of a claim being lodged with LGIS. Upon review, the IMA identified that this worker would be a good candidate for the recovery options review (ROR) by a specialist physio service. This is an early intervention physiotherapy service to support setting a worker up for success when they have injuries and address any negative perceptions or beliefs from a worker about their injury and recovery.

LGIS' IMA initiated contact with the worker and engaged him with the ROR prior to his appointment with a surgeon. The worker told the IMA that prior to the ROR sessions he experienced numbness and pain in his knee. After the review, he reported feeling better about his knee and his pain had improved. He advised that the ROR physiotherapist took the time to listen to him, answered his questions about his knee and provided treatment that resolved the numbness he was experiencing.

Following the consultation with the ROR, the worker was reviewed by his treating surgeon who encouraged him to continue with **conservative treatment** with the ROR team to see how he goes.

Conservative treatment – It is a treatment that supports recovery without surgical intervention.

After a six-week physio treatment, the worker had a ROR follow up, where his lower extremity functional scale improved from 45% to 97.5%. The lower extremity functional scale (LEFS) measures a patient's initial function, ongoing progress, and outcome for a wide range of musculoskeletal conditions.

The worker is now completing a self-managed exercise program and has been upgraded to his pre-injury duties and is nearing a final medical certificate being issued.

Lessons learned

- ▶ Not all injuries require surgery, and most can be managed conservatively. By providing specialised services at the start of the claim, this worker avoided surgery (estimated costing of \$10 000- \$15 000), which would have resulted in six weeks off work, a graduated return to work over 6- 12 weeks once provided with a capacity and intensive physiotherapy and exercise rehabilitation (estimated cost of \$4000 - \$8000).
- ▶ Early interventions on claims are not just about saving money for our members, but also improving the claims experience for the worker. In this case, this worker reported feeling well supported and decided to not undergo surgery as he felt he was recovering better with physiotherapy support.

LGIS new injury management early intervention protocols, designed to identify medium to high risk claims and apply appropriate services, are already supporting members with better claims outcomes.

For more information on the early intervention services provided by the LGIS injury management team, please email your queries at imconsultant@lgiswa.com.au





LGIS welcomes two new Board members

Kelly Hick and Ben Rose have joined the LGIS Board of Directors as independent and member representatives respectively.

WALGA State Council appoints the LGIS Board to provide strategic direction and governance for your local government mutual indemnity scheme, LGISWA. WALGA recognises the broad skill sets and understanding required to successfully lead the scheme and appoints three independent and four local government directors.

Introducing our new directors

Kelly Hick, independent

Kelly joined the LGIS Board of Directors in April 2023 and has over 25 years of experience across professional services, local government, member-based organisations, the private and public health sector, and higher education. A former practising lawyer and allied health professional, Kelly has qualifications in training and assessment, and a Diploma of Local Government (Elected Member).

Based in the South West, she runs a consulting practice, which provides a range of services in governance, strategy, facilitation and project management.

Ben Rose, member representative

Starting in July this year Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup, CEO Ben Rose represents non-metropolitan officers. He has over 15 years' experience in WA metropolitan and regional local governments. He has also served in executive professional roles across state government, private sector and UK local government.

Ben has held a number of board and committee positions, including currently being on the Board for Advocacy WA and the Chairperson for St Mary's Primary School Donnybrook. He was previously the Chairperson for the Bunbury Geographe Group of Councils from 2016-2019 and the Bunbury Geographe Tourism Partnership from 2017-2020.

Ben was a Board member for Local Government Professionals WA from 2016-2019 and a Committee Member for the Donnybrook-Balingup Chamber of Commerce from 2016-2017.

Ben and Kelly join current directors: Peter Forbes (Board Chairman), Cr Karen Chappel JP AM, Nick Sloan, Mary Woodford, The Hon Cr Paul Omodei, John Pearson, and Cr Paul Kelly.

For more information on our Board members, please visit the LGIS website lgiswa.com.au under About us < Your Board members. ▾



LGIS' New resource: Guide to contract risks

Contracts are an essential part of local government operations and come in varying forms of complexity and type, from the construction of a major asset or supply of stationery, contracts are part of day-to-day operations. Contracts can create unexpected risks to members if they're not managed well.

This is why we've developed the 'Guide on contract risks' to help local governments better understand the key mechanisms and common approaches to allocating risk in contracts. It highlights some of the crucial features of a contract and the important clauses that often crop up whenever the parties to a contract discuss risk.

