

# LEARNING IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

*An Analysis of Sector Consultations  
and Perspectives on Education and  
Professional Development*



# LEARNING IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

WRITTEN ON BEHALF OF THE

AUSTRALIAN CENTRE FOR EXCELLENCE IN  
LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

By Sarah Artist and Geraldine O'Connor for  
UTS CENTRE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

October 2011

**Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government**

PO BOX 123 Broadway NSW 2007

**T:** +61 2 9514 3855 **E:** [acelg@acelg.org.au](mailto:acelg@acelg.org.au) **W:** [www.acelg.org.au](http://www.acelg.org.au)

**UTS:CLG**  
CENTRE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

 **ACELG**  
Australian Centre of Excellence  
for Local Government



An Australian Government Initiative

# CONTENTS

<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
The Role of ACELG .....	1
Program Inventory.....	2
Engagement with Local Government Organisations.....	2
Engaging with Local Government Practitioners.....	3
<b>Experiences and Aspirations .....</b>	<b>5</b>
Seminars, Conferences and Workshops.....	5
Written Materials .....	5
Mentoring and Coaching.....	6
Formal Qualifications.....	6
Using E-Learning.....	7
Peer Learning and Good Practice Exchange.....	8
Sources of Funds.....	9
Relevance and Satisfaction .....	9
Barriers to Access .....	10
Future Preferences .....	10
Collaborative Approaches to Design and Delivery.....	13
<b>Summary and Next steps.....</b>	<b>15</b>
Results of the Survey .....	15
An Integrated National Approach.....	16
<b>References .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Appendix – Practitioner Perspectives.....</b>	<b>18</b>
Administrative Officers.....	18
Librarians .....	19
Councillors .....	20
Executives .....	22
Line Managers.....	24
Professional Officers .....	27
Skilled Workers.....	31
Supervisors or Co-ordinators .....	31
Trades .....	36

# INTRODUCTION



The Learning in Local Government project is an exploratory review of the specific and complex needs of education and professional development in Australian local government, and aims to inform and facilitate programs to be developed over the life of the Australian Centre for Excellence in Local Government (ACELG). ACELG has committed funds through its Workforce Development Program to undertake this review.

This paper provides an analysis of over 900 responses to the Learning in Local Government Survey undertaken in 2010. The survey results were reviewed at the 2011 National Workforce Development Forum, and submissions were also received from local government educational and professional development organisations. The engagement process has led to the identification of some themes and issues for consideration, and will inform the next steps to be taken for the Learning in Local Government project.

## The Role of ACELG

At the Australian Council of Local Government (ACLG) meeting in November 2008, the Prime Minister announced funding support for a Centre of Excellence to *showcase innovation and best practice across local government and encourage the adoption of innovative practices and solutions*.

The Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government (ACELG) is a national network and framework within which local government organisations, government agencies, academic institutions, training bodies and other key stakeholders can collaborate in areas of mutual interest. Key priorities for ACELG are:

- Research and development capacity to support policy formulation, drive innovation and help address the challenges facing local government
- Leadership in promoting informed debate on key policy issues
- A clearing house for the exchange of information and ideas, identifying, showcasing and promoting innovation and best practice in local government
- Inputs to capacity building programs across the local government sector, with an initial emphasis on long term financial sustainability and asset management
- Workforce development initiatives including education, training and skills development for both staff and elected members
- Leadership development programs for both senior and emerging leaders
- A specialist focus on the particular needs of local government in rural and remote areas, including Indigenous local governance <sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> ACELG Project Plan 2009 - 2014

ACELG is by no means resourced to single-handedly roll out a comprehensive program of activities across Australia to provide education and professional development to individuals and councils. It can, however, act as a catalyst and outline a strategic framework to provide a focus for program development efforts. Within this framework, ACELG can perform facilitation, coordination and integration roles that seed ideas for new initiatives, build consensus and support for national capacity-building activities, and facilitate the formation of partnerships that will bring about enhanced education and professional development programs<sup>2</sup>.

## Program Inventory

The preliminary *Learning in Local Government* program inventory which was prepared in 2010 included a profile of existing courses relevant to local government, including professional development programs, tertiary education, vocational, registered training organisations and professional association training in key skills shortage areas, and postgraduate courses both within Australian and also internationally.

The identified skills shortage areas were civil engineering, planning and building surveying. Post-graduate university courses which contained a specific focus and tailored content for local government were also identified and profiled, both within Australian and also internationally.

Finally the inventory included a sample of innovative professional development initiatives which utilise content and modes of delivery particularly designed and tailored to the needs of local government<sup>3</sup>.

## Engagement with Local Government Organisations

This review has been conducted by the UTS Centre for Local Government, a consortium partner of ACELG and provider of tertiary education for local government managers for twenty years. The National Workforce Development Reference Group has also provided valuable input to the review, and member local government and training organisations on this group were invited to make submissions. Submissions were received from the Australian Institute of Building Surveyors (AIBS), Local Government Association Tasmania (LGAT), Institute of Public Works Engineering Australia (IPWEA) National, IPWEA Queensland, NSW Local Government Shires Association (LGSA), Local Government Training Institute (LGTI) and the UTS Centre for Local Government.

These sector consultations suggested the following difficulties in developing and accessing good education and professional development in local government:

### **Within Individual Councils -**

- Training budgets are scattered across councils, have to compete with other resourcing priorities, and are often at the discretion of individual managers;
- Individuals may lack the capacity or the information to clearly define their own training needs;
- There is a variable level of access for individuals for funds to complete further education because policies vary between councils;

---

<sup>2</sup> ACELG (2011) *Capacity-Building Strategy for Rural-Remote and Indigenous Local Government*

<sup>3</sup> ACELG (2010) *Learning in Local Government: A Preliminary Inventory and Gap Analysis of Education and Professional Development for Local Government in Australia*

- Individuals are motivated to undertake qualifications which contribute to job security and career progression, however this may not be the reality within each individual council; and
- Individuals may have a reduced capacity to attend training because of the need to travel, take time away from work, or because of limited literacy skills.

#### **Amongst Training Providers -**

- The “thin market” problem – councils are separated by distance and include small numbers of individuals in multiple professions, which reduces the financial feasibility of program development;
- The intensive labour and cost in preparing relevant sector training materials, and the need for experienced local government practitioners to deliver training;
- Lack of facilitated pathways for individuals within councils between RTOs, TAFEs and tertiary education qualifications; and
- The speed of change within the operating environment which outpaces the time needed to develop and accredit courses.

#### **Across the Local Government Sector -**

- Good training development and provision at a broader scale requires a high degree of collaboration and significant commitment of time between councils, training providers and professional associations; and
- Between states there is inconsistent access to federal funding through the Productivity Places Program (PPP) program for Vocational Education training (VET), and an underutilisation and lack of knowledge of the local government training package.

## Engaging with Local Government Practitioners

In September 2010 an online survey was distributed to councils across Australia as well as professional and training organisations who were invited to distribute the on-line survey to their members and networks to canvass further training needs. The survey closed in December 2010 attracting almost 900 respondents. The survey questions asked about the respondent’s role and length of service in local government, the location and type of council they were from as well as their membership of professional associations.

Generally the respondents were long serving local government staff and executive. Almost three-quarters of the summary group have worked in local government for over five years with just over 50% having worked for over ten years.

It should be stated at the outset that the figures from the survey are indicative only, and the percentages of responses from the survey cannot necessarily be extrapolated in these exact proportions across the sector as a whole.

Survey respondents came from across the range of locations with the greatest number of responses from metro urban areas and the least from remote areas:

Role	Metro urban	Metro fringe	Urban regional	Rural agricultural	Remote	Total Count
<b>Councillor</b>	23% (7)	16% (5)	16% (5)	39% (12)	7% (2)	33
<b>Executive and Senior Manager</b>	40% (43)	8% (8)	22% (24)	24% (26)	6% (6)	107
<b>Line manager and Supervisor</b>	37% (94)	12% (31)	31% (80)	17% (44)	3% (8)	260
<b>Professional Officer</b>	38% (79)	19% (40)	28% (58)	14% (29)	1% (2)	212
<b>Administration Officer</b>	29% (28)	7% (7)	36% (35)	20% (19)	8% (8)	105
<b>Skilled workers</b>	31% (10)	9% (3)	47% (15)	9% (3)	3% (1)	33

The four professional associations whose members were well represented in the survey were the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA), the Australian Local Government Women's Association (ALGWA), the Institute of Public Works Engineers Association (IPWEA) and the Local Government Managers Australia (LGMA).

The survey questions explored respondents' involvement in education and professional development (E&PD) while working in local government, their current level of education, the modes of learning used, as well as the quality of the learning experience. Council in-house training has been undertaken by almost three-quarters of respondents and external training by two-thirds. Administration officers had the lowest participation in external training with one-third participating and skilled workers, fewer than half. Executive and senior managers and Councillors recorded the highest level of participation in external training.



