



risk matters

October 2015



**Shared vision to protect
local government**

**This year in review –
WA Local Governments claims trends**

Editorial



This year I'm delighted to say we are celebrating 20 years of working together with our local government members in Western Australia.

Our strong focus on risk prevention and mitigation, along with our shared vision, has shaped what we have today - a sophisticated self-insurance Scheme entirely owned by you.

This improved alternative to traditional insurance has significant collective financial benefits including the distribution of member's dividends as a result of a group approach to risk financing and a specialised knowledge across all areas of risk.

Last year, \$6 million was distributed, the largest dividend disbursement since the commencement of the Scheme. This year, I could not be more pleased to say we have another \$6 million to give back to you. The roll out of the disbursement has commenced with our member service team, who will be in touch with you soon to arrange a meeting, if they haven't done so already.

Continuing with our strong focus on risk prevention, I encourage you to consider areas in addition to the range of risk management programs and services that are complimentary member benefits. The member's dividend is a great way to fund expenses where you might benefit, such as our regional risk coordinator program, property valuations, smoke detection systems and CCTV. We have a section in this edition of Risk Matters which is dedicated to providing ideas and suggestions.

The growth and development of your Scheme has been driven by the vision, dedication and commitment of the original founding

fathers of LGIS, together with our past and present Board of Directors over the last 20 years. It would be remiss of me for this to go unmentioned as without their time and commitment, none of this would have been possible.

Today, the LGIS Board is comprised of a group of nine highly skilled and committed Directors. Cr Lynn Craigie is our most recent addition to the LGIS Board, bringing with her an extensive knowledge of local government in Western Australia. Cr Craigie has been President of the Shire of East Pilbara for ten years and Councillor since 2003. She was also elected President of WALGA in July of this year. It is a pleasure to have Lynn on the team.

I recently also had the pleasure of attending the WALGA Convention in August and it was fantastic to see so many of you there. This year we took the opportunity to celebrate our 20th anniversary and our commitment to local government in Western Australia. Our theme was "Nobody knows local government quite like LGIS"; a theme which we champion with over 20 years of specialising in working together with WA Local Government. At the Friday morning session we launched our new video, which can be found on the LGIS website. We also presented our inaugural LGIS Excellence Award which was accepted by Darren Simmons, CEO on behalf of the Shire of Irwin.

This edition of Risk Matters looks at 25 ways to spend your member dividend including common causes of event failures and incidents, mental skills training and asbestos management - I hope you enjoy reading.

If you have any questions on Risk Matters or if you would like to discuss any matter relating to your membership with LGIS please contact me directly on 9483 8855.

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LGIS is the unifying name for
the dedicated suite of risk
financing and management
services for WA Local
Governments, established
by the WA Local Government
Association in conjunction
with JLT Australia.

Risk Matters is an LGIS journal
to keep member organisations,
their staff and elected members
informed on topical risk
management and insurance
issues and LGIS programs
and services.

LGIS e-newsletter

SIGN UP TODAY.....

At LGIS we are committed to bringing you relevant information on local, national and global risk related matters and issues impacting local governments in Western Australia.

Register now to receive a copy of our e-newsletter through the LGIS website www.lgisw.com.au



Shared vision to protect local government

Celebrating 20 years of LGIS

Spend three minutes with us to see our work over the past 20 years at www.lgiswa.com.au



Why the self-insurance scheme was established 20 years ago and why it endures?

LGIS was created in 1995 as a result of widespread dissatisfaction with the insurances available in the market.

Insurers withdrew local government coverage for public liability and professional indemnity and individual local governments with poor claims records were being heavily penalised, with large, unmanageable and unbudgeted increases in the cost of coverage. Many had difficulty obtaining cover; others were insured in a variety of ways, such as directly with underwriters or through brokerage firms.

LGIS was established by WALGA, working with Jardine Lloyd Thompson, as a member-based self-insurance scheme.

The group approach to risk management helps to minimise both the cost and volatility in coverage, so you can more accurately budget for the future. By pooling together, each member benefits from economies of scale – the members protect one another and therefore avoid the vagaries of the insurance market.

The power of collective bargaining also reaps additional rewards. LGIS has a proven record of delivering sustainably low costs, even in the face of adverse claims outcomes. The purchasing power allows us to provide a comprehensive level of cover and services, at competitive prices bringing security to you our members and your communities.

LGIS is entirely owned by you its members. It is run with sound commercial acumen, financial controls and efficient management, and the result is a superior alternative to what is made available by the traditional insurance market.