A contract is the main tool to regulate the relationship between a local government and their service providers, suppliers or contractors.

The guide provides examples of contractual risks that members should be aware of during the contract lifecycle process. It explains the relationship between contractually assumed liability and general liability risks which exist irrespective of a contract.

You can view the guide on the LGIS website lgisw.com.au under Risk management\Liability risk management.

Why is it important to understand contract risk?

Every contract has an element of risk. It can be related to performance, finance, reputation or legal - in the sense that it can create a liability. Managing risk in a contract is always easier when it is transparent, clearly understood and acceptable to the parties involved. It is always better to enter into a contract with eyes wide open; understanding when, how and where you have assumed, shared or transferred liability risk is fundamental to effective management of the contract.

The starting point for any assessment is the risk associated with the performance of the contract. If a risk assessment is not undertaken, it will be more difficult for the local government member to make informed decisions on whether to accept some risks or seek to reduce, remove, share or transfer those risks. Carrying out a robust risk assessment in advance of agreeing a contract will significantly help your local government to minimise any potential liabilities associated with the risks that may be identified.

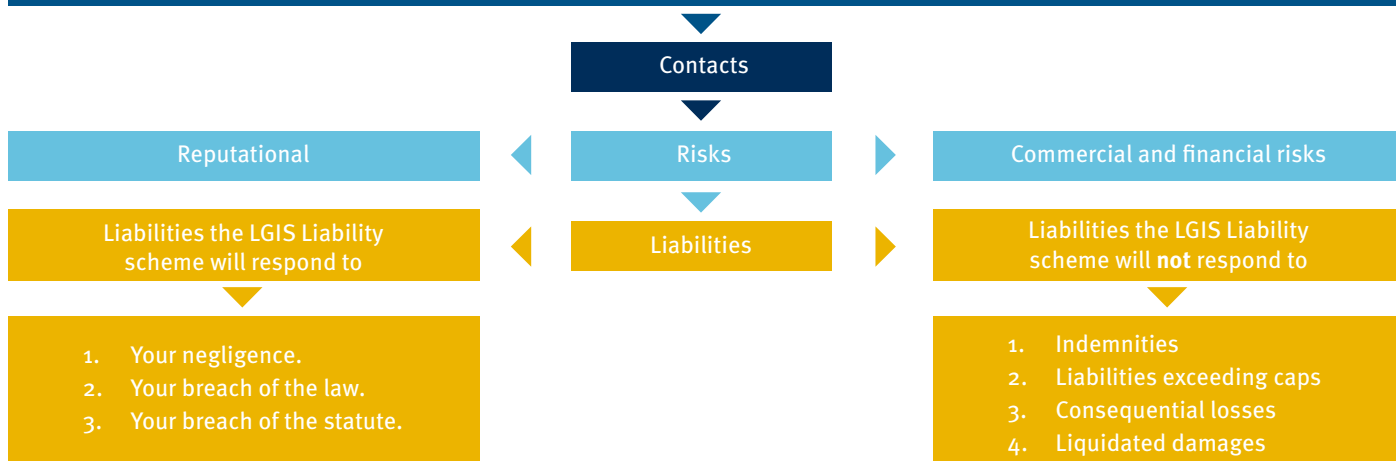
Risk clause checklist, 10 points to note:

1. Consider whether your local government is the 'principal' and therefore responsible for setting the terms and conditions of contract.
2. If the local government is not 'principal', but is subject to terms and conditions set by another party (e.g. as lessee in a lease), assess whether these terms and conditions are acceptable.
3. If the contract is a template contract (e.g. WALGA contract, Australian Standards) and the contractor has proposed variations, consider whether these variations are acceptable.
4. Consider the insurance requirements for both parties and check whether they are relevant and appropriate.
5. Consider whether the contract excludes any liability risks and whether the exclusions are appropriate and acceptable.
6. Consider the effect and appropriateness of any caps on liability. Remember if you cap liability, you will not be able to recover losses in excess of the cap.
7. Consider the effect of any indemnities; small changes in wording can make a big difference.
8. Consider the definition of consequential loss; is there anything that you feel should not fall within that definition.
9. If the local government is 'principal' and the contract refers to excluding proportionate liability; be alert to any changes to this clause proposed by the contractor.
10. Make sure that you document the basis of liquidated damages calculations so that it is clear how you have calculated the losses, should a dispute arise as to whether they are a penalty.