# EXPERIENCES AND ASPIRATIONS

## Seminars, Conferences and Workshops

A lot of E&PD for local government staff is currently delivered over short periods of time such as seminars, workshops or conferences. For the survey respondents full day, half day and one or two hour events were the most commonly utilised mode of professional development across all roles:

	Councillors	Executive/ Senior Managers	Line Managers/ Supervisors	Professional Officers	Administration Officers	Skilled workers	Total (%)	Total Count
<b>One or two hours</b>	58%	63%	56%	54%	48%	41%	<b>54%</b>	<b>405</b>
<b>Half day</b>	65%	66%	56%	46%	36%	44%	<b>52%</b>	<b>390</b>
<b>Full day</b>	58%	77%	62%	52%	38%	30%	<b>57%</b>	<b>430</b>
<b>Two day</b>	61%	59%	38%	30%	15%	19%	<b>36%</b>	<b>269</b>
<b>More than two days</b>	13%	41%	28%	26%	19%	22%	<b>26%</b>	<b>195</b>

## Written Materials

*At this point in time owing to the ongoing changes to Legislation the most relevant training would be .... guidelines etc to explain these changes as some appear to be fairly complex.*

Written reference material is a well-utilised source of learning and was used by most or the survey respondents. Material distributed by a professional association was used by over two-thirds of respondents, reference books by just over half.

Use of Written Material	Councillors	Executive/ Senior Managers	Line Managers/ Supervisors	Professional Officers	Administration Officers	Skilled workers	Total (%)
<b>Professional association</b>	75%	82%	72%	70%	38%	44%	<b>68%</b>
<b>Reference book</b>	29%	58%	56%	58%	33%	61%	<b>53%</b>
<b>Prepared by your council</b>	64%	60%	45%	43%	66%	52%	<b>51%</b>
<b>State or Federal government</b>	71%	67%	44%	48%	34%	39%	<b>48%</b>
<b>Academic Journals</b>	21%	58%	49%	35%	20%	39%	<b>40%</b>
<b>Prepared by another Australian council</b>	50%	40%	25%	29%	10%	13%	<b>27%</b>
<b>Local government overseas</b>	14%	18%	10%	9%	2%	0%	<b>10%</b>



The use of material prepared by other councils and local government overseas was lower than the use of material from professional association and academic journals. Access to written materials from local governments overseas was quite low, with only 10% of participants having access to this kind of information.

## Mentoring and Coaching

*The mentoring coaching provided by a consultant gave me excellent insight into managing a team rather than relying on my existing people skills - it expanded my skill base.*

Just over one-third of respondents had participated in formal work-related mentoring or coaching from someone outside their council and almost three quarters rated this experience good or very good:

Coaching and Mentoring	Councillors	Executive/ Senior Managers	Line Managers/ Supervisors	Professional Officers	Administration Officers	Trades Officers	Summary %
Participated	47%	47%	35%	29%	37%	42%	<b>37%</b>
<b>% rated experience 'very good' or 'good'</b>	83%	87%	70%	62%	74%	73%	<b>76%</b>

The reasons given for the responses on rating coaching and mentoring include: mentoring builds relationships so needs to be carried out over a period of time, it can be tailored to individual needs, it provided greater insight into personal ways of operating, the ability to set and meet goals, and participants liked to be able to bounce around ideas and issues particularly with someone from outside the organisation.

## Formal Qualifications

*I would like to obtain a higher level certificate and work my way up to completing a diploma or degree in my field. There are limited employment opportunities in my community to work in this area, and gaining skills would be beneficial not only in ensuring my continued employment but it would enable me to become more actively involved in improving library services for this community.*

Over half the survey respondents had a TAFE Certificate or Diploma. Nearly three quarters of these have a Certificate qualification and just less than half a Diploma qualification.

TAFE Qualification	Total	Certificate	Diploma
<b>Councillor</b>	42%	62%	46%
<b>Executive and Senior Manager</b>	51%	55%	71%
<b>Line manager and Supervisor</b>	64%	75%	40%
<b>Professional Officers</b>	56%	74%	52%
<b>Administration Officer</b>	62%	85%	30%
<b>Skilled Officers</b>	69%	82%	36%

Just over half the respondents had a university degree. 90% (410/756) of these have a bachelors degree and 53% have a post graduate degree.

University Qualification	Total	Graduate	Post Graduate
<b>Councillor</b>	27%	100%	50%
<b>Executive and Senior Manager</b>	84%	87%	57%
<b>Line manager and Supervisor</b>	59%	92%	55%
<b>Professional Officers</b>	57%	90%	52%
<b>Administration Officer</b>	17%	100%	18%
<b>Skilled Officers</b>	22%	67%	44%
<b>Summary group</b>	53%	90%	53%

When asked about the relevance to their current roles, the levels for TAFE and University were virtually the same. Around 40% felt that their qualification was extremely relevant and 40% quite relevant to their current work in Local Government.

## Using E-Learning

*The distance education graduate diploma in municipal engineering and management...taught me aspects of my job which are local government specific, and has enabled me to find employment all round Australia.*

*I'm planning maternity leave in the next two to three years, and I don't want to complete a degree only to have no hands on work in that field for up to five years after having children. I plan to pursue study via distance education whilst on Maternity leave to coincide my graduation with my return to work.*

Distance and online learning had been utilised by almost half the respondents with close to two thirds rating the experience 'very good' or 'good'. Councillors varied most from the summary group with only 3% having utilised this form of learning:

Online Learning	Councillors	Executive/ Senior Managers	Line Managers/ Supervisors	Professional Officers	Administration Officers	Skilled Workers	Total
<b>Have participated in online learning</b>	1/31	53/106	132/248	89/195	43/91	17/32	<b>363/798</b>
<b>% who rated their experience 'very good' or 'good'</b>	100%	63%	65%	62%	62%	68%	<b>62%</b>

Distance learning was particularly favoured by those from more remote areas as the accessibility enabled them to obtain qualifications they would not have been able to otherwise complete. Other reasons for favouring on-line learning included the ability to balance family and work commitments; variation in the access and response of tutors; and flexibility to manage study around responsibilities. Respondents noted that self- discipline was required, and lack of peer support was sometimes a disadvantage:

*I missed the face-to face and networking available to on campus students.*

The use of electronic and social media has many potential benefits for education and professional development in local government. The tyranny of distance, isolation of professionals within their organisations and across localities can be addressed through a range of web-based online learning materials. Many organisations are beginning to develop on-line libraries, forums, webinars, podcasts and vodcasts etc. However there are also many reasons why access to these media need to be skillfully utilised -

by providers:

*(I rated this course highly because it had) very up to date information with reliable and accurate interaction and response from tutor. Resources and internet sites provide more than enough information. (quote from Learning Survey)*

by councils:

*Computer-based distance education programs are usually only viable with 'indoor' staff or managers, because of availability or access to computers. Council firewalls also present some issues with e-learning strategies as councils generally have not really considered providing facilities to accommodate these delivery methods...*

*Our experience with the delivery of self-directed distance education programs is that most staff find it a real challenge to undertake this training at work due to workloads and perceptions of managers and staff that it is not 'real' work. A separate study area and allocation of time needs to be factored in by the workplace to improve outcomes in this area. (quote from Local Government Training Institute submission)*

and by participants:

*(I didn't enjoy on-line learning because it was) too difficult to juggle work and family commitment plus study at home. (quote from Learning Survey)*

## Peer Learning and Good Practice Exchange

*I will continue to do professional development on new requirements (i.e legislative) and work with peers and others as regards ongoing leadership activity. My preference is to do this with peers thorough tailored conferences and peer group meetings/networking.*

In the learning survey around 80% of practitioners from each of the different role categories expressed interest in participating in training which provides information about other councils' work and innovations. Around 70% of respondents were also interested in exchange opportunities in other councils, and around the same number were interested in facilitated problem-solving with peers in other councils.

There are around 560 councils across Australia, and each local community has unique societal, geographic and historical factors which shape their council's activities. Designing their own approaches to policy and service delivery results in constant innovations and tailored local responses. For this reason, the learning which is possible through the exchange of approaches and ideas is particularly important in the local government sector. Practitioners often speak of the importance of learning together:

*I enjoy networking with other councillors and officers to share ideas.*



*It is always useful to have a look at how other councils are dealing with similar issues.*

Only 10% of survey respondents had accessed publications and written material from overseas, and this suggests a gap in the shared learning that is expressed as a desire in other survey questions. The changes that are taking place in local government across the globe also provide many opportunities to learn from other approaches and experiences.