Celebrating 20 years, LGIS is a sophisticated self-insurance scheme, with a strong focus on risk prevention and mitigation, offering a broad range of inclusive mitigation services, such as occupational safety and health, human resource risk management, organisational risk management, professional risk management, emergency risk management and injury management.

Claims resolution is all the difference

Insurance only realises its true value when a claim is made. It is here that the self-insurance scheme again distinguishes itself from the wider broking industry.

In recent years, fires, rising sea levels and coastal erosion have resulted in significant claims payments. Liability claims by their nature are random and, in the case of catastrophic injury or commercial misadventure, the costs can be astronomical.

These types of losses can be absorbed by a member-based self-insurance scheme

like LGIS, minimising the impact on you the member.

Members work with the claims team who have specific expertise in local government and the LGIS service-based claims philosophy provides you with optimal claims outcomes within a discretionary framework. The focus is on ensuring that your reputation and financial interests are supported at times of loss, unlike claims handlers working on behalf of insurers who can be driven by lowering claims costs to increase the insurer's profit margin.

Local governments require rock solid cover that responds when needed and, when claims do occur, a means in which insurance costs can be smoothed over.

By delivering on loyalty, trust and responsibility with a shared vision, we work with all of you to ensure the long-term protection of local government and provide long-lasting value.

This year in review – WA Local Governments claims trends

With 30 June 2015 now behind us, we thought you might be interested to learn how the year presented in terms of Property, Liability and WorkCare claims. The information set out below is a brief summary of claims and claims costs.



Property Scheme

A total of

417

claims were submitted by members in 2015, slightly down on 2014 (509), 2013 (523) and 2012 (510).

In 2015, 102 claims were related to storm and weather events, around 115 were caused by vandalism and/or malicious damage and some 37 due to lightning strikes.

There were 60 burglaries and 37 incidents of vehicles crashing into property belonging to members. Cyclones damaged property assets in the north of the state and the Scheme's loss adjusters are working together with the affected members with a view to finalise these before the end of this calendar year.

Whilst it will take some time for final figures to emerge particularly cyclone losses the Scheme anticipates that overall payments will finalise at around \$10 million.

It would be timely to mention that no issues of 'under insurance' were identified during 2014/15 which is an excellent outcome. However, members need to be vigilant. The Scheme encourages everyone to undertake property insurance valuations every 3 to 5 years and to take advantage of the 40% valuation rebate paid by the Scheme.



Liability Scheme

A total of

1003

claims for property damage, personal injury and professional negligence were submitted by members in 2015, this is less than 2014 (1152), 2013 (1050), and 2012 (1207).

In 2015, 174 claims related to tree branches and debris, 146, were caused by uneven surfaces, 103 tree roots and 68 claims caused by road surface and potholes.

It should also be noted that 735 property damage claims incurred a cost of \$158,000, 237 personal injury claims at a cost to date of \$340,900 and 28 professional negligence claims at a costs to date of \$167,000.

Public Liability personal injury claims differ greatly from property damage settlements. The "long tail" nature of personal injuries and professional settlements could take up to 8-10 years to finalise.



WorkCare Scheme

A total of

1081

workers compensation claims were submitted by members in 2015, compared to 2014 (1095), 2013 (1153) and 2012 (1185).

The actual net paid for claims in 2014/15 is \$8.2M and the estimate outstanding is \$9.7M giving a total incurred figure of \$17.9M.

It would be reasonable to suggest that as your workforce numbers have grown, so has your ability to manage and address issues affecting a safe work place, work practices and related occupational safety and health issues which has contributed to the above numbers remaining relatively "static" compared to previous years, in spite of increasing staff and wages numbers.

The other interesting finding with these claims is that there is not a great deal of change in the nature and causation of the injuries giving rise to the claims, although there has been an increase in the number of stress claims being reported over recent years.

Like liability claims, workers compensation claims can take an extended period to reach finalisation. Inflationary factors plus potential worsening of open claims often results in the ultimate cost to the Scheme exceeding the initial estimates.

For more information contact LGIS on  (08) 9483 8888.

Your Scheme in a strong financial position

Your Scheme has achieved strong financial results over recent times. This is a direct outcome of your commitment to financing and managing your risk through a group self-insurance approach.

The Scheme's operations for the year resulted in an operating surplus of \$7.34M from a turnover of \$77.5M – taking net assets held on behalf of the members to \$36M.