LGIS can assist members to understand the implication of the risks identified in the context of a particular contract. Specifically, where risks have the potential to create a liability for the member, LGIS can offer contract risk advice on appropriate measures and options to remove, reduce, transfer, share or retain the liability risk. We can advise on the insurance, indemnities and limitation of liability clauses.

To get a copy of the guide please visit lgisw.com.au/pages/public/LiabilityRiskManagement and to discuss assistance that can be provided, please contact the LGIS risk team. ▼

Pre-contractual risk assessment is fundamental to assessing and managing contract risk
(See as iso 31000: 2018 risk management - guidelines)



ASK AN EXPERT



EMMA HORSEFIELD

LGIS People Risk Manager

Emma leads and is responsible for the management of the People Risk Program at LGIS. This includes setting the direction of the program in response to member, sector and industry trends. Emma's extensive industry experience and knowledge covers the development and implementation of workplace health and safety (WHS) initiatives aimed at improving safety behaviours and reducing workplace injuries.

“ How to manage workers on prescribed medical cannabis? ”



Medicinal cannabis is a therapy that has generated increased national attention over the past two years.

The use and acceptance of medicinal cannabis continues to evolve, as shown by the growing number of states now permitting its use for specific medical conditions. Most medicinal cannabis formulations are legal to use in Australia, but they are still classified as ‘unapproved therapeutic goods’, which means they have not been assessed by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) for safety, quality or effectiveness and are not included on the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods (ARTG).

Medicinal cannabis and its health implications

Medicinal cannabis is a prescribed medication that is derived from the cannabis plant and is used most often for the treatment of chronic pain (for lower back, neck or neuropathic), anxiety, epilepsy and insomnia.

Medicinal cannabis differs from recreational cannabis (marijuana) as medicinal cannabis is developed to meet defined criteria and control parameters. Whereas marijuana is classed as an illegal drug where the active ingredients and other impurities are unknown.

Medicinal cannabis is usually taken by inhalation (smoking) or by oral ingestion by oils or capsules. Depending on the way it is taken, it will affect the time of onset of the medication and the duration of the medication within the body.

There are two primary compounds within medicinal cannabis – tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and cannabidiol (CBD), with THC compound having the potential to impair neurocognitive function. There are multiple factors that impact the level of impairment including the frequency, dosage, and the time of the day taken. These factors can result in the worker being in a higher risk when undertaking driving and safety-sensitive activities such as high-risk work.

There are also other known side-effects from medicinal cannabis treatment (both CBD and THC) that include fatigue and sedation, vertigo, nausea and vomiting, fever, decreased or increased appetite, dry mouth, and diarrhoea. THC (and products high in THC) have also been associated with convulsions, feeling high or feeling dissatisfied, depression, confusion, hallucinations, paranoid delusions, psychosis, and cognitive distortion (having thoughts that are not true).

Legal obligations for both workers and local governments

Using medicinal cannabis that has been prescribed by a medical professional is not illegal in WA, however it is an offence under the Road Traffic Act (WA) to be driving a vehicle with any level of THC in your system.

Road Traffic Act (WA):

- ▶ Offence: section 63(1)(b) driving under influence of drugs incapable of proper control of vehicle
- ▶ Offence section 64AB: driving while impaired by drugs
- ▶ Misuse of Drugs Act (WA): cannabis “illicit drug”
- ▶ Road Traffic Drug Driving Reg 2007 (WA) – Reg 3: driving with prescribed “illicit drug”.

If an employee (or any person authorised to operate a vehicle/plant) caused an accident and if they were impaired by the medicinal cannabis then the Motor Protection Policy exclusion would be triggered and would not cover the employee’s (and local government’s) liability – in other words, they should not be driving if they are using medicinal cannabis and have THC in their system.

In addition to the *Road Traffic Act*, local governments and workers have a legal obligation under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2020* in regards to maintaining a safe workplace.



Workers have a duty under the WHS Act 2020 to:

- ▶ Take reasonable care for the worker’s own health and safety.
- ▶ Take reasonable care that the worker’s acts or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of other persons.
- ▶ Comply, so far as the worker is reasonably able, with any reasonable instruction that is given by the person conducting the business.
- ▶ Cooperate with any reasonable policy or procedure of the person conducting the business or undertaking relating to health or safety at the workplace.

This duty includes reporting to the local government (PCBU) any medication that may have an increased safety risk to the worker or others as a result of any impairment from taking the medication.