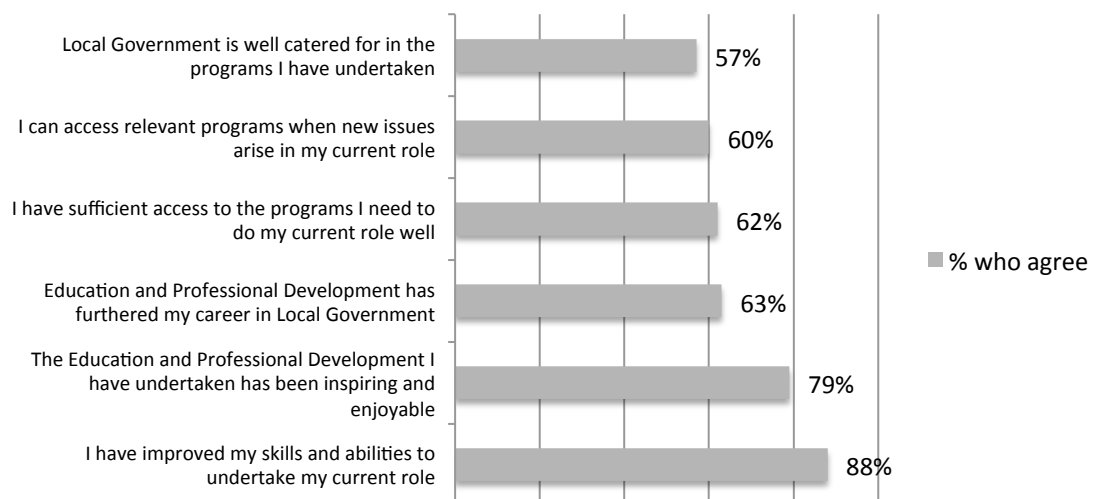
## Sources of Funds

Depending on the council policies, some council staff have access to funding through a central training budget (296 or 40%) or within their own unit of council (459 or 63%). Many of the survey respondents actually funded part (30%) or all (28%) of their own training:

Sources of Funding	Councillors	Executive/ Senior Managers	Line Managers/ Supervisors	Professional Officers	Administration Officers	Trades Officers	Of Total
From Council unit budget	68%	67%	63%	60%	61%	56%	<b>62%</b>
From central training budget	19%	53%	44%	41%	30%	28%	<b>40%</b>
Supplemented by own contribution	42%	43%	33%	33%	12%	19%	<b>30%</b>
Entirely my own contribution	26%	40%	29%	25%	19%	25%	<b>28%</b>

## Relevance and Satisfaction

Respondents were asked to state their level of agreement with six statements relating to the relevance and satisfaction of the E&PD activities they had undertaken while working in Local Government:



There was relatively low levels of agreement (57%) with the statement that local governments were well catered for in the programs that these people have undertaken, and



also with the statement that they can access relevant programs when new issues arise (60% who agree).

Most participants agreed that the E&PD that they had undertaken had improved their skills and abilities to undertake their roles, and that their experiences were inspiring and enjoyable.

## Barriers to Access

Survey respondents were also asked about the barriers they experienced in accessing E&PD:

	Major barrier
Time constraints due to work pressures	49%
Limited access to council funding	36%
Cost and time of travel	33%
Limits on personal finances	32%
Lack of relevant programs	24%
Family or other caring responsibilities	22%

Time constraints due to work pressures was a major barrier for all roles except for skilled workers for whom access to funding and limits on personal finances were more significant barriers. Lack of relevant programs was a greater issue for Councilors than people in other roles, and distance may also have an impact on responses.

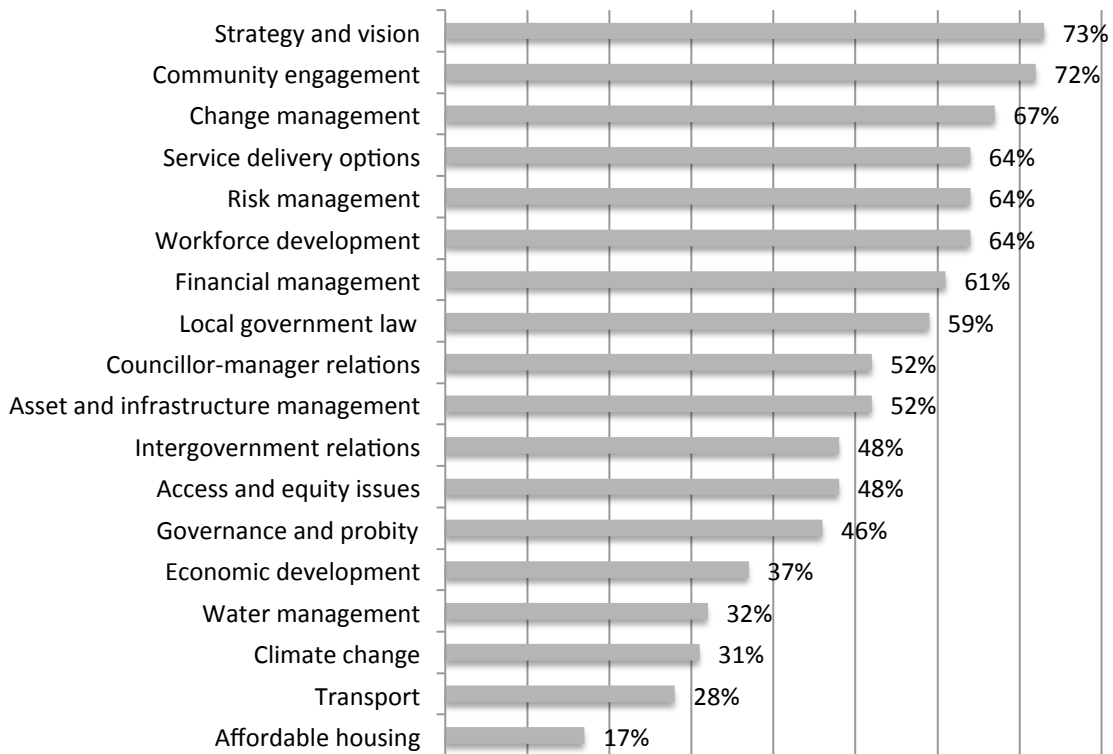
## Future Preferences

Reflecting on their past experiences of E&PD respondents were asked about content topics that would be useful, the mode of delivery they would prefer, as well as what EP&D would interest them and be most useful to their current role and career development, and the results are included in the following table:

	Councillors	Executive/ Senior Managers	Line Managers/ Supervisors	Professio nal Officers	Administratio n Officers	Trades Officers	% of Total	Count (of 775)
Full day workshops/ seminars	76%	87%	84%	81%	73%	79%	81%	<b>627</b>
Half day workshops/ seminars	79%	71%	68%	71%	64%	57%	68%	<b>529</b>
Conferences	70%	79%	69%	74%	41%	58%	66%	<b>514</b>
Certificate or Diploma	42%	67%	62%	66%	69%	61%	64%	<b>492</b>
Individual coaching and mentoring	61%	67%	62%	59%	56%	55%	61%	<b>472</b>
Web-based training	73%	51%	57%	56%	42%	55%	54%	<b>421</b>
Degree courses at university	33%	66%	50%	50%	36%	39%	49%	<b>379</b>
Guidelines and publications	64%	61%	47%	51%	38%	36%	48%	<b>373</b>
Published case studies	55%	51%	29%	39%	14%	24%	33%	<b>258</b>



Respondents were asked 'If good quality programs tailored for local government were to become available to you, which of the following topics and content would be useful?' The following graph presents the results against that question:



The following table presents the results of this question for each of the types of roles held by the survey participants, and indicates which topics would be most valued by each group:

Councillors	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strategy and vision</li> <li>2. Community engagement</li> <li>3. Asset and infrastructure management</li> <li>4. Governance and probity</li> <li>5. Financial management</li> </ol>
Executives and Senior Management	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strategy and vision</li> <li>2. Change management</li> <li>3. Workforce development</li> <li>4. Community engagement</li> <li>5. Asset and infrastructure management</li> </ol>
Line managers and Supervisors	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Change management</li> <li>2. Strategy and vision</li> <li>3. Community engagement</li> <li>4. Workforce development</li> <li>5. Risk management</li> </ol>



Professional officers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Strategy and vision</li><li>2. Community engagement</li><li>3. Local government law</li><li>4. Asset and infrastructure management</li><li>5. Risk management</li></ol>
-----------------------	--

Administrative officers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Community engagement</li><li>2. Workforce development</li><li>3. Service delivery options</li><li>4. Change management</li><li>5. Strategy and vision</li></ol>
-------------------------	--

Trades, Skilled and Outdoor Workers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Community engagement</li><li>2. Service delivery options</li><li>3. Risk management</li><li>4. Councillor-manager relations</li><li>5. Workforce development</li></ol>
-------------------------------------	---

Finally, the survey tested respondents on their interest in new program ideas, and the results are shown in the following table:





	Councillors	Executive/ Senior Managers	Line Managers/ Supervisors	Professional Officers	Administration Officers	Trades Officers	Average
Training that provides information other councils' work and innovations	71	90	87	81	66	78	79
Individual coaching and mentoring	87	74	74	67	77	65	74
Management skills training	67	78	81	70	70	64	72
Facilitated problem-solving with peers in other councils	84	82	71	74	59	62	72
Exchange opportunities in other councils	66	76	73	73	58	80	71
Training on emerging policy issues for your council	94	80	60	61	43	57	66
A Certificate or Diploma in your field	52	31	51	60	76	62	55
A postgraduate degree in your field	34	66	52	55	38	38	47
An undergraduate degree in your field	45	30	38	42	51	42	41
Councillor skills training	86	42	31	33	23	32	41
<b>Count</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>33</b>	

Councillors were most interested in training about emerging policy issues for their council (94%). Senior managers (90%), Line Managers (87%) and Professional Officers (81%) were most interested in training about other councils' work and innovations. Administration officers were most interested in individual coaching and mentoring. Trades officers (80%) were most interested in exchange opportunities in other councils.