A review of net assets for the Scheme against target capital under our Capital Management Plan allowed the Scheme

Board to make a decision to provide for a surplus distribution across the Scheme membership of \$6 million, with each individual member receiving a member's dividend. Surplus distributions back to members since 2007 amount to \$27 million after this distribution.

For further details of this latest chapter in what has been a great success story of WA Local Governments working together, please see the LGIS Self-insurance Scheme's 2015 Annual Financial Report, available on the members section of the LGIS website.

25 ways to spend your member dividend

Risk management underpins the success of your self-insurance Scheme, good governance of your own organisation as well as ensuring a safer workplace and community.

A comprehensive risk management support program is currently provided as a complimentary benefit of your Scheme membership. We've found however, that there are some areas where you may benefit from further support and the member's dividend has been a way to fund these expenses.

Here are 25 popular areas where the member's dividend payment has been put to good use:

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|---|---|---|---|--|---|---|
| Employee Assistance Program | Regional Risk Coordinator Program | Shower and eyewash stations |  | Safety Data Sheet Station Boards | Statutory inspections of pressure vessels (compressors) |  |
| Safety Information Boards |  | Communication equipment for remote workers e.g., UHF radios and GPS | Emergency lighting and signs |  | Business continuity management projects | CCTV |
| Risk management organisational/enterprise projects | Emergency risk projects |  | Bundling equipment | Pre-employment medicals | Hearing tests |  |
| Property valuations (net cost after 40% scheme subsidy) |  | Asbestos removal and register | Electrical tagging and testing programs | Spill kits | First aid training | Top up of the Health and Wellbeing Program |
|  | Chemical storage units | Lifting equipment (inspections and compliance) | Purchase of defibrillators |  | Smoke detection systems |  |

Talk to your account manager, member services or regional risk coordinator to identify opportunities or additional areas of protection that meet your needs; ensuring the best possible customised risk management solutions are realised.



Asbestos – a risk that can never be ignored

Although the manufacturing and use of all asbestos products was banned nationally from 31 December 2003, due to the age of your buildings, there is the real likelihood that asbestos containing materials remain in place at your local government.

What is asbestos?

Asbestos is a naturally occurring fibrous material that was widely used in both building and commercial applications up until the late 1980's.

What are the health risks?

Asbestos fibres can cause health problems if they are breathed in and get trapped in the lungs. These fibres can cause disease many years later including asbestosis, lung cancer, pleural disorders and malignant mesothelioma.

When was it used?

Before the health risks were known, asbestos products were widely used because they were durable, fire resistant and had good insulation properties. Products made from asbestos cements include fibro sheeting, guttering and downpipes, as well as other pipes for water, drainage or flues, corrugated roofing sheets, and roofing shingles.

Where could it be in your buildings?

Although asbestos can be found in a myriad of places, some common areas where it may be found include cladding, eaves, roof sheeting, electrical switchboards, sheds and wet area walls.

When is asbestos hazardous?

Current evidence supports the fact that simply living or working in a building containing asbestos is not dangerous as long as the asbestos is in good condition. It is when asbestos is worked with or disturbed and asbestos fibres are released that the risk of developing an asbestos related disease is increased.

Who is at greatest risk?

The people at greatest risk of developing an asbestos related disease are those that frequently undertake repairs, renovations and other work which may generate the release of asbestos fibres into the air.

What do I need to do?

Occupational Safety and Health legislation defines the methods that are used to manage asbestos.

Whilst it should be the aim of all local governments to rid their workplaces of asbestos, organisational focus should be aimed to those areas that pose greatest risk.

The legislation requires you to have a competent person identify the presence and location of asbestos in your workplace and accommodation dwellings. If identified, you are then required to:

- develop a register of asbestos covering all of your premises
- assess the risks associated with the asbestos
- develop an asbestos management plan detailing how the asbestos containing materials will be managed safely
- ensure asbestos containing materials are not disturbed
- ensure any work done to remove asbestos is done by appropriately licensed operators


Am I covered?

Most standard public liability policies do not include coverage for damages over asbestos exposure, meaning if you are likely to be dealing with asbestos abatement and / or removal operations yourself, you will need to consider obtaining additional insurance that is specific to asbestos liability. For Example:

- Asbestos Removal Cover
- Pollution Legal Liability Cover

LGIS have available a number of staff who meet the competency requirements to assist you in managing the asbestos at your local government.

For further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us on

 **(08) 9483 8888.**

Pre-Existing Conditions and Entitlement to Workers' Compensation Benefit

The Western Australian workers' compensation and injury management scheme is based on a "no-fault" principle. This means you do not have to establish that your employer was at fault or negligent to make a claim.