Local governments have a duty of care, so far as is reasonably practicable, under the WHS Act 2020:

- ▶ Must ensure the health and safety of workers while the workers are at work.
- ▶ Must ensure the health and safety of other persons is not put at risk from work carried out.
- ▶ Must ensure the provision and maintenance of a work environment without risks to health and safety and the provision and maintenance of safe systems of work.

To meet these legislative duties, when a worker declares that they are using prescribed medicinal cannabis, the local government will need to consider potential safety risks associated with the usage of the medication, particularly in regards to driving/operating plant and carrying out any high risk work activity.

Step-by-step on how to manage workers on prescribed medication

1. Risk assessment

Local governments should undertake a formal risk assessment based on the individual circumstances of the worker.

The risk assessment should consider:

- ▶ Identification of work activities that may increase safety risks like operating local government vehicles or mobile plant, carrying out high risk work activities or working alone.
- ▶ Consideration of the frequency and duration of work that may increase safety risks and if reasonable adjustments to these duties can be made, or identification of alternate duties. This should be done in consultation with the worker.
- ▶ Local governments must also consider not subjecting the worker to discrimination.

2. Consult an expert

Once the initial risk assessment is carried out, local governments should then consult an occupational physician to determine:

- ▶ Inherent requirements of the worker’s role and any driving/ mobile plant or high risk work activities vs predominately desk based work.
- ▶ The type, dosage and frequency of use requirements of the medication.
- ▶ Safety risks from medical disability/impairment and/or medications.
- ▶ Reasonable adjustments available considering the role and medication.

3. Keep records of all elements of the process

To ensure that the local government is managing individual cases effectively and consistently, it should have documented processes in place. These include:

- ▶ Fitness for work procedures that define how to manage declared medications.
- ▶ Processes for consultation between the worker, supervisor and other parties.
- ▶ Ensure confidentiality regarding the worker’s medical condition and medication use.
- ▶ Ensure that additional processes are in place to manage other legislative obligations *(Including Industrial Relations Act (WA) 1979, Workers’ Compensation and Injury Management Act (WA) 1981, Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth) Section 772, Equal Opportunity Act (WA) 1984 and Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth).*

Quick tips:

DOs	DON'Ts
Treat the person with respect.	Do not consider the person as a drug user.
Remember this is a medication not an illicit drug.	Do not take damaging action against the worker.
Have proactive communications with all parties involved	Do not discriminate against the worker.

To know more about managing your workers who are on prescribed drugs, please speak to the LGIS People Risk Team or your regional risk coordinator. ▼



ASK AN EXPERT

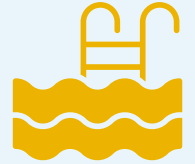


TRAVIS DOYE

Senior Manager, Workforce Solutions at Royal Life Saving Society WA

Travis is an experienced senior manager with an extensive background in aquatic facility management. Having worked across a diverse range of aquatic recreation facilities, Travis' knowledge and network is an important element in his role at RLSWA.

“ Aquatic Facility Equipotential Bonding



Western Australia is home to 129 public aquatic facilities and thousands more school, hotel/motel and back yard pools. While many know of the risks within these facilities such as lack of patron supervision, inappropriate use of shallow water and issues associated with slips, trips and falls – non-compliance with equipotential bonding (earthing) requirements can present a relatively unknown or hidden risk.

Based on a series of recent safety assessments conducted on Group 1 and Group 2 swimming pools by Royal Life Saving WA, 35% facilities either did not demonstrate appropriate equipotential bonding or regular inspection and testing was not taking place.

Group 1 includes all public pools in Western Australia while Group 2 comprises of schools/learn to swim swimming pools.

Over a period of 12 months, RLSSWA did 87 assessments in Group 1 category, of which 30 were done at local government aquatic facilities.



(Image of an equipotential bonding bar – these units are used to provide a convenient common earthing point within an installation)

What is equipotential bonding?

Equipotential bonding, commonly known as bonding or earthing, involves connecting all metallic components within a defined area around the swimming pool with an earth wire so that all of these items share the same potential energy.

The process of installing equipotential bonding for your swimming pool normally occurs at construction level. However Royal Life Saving WA has encountered many pools that did not have any bonding in place at all.