## Collaborative Approaches to Design and Delivery

Good training development and provision at a broader scale requires a high degree of collaboration and significant commitment of time between councils, training providers and professional associations. However, there are sometimes 'border protection' behaviors between organisations which makes this kind of collaboration difficult:

*We try (to collaborate) and sometimes succeed, however a lot of the time there are the constraints of the 'precious pups'. We have found sometimes that collaborating with other organisations to promote our programs on the basis that we promote theirs seems to work better. (quote from a training provider submission)*



Across Australian local government many highly successful initiatives are currently operating in individual states, organisations and networks. There are great potential benefits for both providers and practitioners to improve the level of collaboration across the sector – spreading course development costs, sharing expertise in course delivery, increasing uptake and informing course content, to name a few.



# SUMMARY AND NEXT STEPS

## Results of the Survey

It is possible to make the following observations overall about the experiences and aspirations of participants in the Learning in Local Government survey and associated consultations:

- There are constraints in accessing education and professional development for local government at the level of individual councils, training providers and across the sector as a whole;
- A lot of current E&PD is currently delivered over short periods of time, such as through seminars, workshops or conferences;
- Written material distributed by professional associations is the most commonly utilized by 75% of survey participants, and a very low number of participants had accessed materials written for the local government sector from other countries (10%);
- Just over one-third of respondents had participated in formal work-related mentoring or coaching from someone outside their council and almost three quarters rated this experience good or very good;
- Just over half the respondents had a TAFE or University qualification, and there was a similar level of perceived relevance to their current roles. Around 40% felt that their qualification was extremely relevant and 40% quite relevant to their current roles;
- Distance and online learning had been utilized by almost half the respondents, with close to two thirds rating the experience as 'very good' or 'good';
- Around 80% of respondents expressed interest in training which provides information about other councils' work and innovations. Around 70% were also interested in exchange opportunities in other councils, and about the same number were interested in facilitated problem-solving with peers in other councils;
- Many of the survey respondents fund part (30%) or all (28%) of their own training;
- Over half of respondents (57%) felt that local government was not well catered for in the programs they have undertaken;
- Time constraints due to work pressures was a major barrier for almost half the survey respondents;
- The most popular topics for future programs were strategy and vision, community engagement, change management, service delivery options, risk management and workforce development; and
- Councillors were most interested in training about emerging policy issues for their council (94%). Senior managers (90%), Line Managers (87%) and Professional Officers (81%) were most interested in training about other councils' work and innovations. Administration officers were most interested in individual coaching and mentoring. Trades officers (80%) were most interested in exchange opportunities in other councils.



## An Integrated National Approach

Work and discussions continue to explore gaps in content and availability of education and professional development that specifically relate to local government. ACELG is advocating an integrated national approach to education and training for the local government workforce that:

- is forward looking and reflects the changing environment and role of local government;
- addresses sector needs for essential skills now and into the future;
- focuses equally on people working in the sector and meets their personal needs to enhance their skills and develop their careers; and
- offers seamless pathways between vocational and higher education and ongoing professional development.

By taking a national approach ACELG aims to participate in the Federal agenda and extend the sector beyond local and state boundaries. A collaborative approach to developing future programs will aim to ensure that successful experiences and approaches in each state are shared and supported, that the sector makes better use of limited resources, and that an integrated approach increases the potential for identifying and sharing good practice. ACELG is working with stakeholders that are mutually supportive of creating greater development opportunities and who actively champion a national network of best practice education and professional development.

As an outcome of this project ACELG aims to provide practitioners and providers with a range of support and resources in improving education and professional development. Research and program development will be distributed widely for the use of interested sector organisations. Local government associations, professional associations, Government Skills Australia, VET and tertiary training providers and local government organisations will continue to be engaged in the evolution of the project.

Over the coming months work on the project will aim to identify and connect existing and successful education and professional development initiatives, as well as offering a framework for future collaborative program development

The national review of training will identify current State and Territory training programs focusing on accredited courses and formally presented, non-accredited training programs delivered in-house, regionally and centrally to local governments in Australia. Information about ad hoc training undertaken in-house may be collected and inform the recommendations however will not be the focus of this review.

Information will be collected in priority areas regarding existing training programs, the range and perceived suitability of course content, methods of delivery, gaps in training delivery, current networking between providers and councils and possibilities for national development of training courses and their application.



# REFERENCES

ACELG (2011) *Capacity-Building Strategy for Rural-Remote and Indigenous Local Government*

ACELG (2010) *Excellence and Continuous Improvement in Australian Local Government*

ACELG (2010) *Learning in Local Government: A Preliminary Inventory and Gap Analysis of Education and Professional Development for Local Government in Australia*

ACELG Project Plan 2009 – 2014

Australian Financial Review 2010: 'Growth State Unveils Plan to Meet Labour Shortage',  
10<sup>th</sup> December

LGMA National 2007: *National Skills Shortage Strategy for Local Government*

LGMA National Australasian Challenge (2011) *Pre-Challenge Task*

UK Audit Commission 2008: *Tomorrow's People: Building a Local Government Workforce for the Future*

## APPENDIX – PRACTITIONER PERSPECTIVES

The Learning Survey conducted in 2010 attracted almost 900 respondents, and included two open-ended questions which aimed to canvass experiences and aspirations with regards to education and professional development. The questions were as follows:

*‘Of all the education and professional development you have undertaken, which has been the most useful and why?’ and*

*‘What kind of education or professional development would you most like to undertake over the next couple of years and why?’*

Selected responses to this question are provided in this section, and have been grouped into roles within councils.

### Administrative Officers

<b>Title:</b>	Executive Assistant
<b>State:</b>	Queensland
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Executive Assistant workshop held by the Association, as it is directly relevant to my employment.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	I am about to commence an undergraduate diploma of business with CQUni, which will give me direct credit to a bachelor of Business Management if I wish to continue.
<b>Title:</b>	Administration Officer and Rehabilitation and Return to Work Coordinator
<b>State:</b>	Queensland
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Rehabilitation and Return to Work Coordinator - completing this course has enabled me to further my career in this area as I am performing this role for 2 district areas.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	My career focus is in the area of Workplace Health and Safety and Rehabilitation. I would very much like to complete a Certificate IV in Workplace Training and Assessment as well as other detailed/informative courses on Workplace Health and Safety areas (such as hazardous substances, fire and electrical safety, etc).
<b>Title:</b>	Training & Administration Officer
<b>State:</b>	Queensland
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Emotional Intelligence has helped me in improving the way I deal with customers. Speed Reading (which I completed yesterday) will definitely be very useful because I have to read large volumes of text in my current role.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	I would like to undertake Supervisor training as I am interested in and enjoy leading a small team and I have acted in such a role for periods of time over the past few years.

<b>Title:</b>	Customer Service / Administration Officer
<b>State:</b>	Queensland
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	I would like to undertake a course in specialising Local Government Administration or Customer Service. It would increase my knowledge of local government and feel that I could service the community better. I know there are courses available in LGAQ but not everyone gets the opportunity to do these courses.

<b>Title:</b>	Business Support Officer
<b>State:</b>	Queensland
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Risk management skills; it help me place on ground programs with an open mind.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Anything in the line of disaster management.

<b>Title:</b>	Senior Development Support Officer
<b>State:</b>	Queensland
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Dip. Business for dealing with procedures and people.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Local Government Act understanding; finance training

<b>Title:</b>	Business Support Officer
<b>State:</b>	South Australia
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Cross Cultural Communication course delivered through PCE. It gave me a clearer understanding of religious groups and cultures that I dealt with in my past job. Made me understand the reasons behind some of their issues etc.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Bachelor of Tourism and Event Management and a MBA as I would like to further my skills and knoweldge in this area for future growth and development and getting me that more fufilling job.