You are entitled to make a claim if you are defined by law as a worker and suffer any of the following (and any one of them results in time off work or requires medical treatment):

- Personal injury by accident arising out of, or in the course of employment, or while acting under the employer's instructions
- Disabling disease
- Disease contracted in the course of employment, or the recurrence or aggravation of a pre-existing disease where the employment contributed to a significant degree.

The definition of disease includes any physical or mental ailment, disorder, defect, or morbid condition whether of sudden or gradual development.

A scenario may arise if a worker employed by you has a degenerative disc condition in their lower lumbar spine which may not be diagnosed. The worker at the commencement of their employment is quite capable of


undertaking their employment duties without any duress or restrictions irrespective of their condition and for this period of time would be classified asymptomatic.

However, if the worker suffers a personal injury at work and "aggravates" an underlying condition (in this case a degenerative lower lumbar disc) and becomes symptomatic, for the purposes of the Workers' Compensation and Injury Management Act 1981, they have a compensable claim and are entitled to benefits.

Pre-employment medical assessments are a very useful tool to ensure an employee is fit to work in a specific environment. These assessments can provide details of any previous injuries or underlying conditions that may impact on an employee's ability to safely perform the inherent requirements of their job.

Employers have to accept employees as they find them. The rule holds that if an employee suffers an unusually high level of injury due to a pre-existing disease aggravated by a workplace incident the employer will be held liable and benefits payable pursuant to the Workers' Compensation and Injury Management Act. 1981

For more information regarding entitlements under the Workers Compensation Act and Injury Management Act 1981, contact the LGIS WorkCare team on

 **(08) 9483 8888.**

Coastal Hazard Risks:

Key considerations for local governments




CASE STUDY

A small coastal town in Western Australia is in the process of being impacted significantly by accelerated coastal erosion and has been for a number of decades. This coastal erosion is having a distressing impact on the community and local government, requiring extensive resources, time and community involvement. The erosion has progressed to the extent that private properties are now at immediate risk. The particular case is further complicated due to the impacted coastal strip consisting of unallocated crown land, adjoining private properties and a road reserve all of which have been negatively impacted by the coastal erosion process. This scenario has progressed to a point where immediate action is required putting immense pressure on the affected local government to respond appropriately.

Considerations for other local governments facing similar scenarios:

- ▶ Ensure you receive legal advice as early as possible regarding local government responsibilities
- ▶ Ensure your elected members are educated about the issue and feel confident making informed decisions
- ▶ Ensure all decisions related to the issue are backed by documented evidence.
- ▶ Frequent community consultation and education regarding the risks and adaptation methods available
- ▶ Liaise with relevant State agencies on behalf of the community and local government for assistance in managing risks associated with sea level rise
- ▶ Recognise the important advocacy and leadership role that local government must play when dealing with coastal hazards such as coastal erosion and inundation of water
- ▶ Research the range of grants and funding available to assist in the management of coastal hazard risks such as hazard mapping, reporting, consulting and undertaking protection works
- ▶ Consider working with neighbouring local governments to undertake joint coastal adaptation and planning projects or responses which may assist with sharing of resources, knowledge and expertise



While this specific case study is associated with a coastal hazard risk, the same circumstances and considerations can be applied to many natural and man-made hazards that are a threat to your local government (for example bushfires and cyclones). For further insight and support on this topic please contact the LGIS risk services team on  (08) 9483 8888.

Common Causes of Event Failures and Incidents

Events are an integral part of all communities, with many of you actively seeking and encouraging local events as a deliverable within your strategic community plans. You play a role by managing events, issuing approvals and monitoring compliance for events, sponsoring events and/or providing facilities and services for events.

While there are different factors and measures used by varying stakeholders in determining what is a successful event, such as financial return, numbers of attendees, no injuries and brand penetration, there is one common underpinning objective amongst all stakeholders regardless of their interests in an event and that is the delivery of a safe, suitable and quality event.

We should all be striving to deliver safe, suitable and quality events, however, a scan of LGIS claims data and global, national, state, regional and local events over the last twenty years provides a dizzying number of event failures, accidents, incidents and near misses; some with catastrophic consequences to persons, property and reputation of key stakeholders.

Further analysis of these event failures, accidents, incidents and near misses leads to the identification of five common factors where one or more was present. These factors are provided to assist your officers who may be managing events, issuing approvals, monitoring compliance, sponsoring events or providing facilities and services for events to assist in the planning and decision making process for a greater degree of certainty that key and significant event risks will be anticipated, understood and appropriately managed.