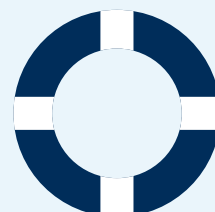
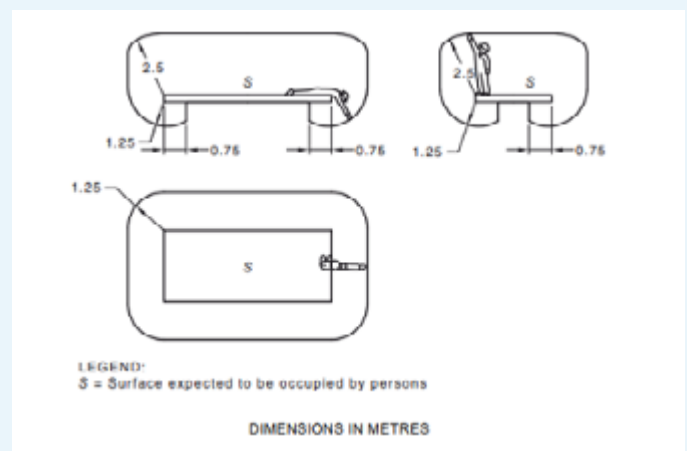
According to the electrical wiring rules of **AS/NZS 3000:2018**, all metallic objects that measure 100mm or more in any dimension in a location accessible (see ‘arms reach’ below*) to the public that is likely to become wet whilst people are in attendance require bonding.

This includes (but is not limited to) items such as:

- ▶ Lane rope anchor points
- ▶ Handrails
- ▶ Deck sockets for backstroke flags
- ▶ Lane rope anchor points

*AS/NZS 3000:2018 defines ‘arms reach’ as an accessible location in and around the swimming pool as a zone extending from any point on a surface where persons usually stand or move about, to the limits that a person can reach with the hand in any direction without assistance, for example tools or a ladder.

The following image is an excerpt from AS/NZS 3000:2018 that helps to explain this zone of ‘arms reach’:



What are the effects of not maintaining adequate equipotential bonding?

Put simply, equipotential bonding is a crucial element in the construction of a swimming pool that helps reduce the risk of electrical shock if a fault causes conductive elements to become energised.

It is simply not worth the risk of ignoring this requirement.

How can local governments test and maintain equipotential bonding?

The testing process for equipotential bonding is not a difficult one. It does not take long and does not come at a significant cost.

In the event remediation works are required, timelines and costs may differ, however planning and implementing a regular testing regime is as easy as engaging your electrician to conduct a series of tests during your annual testing and tagging regime.

Estimated costs for an electrician to conduct and report on equipotential compliance of a site with one water body should start from approximately \$650. While these tests are conducted without anyone in the water body, they are unobtrusive and will not have your site out of action for any extended period of time.

When designing a testing regime, it is recommended that facility managers work with their electrician to develop a schedule of metallic items that require testing. A test result sheet that tracks equipotential test results should be maintained for each item. In doing so, any trends in damage or wear to particular electrical components can be identified and if needed, either reinforced or be scheduled for more regular testing.

Aquatic facility safety assessment

Royal Life Saving WA conducts a series of regular aquatic facility safety assessments that serves to help the local swimming pools to achieve ongoing compliance with a range of regulatory requirements. This assessment also checks on each facility's arrangements in relation to equipotential bonding testing. It is recommended that these aquatic facility assessments are conducted annually.

LGIS partners with RLSWA to provide safety assessments at local government aquatic facilities. For further information on these assessments, please get in touch with the LGIS Risk team. ▼



Where we've been

Injury management workshop – Geraldton

About 30 local government professionals attended the event on Thursday 20 July 2023 held at the City of Greater Geraldton.

Attendees included officers from varied roles like injury management, human resources, and work, health and safety. The workshop covered important topics such as worker's compensation; LGIS' role in managing a claimant and initiating a quick return to work; and role of injury prevention and health and wellbeing services.



CEO breakfast and South West WorkCare Forum

Over 60 local government leaders and professionals attended the CEO Breakfast and South West WorkCare Forum on Wednesday 30 August held at Dolphin Discovery Centre, Bunbury.

John Worsfold, former West Eagles coach, was our guest speaker at the CEO Breakfast, and spoke about his experience in the corporate world and on the field for insights to lead and change culture at local governments.

With professionals across a range of disciplines in attendance, the forum had relevant discussions on topics like managing fitness for work at workplaces, preventive health programs, having difficult conversations over fitness for work, and what changes to the Workers' Compensation Act mean for local governments. ▽ ▽



This event is proudly supported by





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