## Librarians

<b>Title:</b>	Serials Officer
<b>State:</b>	Queensland
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Cert IV in Library & Information Services. This course was directly relevant to the service I provide in my job. It does not relate to local govt in general but specifically to library services. The course increased my knowledge of information services, improved my service delivery and motivated me to give better service. I was able to learn and work at the same time. It also enabled me to earn more money.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Peer to peer type training would best meet my present needs. I could use this to better understand the management system and databases I need to use.

<b>Title:</b>	Cultural Services Officer
<b>State:</b>	Queensland
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Training is essential in most roles. Customer Service and obviously Library training and QGAP training which directly is associated with our job.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Keeping up with technology (in a format we can understand).



<b>Title:</b>	Library Assistant
<b>State:</b>	Queensland
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Peer-interaction as well as formal hands-on training. It is often the case that more can be learned from an experienced colleague. I remember more by actually doing a process and carrying out the task than by simply sitting and hearing about it.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Diploma of Library and Info Tech - to upgrade my knowledge and skills to provide better quality service.

<b>State:</b>	NSW
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	It is difficult to answer, as training that our council organises from external trainers on communication, fire training, code of conduct and OHS policies is vital for my work and I couldn't perform my job without this training. However, the best training was a LIAC course that I attended. This course was extremely well presented, and included practical components.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	I am currently looking at a project management course.

<b>Title:</b>	Library Assistant
<b>State:</b>	Queensland
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	In-house training programs that are upgraded regularly are the best for my customer-focused work and they have helped me the most over time.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Upgrading skills in computer-based programs such as Database, Word, Publisher, Excel etc. and customer service development. To keep up with changing technology and attitudes.

<b>Title:</b>	Library Technician
<b>State:</b>	Queensland
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	The LGAQ course I did on Local Government took into account that I had worked for Local Government for years and that should be acknowledged as formal training and the course was catered for that, cutting down the amount of time and assignments needed to do the course. I feel more programs need to be catered to like this, as more people would do them to get the piece of paper to show that they can do the job they have been doing for years.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Diploma of Library Science, to get the piece of paper to say I can do the job I am currently doing.

## Councillors

<b>State:</b>	Western Australia
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Delivery of Governance Training for Councils in remote areas.

<b>Title:</b>	Councillor
<b>State:</b>	Victoria
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	There has to be more than the Australian Institute of Company Directors Course!!!
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Education and professional development in meeting procedures, basic skills, public speaking, time management. Legal obligations and the application of the Local Government Act. Planning laws and environmental laws State/Local Government obligations.

<b>Title:</b>	Councillor
<b>State:</b>	Queensland
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	The Diploma in Local Government Administration Because it is based entirely on the strategies - risks - information that is relevant to the role of a Councillor
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	I would like to update my diploma - in the light of amalgamated Councils and the changes to a regional type of LG
<b>Title:</b>	Councillor
<b>State:</b>	Victoria
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	The Masters of Planning and Community Development has broadened my knowledge of the role of local government in implementing state and federal government policy, and in managing expectations for communities and in providing a wide range of services to the communities.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	I hope to finish the Masters in Planning and Community Development, and will participate in some programs provided by MAV, VLGA and others.
<b>Title:</b>	Mayor
<b>State:</b>	NSW
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Programs run by the Division of LG- good use of time, expert input, relevant, cost effective
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	1/2- full day programs delivered locally/regionally to minimise travel and accommodation costs and tailor relevance to local issues
<b>Title:</b>	Councillor
<b>State:</b>	Queensland
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Diploma Business. Local Government is afterall a very large business with totally operational requirements because of the State Government legislative enforcements. Gender Workshops - how to work to achieve equity and make your work 'visible' by others.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Diploma of Management as well as Human Resource Management, and Executive Coaching and Mentoring, to understand the different needs and then assist in that process with enhanced skills.
<b>Title:</b>	Mayor
<b>State:</b>	Victoria
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Good governance training Top Teams training Media Training.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Regular Good governance training for Councillors, including responsible financial and asset management training in particular relating to the financial sustainability of small rural Councils. Effective team building support and training on the purpose and direction of Council as well as Roles and responsibilities of Council- there is too much blurring of the lines.(ie)Delving into Operational matters. More Planning training for Councillors as a Planning Authority. Council as Committees of Management- clarification-what are our roles and responsibilities- and are they different from Council roles and responsibilities. Understanding Economic Development principles that support Councils direction and vision. Local Government law.
<b>Title:</b>	Councillor
<b>State:</b>	Tasmania
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	LGA conference and and workshops. Planning activitites for ellected members delivered by LGA and State University
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Workshops and case studies on sustainabilty and asset managment. Very pertinent to small regional and rural councils facing sustainability decisions

<b>State:</b>	Victoria
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	That provided by MAV presented by people who are councillors or have been councillors. High level financially skilled presenters and realistic, down to earth interpretation of rules and regulations in planning and development.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Visioning and strategic thinking using all available data, ABS, demographic, SEIFA etc, for a long term future plan for all our area (including our most marginalised residents)

<b>State:</b>	Victoria
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Enjoy learning about latest research and programs relating to Local Government responsibilities, especially - Community engagement and strengthening, environmental initiatives, service delivery, tourism and economic development. Also enjoy networking with other councillors and officers to share ideas. Currently undertaking a Graduate Diploma of Business Management to develop my own leadership and management capabilities.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Currently undertaking MAV Graduate Diploma of Management through Swinburne University to help in my career after Council. Would be great if future courses could be by distance as fortnightly attendance requirement is quite difficult to juggle with Council and running my own business.

<b>State:</b>	Western Australia
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	The WALGA development when I was first elected was the most useful, with specific information relating to LG in WA and the councillors statutory roles
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Some refresher type courses would be good and it is always useful to have a look at how other councils are dealing with similar issues

<b>Title:</b>	Councillor
<b>State:</b>	Western Australia
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	The WALGA Dip of Local Government. Extremely relevant and assisted greatly as a new councillor to understand the roles, responsibilities, legal implications, finances, etc,etc of the job.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	I will be undertaking company director training and Adv Dip training from AIM on management. Have just completed training on the WALGA Dip of Local Government and have also completed most of a Commerce degree at Curtin Uni

## Executives

<b>Title:</b>	General Manager Urban Planning & Leisure Services
<b>State:</b>	South Australia
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	The current VET Diploma of Management that I am due to finish this under the PPP program , blends uni level elements with practical sessions
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Following the restructure of my dept I would like to gain some training in economic development and tourism as portfolios I now manage

<b>Title:</b>	Director, Engineering Services
<b>State:</b>	Victoria
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	MBA - breadth of coverage and ability to take a different perspective on issues (eg marketing or finance view on an engineering proposal)
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Institute of Directors Course / Leadership training Having made the step from manager to executive, I am looking at improving my knowledge of governance matters and my leadership practice

<b>Title:</b>	Director, Assets and Environment
<b>State:</b>	South Australia
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Cross Council learning forums that provide networking benefits and case study/real life scenarios for discussion
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Mentoring or Coaching as it allows for a more personalised learning and support forum for those they may be moving beyond more formal academic qualifications
<b>Title:</b>	Chief Executive Officer
<b>State:</b>	South Australia
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	In the early stages of my career I undertook engineering specific studies which provided me the technical skills and qualifications required to work as a professional engineer in LG but as I moved into management I undertook business and management specific studies to further enhance my understanding of these disciplines.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	A qualification in public policy to equip me better in the formulation of policy issues.
<b>Title:</b>	Chief Executive Officer
<b>State:</b>	Victoria
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Specific issue workshops/seminars on new developments has ensured knowledge base is regularly updated and thinking challenged. Has enabled libraries to continue to change, adapt and evolve. Developing management skills still a problem.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Continued involvement in professional networks, seminars and workshops. Usually very practical. Am encouraging other staff to undertake formal qualifications to develop theoretical knowledge base.
<b>Title:</b>	Director Corporate & Strategic
<b>State:</b>	Western Australia
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Post Grad Dip in Local Govt Management through Deakin, which was stopped and incorporated into the mainstream. I am currently considering the Aust Inst of Company Directors course for Governance and Leadership development
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Workshops and exchange visits to sight best practice ideas, intense study courses (as indeed ACRLG is doing) as due to family and work committments - time is precious!
<b>Title:</b>	Executive Manager Human Resources
<b>State:</b>	Northern Territory
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Cert IV TAA because my role involves a large component mentoring and training others including managers in a number of aspects of Council operations
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	I find conferences and workshops given by innovative and high quality presenters provide me with the best information and tools to do my job.
<b>Title:</b>	General Manager
<b>State:</b>	NSW
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Masters Degree in Urban Planning was very relevant to strategic planning generally, as well as transport and land-use planning specifically Aust Institute of Company Directors Certificate course was very useful for governance and strategic decision-making
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Advanced leadership development because I've already done all of the technical and skills development I need for my position, and this would provide me with the level of development that I need at this stage in my career

<b>Title:</b>	CEO
<b>State:</b>	South Australia
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	MBA - learning strategic analysis from a business perspective Leadership development - coaching based on Human Synergistics LSI & LI.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Leadership is the key to change & improvement - effective leadership delivers success & poor leadership delivers failure. Business Excellence Framework - staff need access to an effective framework they can use to lead and manage improvement if we want to improve value for ratepayers and residents.