1. Poor planning and preparation

Proper planning and preparation underpin the successful delivery of any strategy, objective or activity, and this is the same for delivering safe, suitable and quality events. However, events present some distinctive hurdles given their dynamic nature, defined timeframes, multiple stakeholder inputs and unique locations. When combined with inexperienced event managers, lack of stakeholder engagement, late submissions for approvals, inexperienced event goers and not being familiar with local conditions these issues can be further exaggerated and when things start to go wrong, they can go very wrong.



2. Use of temporary structures

Event sites contain many items that are of a temporary nature. While the obvious risks of structural collapse or failure of temporary structures like fence lines, stages, amusement rides and marquees are included; this factor extends to anything of a temporary nature on or around the event. Sometimes the small things such as electrical cords, trestle tables, chairs and urns can still cause significant harm and losses.



3. Weather and environmental conditions

Weather and environmental conditions are one factor that event stakeholders can't directly control and may only have generic knowledge of expected conditions until relatively close to the event day. The impact of weather and environmental conditions can result in catastrophic impacts to persons, property, reputation and continuity of the event.



4. Inadequate emergency response


While emergency management plans may be documented to prevent, identify, escalate, and respond to a range of scenarios, due to the nature of events many of these plans and arrangements are not well communicated or ever exercised. This means when an incident takes place the capability, competence, authority, common understanding and capacity to enact the plans may not exist, resulting in magnified consequences to people and property.



5. Crowd dynamics, crowd control and human factors

People's safety should be an explicit priority when managing events. The way people behave, interact and respond within and around an event site and crowd can be a significant factor in achieving or not achieving a safe, suitable and quality event. Failure to consider crowd dynamics, crowd control and human factors both internal and external to an event site can lead to harm to people and when combined with any of the above four causal factors has had catastrophic consequences.

Unfortunately, there is no 'one-sized fits all' solution to each or any of the five factors as it will depend on the size, type, nature and location of the event, the expertise and experience of the event organisers and specifics of each event such as site layouts and structures. What your event managers should be able to do is demonstrate through their planning, management and/or risk management that they have in some way included and addressed the above factors to a reasonable level providing assurance to all key event stakeholders that they are striving towards an objective of safe, suitable and quality events.

For more information on event risk management please contact the LGIS risk services team on  (08) 9483 8888.

Mental Skills Training for Emotional Intelligence

Decades of research have shown that emotional intelligence is the critical factor that sets star performers apart from the rest of the pack. Emotional intelligence is that ability you have to understand your own emotions and those of others, and to use that understanding to navigate your relationships, manage behaviour, and make good decisions.

Dr Travis Bradberry, co-author of a best-selling book Emotional Intelligence 2.0 has identified a number of sure signs that you have high emotional intelligence. The good news is that you can learn and improve your emotional intelligence; however you need to be realistic and accept that it may take some hard work because it most likely will involve challenging some of your thinking patterns and changing some of your habits.

The sure signs of high emotional intelligence:

- You have a robust emotional vocabulary
- You're curious about people
- You embrace change
- You know your strengths and weaknesses
- You're a good judge of character
- You are difficult to offend
- You know how to say no (to yourself and others)
- You let go of mistakes
- You give and expect nothing in return
- You don't hold grudges
- You neutralize toxic people
- You don't seek perfection
- You appreciate what you have
- You disconnect
- You limit your caffeine intake
- You get enough sleep
- You stop negative self-talk in its tracks
- You won't let anyone limit your joy.

Without doubt, if you become more self-aware and better at managing your reactions when faced with unpleasant situations at work (including those related to "toxic people", others that offend us, imposed change, or dealing with the result of mistakes), you will be growing your emotional intelligence and improving your day to day work experience.

Drawing on lessons from the field of sports psychology that have helped champion athletes and top performers to be at their best, we now have a proven approach to

teach the brain how to manage unpleasant situations in a more productive way.

Called "a mental skills training program for local government" the program starts with the idea that when trying to figure out how to reduce the amount of time you feel uneasy, there are three things to consider: the brain; the body; and the mind (or our thoughts, images, mental movies and memories). Sometimes the brain controls the immediate response to an event, and sometimes it is the mind that controls the outcome (see example, "Not you again!").

Not you again!



You are in a good mood – mind (emotions).