## Line Managers

<b>Title:</b>	Arts & Cultural Manager
<b>State:</b>	NSW
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	A cultural policy training undertaken some years ago at CCCDNSW was very relevant to undertaking a Cultural Policy, which was part of my job at that time
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	I have just enrolled in a Diploma of Government (Management) with LGMA (NSW). I enrolled because it seems to offer a bit of everything, I am attending in work time but I have to take leave or RDO's. It was offered at a discount and it seems to balance my specialist knowledge. It goes for a year. I will get half of fees back when completed.

<b>Title:</b>	Branch Librarian
<b>State:</b>	Queensland
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	My BA has been most useful. Without it I couldn't work as a Librarian. Apart from that degree, internal courses have been very good and useful. I've recently completed a "Leadership" course which I found very good as it was very practical as opposed to being theoretical.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	dealing with challenging staff.....because I have some!

<b>Title:</b>	Team Leader Information and Library Services
<b>State:</b>	NSW
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	University of Newcastle Local Government course. Very useful for improving my understanding of strategic management issues and benchmarking existing skills and the lack of them against my peers. The course was particularly useful in terms of the way it created a "learning " environment within the workplace as the staff undertaking the course met each week as well and shared their knowledge where they had strengths.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	I will continue to attend required training in relation to finance, staff management, OHS, EEO and the like. I have just completed the Leaders course in Business Excellence and will continue to develop specific skills to lead BE projects within the workplace. We will embark on more eServices delivery over the next year and this will require training and service delivery planning. More training in these areas as a manager would be helpful.

<b>Title:</b>	Library Operations Manager
<b>State:</b>	Queensland
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	The most useful has been Leadership and Management training / professional development run by external providers with a Corporate focus that is outcome driven. This type of professional development is clearly aimed at providing appropriate tools to middle and senior management that are delivered to counterparts in the Corporate world.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Exchange programs with other Councils to determine if there are better ways of tackling some issues; Change Management training to assist staff if adapting to changing job requirements in the future.
<b>Title:</b>	Technology Services Librarian
<b>State:</b>	NSW
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Aspiring Leader program. Aside from leadership development, this program gave a good overview of council departments as well as meeting and interacting with various managers (including GM and Directors) in the organisation not normally experienced by staff in such detail or candid surroundings. Attending staff benefited greatly from this experience. Very worthwhile.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Information Technology predominantly due to my role.
<b>Title:</b>	Team Leader
<b>State:</b>	Western Australia
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Job specific training has been the most relevant, including the post graduate degree I am currently completing (Library and Information Management); State Library courses in Libraries Australia and TROVE; Kevin Hannah marketing of public libraries; Business planning training (internal local government professional development); my inclusion in ABEF training has also enabled me to better assess our policies and procedures.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Complete my graduate diploma and possibly move into a Masters degree because people who run libraries should be library trained, it will increase the overall value of the library service in the hierarchical structure and value add to the skill set I possess and share, and I thoroughly enjoy studying! Acquiring a mentor outside my local government so I can have someone to talk about things, assess situations and show me some possible directions I may not be aware of. Change management - Library and Information Services role in the community and local government is changing rapidly and I need to be able to communicate this effectively with my staff to achieve the best results.
<b>Title:</b>	Community Planning & Engagement Team leader
<b>State:</b>	Queensland
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Mainly my Masters Degree has informed my work. One or two of the management/leadership courses I have undertaken over the years has been helpful. I try to take something positive from every learning opportunity
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Change management - we never stop restructuring. Emerging policy trends - how to get good ideas up the line

<b>Title:</b>	Manager Library Services
<b>State:</b>	Queensland
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Diploma in Local Government. Administration was very useful in understanding how local government works - being in libraries, I had been isolated from much of the other functions of Council.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Change management - Libraries are constantly evolving and being able to assist staff with change would be invaluable
<b>Title:</b>	Coordinator Community Centres
<b>State:</b>	South Australia
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Leadership training and understanding community engagement techniques. Both are relevant to my job
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Finish my MBA as it seems to be the most recognised credible generalist qualification for women in local government
<b>Title:</b>	Learning and Development Leader
<b>State:</b>	NSW
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Business Excellence methodology - I now train in this methodology and have reference of the tools to use in developing excellent training packages.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Further Business Excellence training, leadership training, further exposure to L & D initiatives in other private sector and public sector organisations.
<b>Title:</b>	Environmental Health Field Support Officer
<b>State:</b>	Western Australia
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	On the completion of my BoS degree I will be a valuable asset. I am aware LG all over Australia require Indigenous EHO. I will be the 3rd Indigenous person from the whole state of Western Australia to complete this degree. It may be possible that I am also the longest serving Aboriginal EHSO in the whole state of WA.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Emergency Risk Management because we have started a pilot project in the Eastern Goldfields remote Indigenous communities.
<b>Title:</b>	Manager, Communications and Community Development
<b>State:</b>	NSW
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	There are two. The current short courses available through UTS are relevant to my current role and have proven to be valuable in helping me to gain a better understanding of what the requirements for Local Government are. The second is the externally led, internally delivered leadership training conducted by our organisation that is bringing about a change in culture within the organisation that will be beneficial to not only those who work withing but to the community we serve.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Given that I am currently undertaking the Graduate Diploma in Local Government Management through UTS as well as Leadership training, there might not be much that I would undertake in the coming 12 month period. If anything, a greater knowledge of Local Government Legislation would be helpful but is not critical to my current role.



## Professional Officers

<b>Title:</b>	Senior Sustainability Planner
<b>State:</b>	NSW
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Private industry briefings and seminars. Because in the area I currently work in, the private sector is streets ahead of the public sector in understanding the issues and implementing actions.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	2-3 day 'retreat' on an annual basis with peers to discuss trends and emerging issues and challenges
<b>Title:</b>	Strategic Planner Open Space and Recreation
<b>State:</b>	South Australia
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	South Australian Enterprise Workshop - Six month programme - The most Challenging and demanding professional development programme I have completed. Given that this is driven by and developed for private enterprise/entrepreneurs the challenge to a local government team was huge and took us all out of our comfort zones....very much changed my approach.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Strategy and Vision, Climate Change, Water Management. More forums that provide a cross section of Academic research, Government Depts and hands on practitioners.....opportunities for Local Government to form partnerships with Universities across South Australia, Research projects etc Community expectations and services provided by local government are changing at an alarming pace, to keep abreast of these issues we need to be using the most relevant and current research in our decision making processes
<b>Title:</b>	Community Development Officer (Access & Inclusion)
<b>State:</b>	Victoria
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Access Appraisal in buildings & parks and gardens. This training has helped me identify and report on access barriers within the built environment. These reports then help develop maintenance and improvement works on council owned and managed lands/property. Community Development Training. this has given me the tools and knowledge to engage with the community in various ways and mediums
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Diploma in Disability, this is an area that I focus on strongly in my role and have a personal interest to expand my own knowledge to benefit my role
<b>Title:</b>	Senior Open Space Planner
<b>State:</b>	Victoria
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Post graduate degree: masters by coursework. Involved numerous subjects covering a range of relevant areas
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Governance has been one I have requested internally...not very interesting but necessary! -Meeting/group facilitation skills, techniques and protocol - Develop alliances with relevant professional associations to provide training in specific professional areas (eg. AILA, PIA etc)
<b>Title:</b>	Sport & Recreation Planner
<b>State:</b>	Queensland
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Diploma Project Management & IAP2 Public Participation training (module 1) - specifically relevant to my work.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Training in the implementation and delivery of Council's Priority Infrastructure Plan, specifically Public Parks & land for Community Infrastructure

<b>Title:</b>	Sustainability Planner
<b>State:</b>	NSW
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Professional networks - provide networking opportunities, professional contacts and project information, and conference topics relevant to projects
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Have considered training/ education in the following areas: Recreation planning, Community development and engagement, Planning and development
<b>Title:</b>	Senior GIS Officer
<b>State:</b>	NSW
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Events where real case studies are used of Local Government to demonstrate the topic discussed, in particular best-practice or innovative examples. Where focus is directly on Local Government, the networking is more valuable to me as I have available a direct line of contact to a similar position in another Council
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Involved in a Leadership/Mentoring Program either within Council or externally facilitated across multiple councils
<b>Title:</b>	Online Futures Librarian
<b>State:</b>	Queensland
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Conferences - the ability to network with professional colleagues and industry experts in the arena of libraries and technologies has been highly valuable.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Conferences and vendor training, networking with other professionals continues to offer the most effective training and learning opportunities for me as I have enough academic qualifications and need to keep abreast of trends in this industry.
<b>Title:</b>	Asset Planner
<b>State:</b>	South Australia
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	I recently undertook the Emerging Leaders program which provided an excellent insight to the thoughts, experiences and feelings of a number of leaders within Local Government and other areas. It was through this program that I received mentoring which helped me through difficult times within my position and influenced my decision making processes. I found the information and personal accounts along with the networking opportunities invaluable.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	I would like the opportunity to upgrade my advanced Certificate of Civil Construction Supervision to a Degree in Civil Engineering or similar to assist in furthering my career.
<b>Title:</b>	Development Officer Engineering
<b>State:</b>	South Australia
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Contract Management because it was relevant to myself at the time of the training as well as being extremely proactive in encouraging participants input and problem solving skills. Lots of group and individual exercises to entice the participants involvement as well as assisting in getting the individuals to think about the subject matter and putting relevant learnt issues into practice.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Project Management as this is a growing area within Local Government and I have a strong interest in this subject. I believe that Councils are more responsible for the delivery of projects and are maintenance based organisations with expertise being sought from external sources etc.

<b>Title:</b>	Technical Officer
<b>State:</b>	South Australia
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Asset Management Training. This has assisted me to better understand current issues and has provided knowledge to improve work practices
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Maintenance of knowlege in respect to future trends in Infrastructure Asset Management ... so as to enable me to undertake my current responsibilities at least as well if not better than at present
<b>Title:</b>	Regional Services Officer
<b>State:</b>	NSW
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	All of the education and professional development has been useful in my current role but if I had to select one, it would possibly be in my current studies at university in the Masters of Library and Information Science.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Over the next couple of years I would like to move into a management role preferably with a small team and budget. With this in mind, I would like to undertake some professional development in managing people and budgets as well as gain more knowledge of the working of local government.
<b>Title:</b>	Business and Project Support Officer
<b>State:</b>	Victoria
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Corporate Learning and Development programs that can be immediately introduced into personal work - eg. Professional Presentations, Report Writing etc. Also Diploma of Management has been integral to developing business practice knowledge and furthering my opportunities for promotion within council.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Project management and risk management training to develop my skills in this area for the purpose of persuing a career in project management.
<b>State:</b>	Queensland
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	The degree I undertook did not include a lot of context for local level government. Therefore the inhouse training on negotiation, report writing and community engagement that included local government scenarios were most relevant in providing me context as well as skills.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Personally facilitation and project management skills would be useful to assist me in completing my work. To assist with the content aspect of my work more information on options for Council to support and implement affordable housing is required ASAP.
<b>Title:</b>	Response Services Officer
<b>State:</b>	Queensland
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	My initial training in Council as a customer service officer (Certificate IV in Call Centres) gave me the skills to handle a diverse range of enquiries in which enabled me to successfully gain a position in a regulatory role.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	I feel it would be beneficial to obtain a Certificate/ Diploma in Investigations as we are not provided with sufficient training to effectively investigate breaches of the law (Sunshine Coast Council)

<b>Title:</b>	HR Advisor
<b>State:</b>	Victoria
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	I already have a Masters in my discipline area, but am new to local govt. So understanding the sector through seminars, networks, reading. Also updates on the regulatory changes as they occur - either workshops, reading, networks, conferences.
<b>Title:</b>	Organisational Change Manager (ICT Projects)
<b>State:</b>	Queensland
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Process Consulting Skills, Facilitation Skills, Community Engagement Planning & Techniques. Working out why people do things, how to reach and engage people, which methods and techniques are best suited for specific engagement.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Communication skills in the new age - different channels now coming forth with technology and reaching youth.
<b>Title:</b>	Community Development Officer
<b>State:</b>	Queensland
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Empowering partnerships course
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Management skills as I would like to increase my knowledge for career purposes. Indigenous cultural heritage training and history as I feel Local Government could be responding to more but there is a huge lack of awareness amongst my peers
<b>Title:</b>	Project Officer
<b>State:</b>	Queensland
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Project Management Training - this has changed my career path from an administration role to a more project focused role and in turn has provided opportunities to investigate roles within the IT area.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Training in Information Technology - specific programs training and training in web based technologies
<b>Title:</b>	Principal Consultant - Organisational Development
<b>State:</b>	Queensland
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	The masters degree I undertook gave me a strong and credible qualification, and was extremely topical to my work, and has enabled me to develop myself even further following it's completion.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Executive development, Mentoring/coaching/professional supervision, Structured networking with senior colleagues (similar / related disciplines - L&D, Org. development) from other local govts
<b>Title:</b>	Investigator, Development Control & Compliance within Planning Services
<b>State:</b>	Queensland
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Mediation and dispute resolution. Role as an investigator for breaches of planning scheme places me right in the forefront of antagonistic and agitated persons on a day to day basis.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Investigation skills; Cross-local government exchange system; More focus on compliance management and sharing of ideas, innovations and skills amongst other regulatory areas within local government and like agencies

<b>Title:</b>	Children's Services Support Officer
<b>State:</b>	South Australia
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	LGMA Challenge Programme- allowed me to form network with colleagues in my org, and raise my profile, and learn leaderships skills among others
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Governance and Local Government Law once I have finished my Public Relations Post Grad Diploma- interested in moving into this area

<b>Title:</b>	Sustainability Planner - Environment
<b>State:</b>	South Australia
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Attending conferences and seminars as this usually includes some excellent key note addresses on relevant topics along with smaller break out sessions to discuss specific aspects. A key benefit of attending seminars and conferences is also the networking opportunity - making contact with other practitioners to discuss common issues, etc. & sometimes form ongoing working relationships.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Opportunities to provide up-to-date subject/topic specific information that I will use to prepare new and review existing policies, strategies, plans, etc. Possibly also some leadership coaching.

<b>Title:</b>	Business Excellence Partner
<b>State:</b>	South Australia
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Learning through Local Government Business Excellence Network. Hearing people's experiences and stories about what has and hasn't worked for them.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Six Sigma Black Belt due to the value add to Leading Improvements across council

## Skilled Workers

<b>Title:</b>	Youth and Children Services Library Assistant
<b>State:</b>	Queensland
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	I find conferences and workshops pertaining to my field (public libraries - children and youth) to be the most effective as they expose me to successful programs and ideas from other libraries that I can implement at my place of work.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	I am completing my undergraduate degree in Library and Information Science, and would like to complete a short course in writing proposals for grant funding, and a short course in event management and PR.

<b>Title:</b>	Acquisitions Officer (Library)
<b>State:</b>	Queensland
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	My university degree will be the most useful as it will allow me to gain a professional position within council including increased management roles and responsibilities and higher pay.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Peer exchange opportunities would probably be best as I will have just completed 9 years of distance education and will be wanting to have a break for a while!

## Supervisors or Co-ordinators

<b>Title:</b>	Coordinator Recreation Services
<b>State:</b>	Western Australia
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	LGMA Challenge Concerns - Very few, have been tailored to local government, quite often they are industry specific
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Coaching Diploma

<b>Title:</b>	Parks Supervisor
<b>State:</b>	NSW
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	The Graduate Diploma in Local Government through UTS was the first course that I have completed aimed at Local Government employees. This made the course much more relevant with the information supplied usable in my current position.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Attending relevant conferences to keep up to date and to have networking opportunities with other Council employees in a similar position or dealing with similar issues.
<b>Title:</b>	Recreation & Events Co-ordinator
<b>State:</b>	Victoria
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	LGPro Ignite Program was the most useful as it was provided at a point in my career when I was ready to move into a new role/direction.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Certificate/Diploma in Recreation
<b>Title:</b>	Facilities Planning Coordinator
<b>State:</b>	Western Australia
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	IAP2 training in public facilitation - good blend of situational and theoretical training that was easy to apply in the workplace
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Mentoring because at times I feel jaded and need a boost from someone who understands and can incite spark again
<b>Title:</b>	Coordinator Open Space Planning
<b>State:</b>	Victoria
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Undertaking of the Master of Social Science allowed for me to transit from work within the 'parks' area into Town Planning and then into my current role of Open Space Planning Coordinator.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	I am about to apply for a research Masters in Recreation to develop my knowledge and skills in the area of Open Space and to provide the industry with relevant research data.
<b>Title:</b>	Information Services Librarian
<b>State:</b>	NSW
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Internet Communication degree has enabled me to be part of the website improvement team which I am currently involved with. I undertook this course without support from my employer. They are now utilising the skills I developed for the current project. However my librarianship degree has enabled me to be eligible for my actual job. I had almost completed this course before I worked for local government.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Knowledge management - an area which our council does very badly and which is an extension of my librarianship info science background
<b>Title:</b>	Asset coordinator
<b>State:</b>	South Australia
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Emerging leader program for the contacts and mentoring program. I am still in contact with past members to resolve and discuss some work issues. Also on a social level.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Asset Management to increase my skills and better understanding of maintaining councils assets