You are currently serving at the counter of your Local Government office – mind (skills you have learned to do the job).

In walks a ratepayer you have served previously, who is always argumentative and rude – mind (perceive a threat to your current good mood state).

You say to yourself "Not Mr Smith again! Go away, go away – mind.

The stress chemical release causes the body to react by scanning the environment for an escape route, tapping the right foot as if ready to run away, and a heavy sigh and the "death stare" when no escape is possible – brain.

The ratepayer arrives at the desk and as soon as he starts talking, you start jabbering away inside your own head "yeah, yeah, heard it all before. Nothing I can do about it. Blah blah blah" – mind.

Your hearing is no longer operating properly as all your mind's attention is now inside your own head and therefore the mind cannot process the information coming into the brain – mind and brain.

Your body language now virtually screams at Mr Smith that you are ready for a fight – mind and brain.

Mr Smith then has his stress response spontaneously triggered to ramp up even further, and so he gets more upset, which further triggers your stress response – mind and body.

And now you are in a loop that will not end well for either person in this interaction.

He argues. You defend. He argues. You defend.

You don't solve the problem and you can almost guarantee that Mr Smith will be back!

In other scenarios, it may be that the body sends a signal to the brain, which is then perceived by you as distressing. Pain is a good example of this sequence.

Whatever the arising cause of the stress, it is a powerful skill to be able to identify when it occurs, what is happening and how to change your immediate reaction for the best possible response to the situation.

The willingness to manage or eliminate unpleasant situations within the workplace is not only about professional behaviour and how you do your role. It is also about how many daily unpleasant situations (from in and outside of the workplace) accumulate over the course of a day, week, month or even years, and the affect that has on your physical and mental well-being. The challenge for most of us is how to find simple and effective ways of handling daily hassles when they arise. This is where you can learn a lot from the skills and strategies of champions, successful people, explorers and survivors; people who are often described as being mentally tough or resilient individuals. The skills that they use to achieve success or sustain themselves through difficult times are also skills that can help you to handle everyday unpleasant situations. The skills can be learnt, practiced and then implemented whenever they are needed to reduce or eliminate your unwanted unpleasant situations.

There are many skills you can include in this type of mind training. The best place to start is creating a foundation on which you can build your skills over time. You will get the most impact by learning how to respond in the first 60 seconds of an encounter that could trigger a stress response (e.g., potential conflict), or to be able to quickly get your mind back where it needs to be if the stress response is spontaneously triggered (e.g. an unexpected scare).

The brain learns and stores information in an organised way. When it comes to skills that you learn they are usually a sequence of steps that you follow to get a task completed. If you want to control a reaction by the brain or mind you have to give it a sequence of actions and thoughts to follow so it can be learnt. Once you practice it enough it will be

This basic foundation skill sequence looks like this:

ATTEND ► THINK ► BREATHE ► ATTEND



Attend: is controlling what you first pay attention to, or your level of awareness of a situation, reaction in the body, or an event that could be happening at any moment. This happens within seconds of information arriving in the brain.



Think: is the way you immediately perceive and understand the situation and whether you think of it as a threat to your personal safety, emotional state or your competency. This happens within seconds of your mind attending to something.



Breathe: to counter any stress response triggered by the brain as a result of the situation itself or a past memory of similar experiences. The first thing you attend to may trigger the brain response, or it could be the first thing you think to yourself once you have noticed something.



Attend: is about controlling where you direct your attention to next so that you get the most appropriate physical, mental, behavioural and emotional response to the situation. This is about controlling a response in the first few minutes of the situation because that sets the scene for the rest of the interaction or experience.

stored as a blueprint in the mind for what should happen, in the same way you know how to throw a ball, clean your teeth or drive your car. Once you have these blueprints stored, you can call on the skills whenever you need it.

The LGIS mental skills training program for local government is presented in a comprehensive manual to help you gain a few mental skills associated with mental toughness and emotional intelligence. These mental skills are a range of simple thinking and behavioural skills that allow you to control the stress response when it occurs and therefore reduce any negative impact it can have on your thoughts, conversations and behaviours in those short few minutes in which you have to react. It is designed so that each LGIS 'handling unpleasant situations' module adds to your knowledge and understanding of the basic mental skills required.

You can use these skills to conduct your own team meetings or workshops to develop team strategies. They are also being included in many of the development services (for example, training programs, mediations, and coaching) being tailored and delivered by the LGIS workforce risk team.

For further information about mental skills training, please contact the HR risk management team on

 **(08) 9483 8888.**