<b>Title:</b>	Team Leader Asset Management
<b>State:</b>	Victoria
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	I find the EPD programs that allow a reasonable amount of discussion and networking (through workshops, brainstorming or similar) to be very beneficial.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Formal qualifications in asset management, however most courses available at present have an overemphasis on road and road related assets. I would like to participate in a course that also has an equal focus on drainage, building, open space and non-infrastructuree assets
<b>Title:</b>	Coordinator Information Services Delivery (library)
<b>State:</b>	Queensland
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Half day workshops, that include practical hands on skill development.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Interpersonal communication in the workplace (so staff get along better with each other) Managing depression in the workplace, handling day to day stresses. Customer service for dealing with difficult customers, or customers with 'social' issues such as anger, mental instability. etc give staff some more 'social work' type skills).
<b>Title:</b>	Coordinator Collections Services
<b>State:</b>	Queensland
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	The MBA has been useful, because it has allowed me to develop good business and leadership practice in my role.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	A post-graduate specialist course e.g. Grad Certificate in Law, that would increase my knowledge within my role.
<b>Title:</b>	Library Services Coordinator
<b>State:</b>	Western Australia
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	First time supervisor training (especially when I became a supervisor of staff). PD programs to keep up to date my my field (libraries)
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Managing staff and projects. Performance managing staff
<b>Title:</b>	Branch Coordinator
<b>State:</b>	Queensland
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Program or issue specific training - ie training about the new budgeting system, or about how Payroll works etc.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	I would really like some training in the bigger issues impacting on how councils currently work and manage. I would like to know how to manage up as well as down, as middle managers are a bit 'voiceless'. I would like to learn how to get the best from staff who are all really tired and perhaps a bit overloaded by the pressures that Council and the public are putting on them at the moment with change happening daily - sometimes with little or no explanation or warning.
<b>Title:</b>	Shire librarian
<b>State:</b>	Western Australia
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	My initial qualification with TAFE as this opened the door for me to work in the Library industry.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Conflict resolution Dealing with difficult situations within council Moving towards retirement, the options to reduce working hours but still retain current position.

<b>Title:</b>	Research Coordinator
<b>State:</b>	NSW
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Frontline Management course, sponsored by my Council for Council staff. Network of other Council staff, tailored to needs of Council staff, carried out in Council time on Council premises, of relevance in my work area every day.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Personal development - dealing with workplace bullying - standing up for myself - self-confidence building - specific technical areas in Library management
<b>Title:</b>	Network Co-ordination Officer
<b>State:</b>	Queensland
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Disaster Management Workshop. It demonstrated the complexities of the inter-departmental and inter-agency relationships and the difficulties of dealing with these issues. It involved learning new paradigms and assisting others to do the same.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Short work related courses - personal circumstances prevent any additional time.
<b>Title:</b>	Coordinator Youth Development
<b>State:</b>	Victoria
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	community engagement principals to better assist with stakeholder participation
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	facilitation, community development, leadership/management to enable a higher standard or work with community
<b>Title:</b>	Supervisor, Contact Centre
<b>State:</b>	Queensland
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Cert IV Training & Assessment is an extremely useful tool. As a supervisor, it is extremely important to have these skills to enable me to deliver one-on-one and group training and be able to construct a course.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Human Resources Certificate IV or Diploma. As Supervisor in Contact Centre, it would be good to have HR background information.
<b>Title:</b>	Tourism Coordinator
<b>State:</b>	Queensland
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	1. In-house training targetted to specific local needs or issues because it was totally relevant to my workplace needs. 2. Workshops/conferences with industry peers, because the sharing of ideas, work practices etc. is extremely valuable
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Internet and web based social media skills to ensure that council communications remain relevant to all residents and to be able to promote our region's tourism potential to a wider range of market segments.



<b>Title:</b>	Regional Coord - Civil Engineering
<b>State:</b>	Queensland
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	A management/behavioural course that examined the behaviour of staff ie. the reasons why people act the way they do & how to deal with that. The course included a self-examination which was VERY helpful in understanding my own behaviour toward my staff & others.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Task & role specific training up to a few days in duration. I recently attended classes for Cert IV Frontline Management through BNIT - 1 full day per month for 6 months in work time. I simply did not have sufficient time or motivation to complete assessment work during my normal work time or in my personal time. I found the class work very useful. I would do this sort of training again
<b>Title:</b>	Water Operations Unit Leader
<b>State:</b>	Queensland
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	TAFE Based because it was practical training usually pertaining very closely to the actual task/skill that I was required to do at that time of my employment
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Cert 4 or Undergraduate qualifications in Water & Wastewater services. I am approaching 50 and no longer wish to climb the corporate ladder but do wish to maintain and enhance my knowledge in my area of skills and experience. In the larger councils as now exists in Queensland the individuals exposure to Councillors is very limited. Therefore training to deal with councillors is of little value to the majority of Local Govt staff. Being able to progress in each individuals area of skills and knowledge I believe is the best option for future training. This is better facilitated by TAFE other than UNI courses I believe. University training is very powerful but is much broader than many require
<b>Title:</b>	Acting Senior Learning and Development Officer/Learning and Development Officer
<b>State:</b>	Queensland
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Certificate IV in Training and Assessment.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Exchange program with an overseas Council in Europe or the United States for 12 months to study how they work and compare our working.
<b>Title:</b>	Economic Development Officer
<b>State:</b>	South Australia
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	CEDA - because they deal with up to the minute economic development issues, policies etc at a State and Federal level. Also EDA conference for the same reason.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Management training to improve my skills in this area. Workforce Development training as I work a lot in this area on a regional basis and with businesses.
<b>Title:</b>	Business Development
<b>State:</b>	Western Australia
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Local Government Act training and involvement in working groups for specific areas of interest.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	more information about community planning for growth councils and the impact on services and deliverables

<b>Title:</b>	Coordinator of Open Space
<b>State:</b>	Victoria
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Half day courses professionally provided specifically target at an improved skill set to improve my communication and computer literacy skills eg Wizard
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Given I am nearing the end of my professional life and intend retiring in the next 2 years,I am interested in specific well focussed training on my areas of need which are innovative practice in land management and computer literacy

<b>Title:</b>	Coordinator Corporate Planning & Improvement
<b>State:</b>	Victoria
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	Learning about Quality Frameworks has helped me in my current Corporate Planning & Improvement role. My director has advised that if I would like to progress up the hierarchy I would need to complete at least a degree despite the fact that I have worked in this organisation for 15 years and have over 30 years work experience.
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	Unless I am able to reorganise my work load I cannot see that I can commit to substantial further education at this point.

## Trades

<b>Title:</b>	Manager Employment
<b>State:</b>	South Australia
<b>Most valuable – past:</b>	When undertaking TAFE studies I found it was practical, useful, relevant and at that stage in my career extremely worthwhile
<b>Most valuable – future:</b>	A number of corporate governance related project responsibilities have recently been assigned to my role, therefore I am interested in things such as fraud/corruption, review of council decisions, whistleblowers, complaints management etc within the SA legislative framework.



# WORLD-CLASS LOCAL GOVERNMENT TO MEET THE EMERGING CHALLENGES OF 21ST CENTURY AUSTRALIA

## ABOUT ACELG

ACELG is a unique consortium of universities and professional bodies that have a strong commitment to the advancement of local government. The consortium is led by the University of Technology Sydney's Centre for Local Government, and includes the University of Canberra, the Australia and New Zealand School of Government, Local Government Managers Australia and the Institute of Public Works Engineering Australia. In addition, the Centre includes three program partners to provide support in specialist areas and extend the Centre's national reach: the Australian National University, Charles Darwin University and Edith Cowan University.

## PROGRAM DELIVERY

ACELG's activities are grouped into six program areas:

- Research and Policy Foresight
- Innovation and Best Practice
- Governance and Strategic Leadership
- Organisation Capacity Building
- Rural-Remote and Indigenous Local Government
- Workforce Development

### **Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government**

PO BOX 123 Broadway NSW 2007

**T:** +61 2 9514 3855 **E:** [acelg@acelg.org.au](mailto:acelg@acelg.org.au) **W:** [www.acelg.org.au](http://www.acelg.org.au)